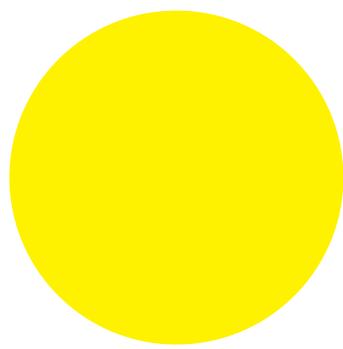


Iran calls for
roadmap to turn
Russia cultural
ties into sustained
cooperation
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FM warns Iran to fight back any aggression, even an 'apocalyptic war' 2 >

Days of foreign domination gone forever: **Leader** 2 >



Leader.ir

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei

Naval blockade opens opportunity to diversify Iran's trade routes

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

The United States has been imposing a sea blockade on Iran's southern ports for months. The blockade has inevitably affected the country's foreign trade and supply chains, highlighting the need to strengthen alternative routes, including land and rail links. Ali Emami, director general of the Logistics and Support Office at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, told Iran Daily that although alternative routes cannot fully replace maritime transport, they are essential for maintaining the resilience of supply chains during times of crisis. He said that despite the damage inflicted on Iran, the war has created an opportunity to pay greater attention to developing such routes.



Ali Emami

IRAN DAILY: Given recent developments in maritime trade routes, how can Iran make use of its land borders, rail network, northern ports and Caspian Sea routes to diversify its foreign trade routes?

EMAMI: The truth is that maritime transport dominates global trade. You cannot eliminate maritime transport and replace it with road and land transport, just as China and the United States have been unable to do so, for several reasons. One is that the volume of cargo carried by a single ship is far greater than what can be transported by a train or truck. In addition, maritime transport is far less costly than road and rail transport. However, all major economies where trade is important, including China, draw up alternative routes so that if their supply chains run into problems, they can make use of those capacities. These include the Northern, Middle and Southern Corridors that China has developed toward Europe.

Page 8 >



Aviation chief says
Tehran files ICAO
complaint over US
restrictions

3 >

Iran war's climate,
environmental,
and human
security fallout

OPINION

4-5 >



Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian
Games:
**Alamian settles
for bronze in table
tennis, Karimi
wins historic
weightlifting bronze**

6 >



Days of foreign domination gone forever: *Leader*

International Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei said the days of foreign domination that Iran's enemies seek to bring back are over and will never return.

The Leader made the remark in a message on Monday on the occasion of the Sacred Defense Week, which marks the start of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's 1980-88 war on the country, and the second anniversary of the assassination of late Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Press TV reported.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that in those days, two seas in southern Iran were once like a "playground" for enemy forces, but they no longer venture beyond the Arabian Sea given the painful blows they have received from brave Iranian fighters and the defenders of the Strait of Hormuz.

The Leader added that whenever they took the risk of doing so, they suffered damage themselves, emphasizing that

it will not be long before the Arabian Sea, too, is cleared of their presence.

Iran's growing strength

During the Sacred Defense days, "the warm rays of the Revolution's sun shining across Iran spread a pleasant sense of national solidarity and loyalty to the school and path of revolutionary Islam," which began to melt the "ice of old and new forms of domination and colonialism."

"But the days before that were dark days," he said, saying that ambassadors of the arrogant powers would convey their orders to the Iranian monarch, who would implement them willingly or unwillingly.

The 1979 Islamic Revolution overturned that order, he highlighted.

"This was extremely difficult for the powers that sought domination and had set their sights on the wealth of this land, and which for years had committed various injustices against its people in an effort to make those resources their own," added Ayatollah

Khamenei.

Hence, the enemies "devoted all their efforts to turning the powerful current of the revolutionary nation back toward its previous course," and the war launched by Saddam Hussein was their "most important action" during the first decade of the life of the Islamic Republic.

The Baathist regime had this "illusion that it would be a war of only a few days and would bring an easy victory"; however, Iran "rose like a phoenix, more mature and stronger than before."

The Leader noted that at the beginning of the war, Iran had "inherited empty hands" of the Western-backed monarch and possessed little to defend the country against threats.

"But thanks to upholding the truth and divine assistance, we have now reached days when the aggressors themselves, rather than their proxies, seek shelter from the attacks of the Islamic military forces and plead for an end to the war," he said.



Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei
● IRNA

Ayatollah Khamenei noted that enemies wish to "return our country were days of backwardness, humiliation and degradation, dependence, and Iran's disrepute in the Islamic world."

"The days we are living through now, however, are filled with progress, dignity, independence and the highest level of prestige in the Islamic world and, indeed, throughout the world," he added.

FM warns Iran to fight back any aggression, even an 'apocalyptic war'

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday that Iranian delegation came to New York to forge peace but he stressed that "Iran nonetheless remains steadfast in the face of any aggression — even if it comes to an apocalyptic war".

"President Pezeshkian and I did not come to New York to sell a war. We came to forge peace. Iran nonetheless remains steadfast in the face of any aggression—even if it comes to an apocalyptic war. At the same time, we are ready for real diplomacy", he made the remarks in a post on X.

Iranian top diplomat, who has traveled to New York for 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, also told NBC News' "Meet the Press" on Sunday that his country is prepared to resume fighting with the United States but has not yet abandoned diplomacy after President Donald Trump publicly rejected a proposal to reopen



The screen grab shows Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaking to NBC News' Meet the Press program on September 27, 2026.

the Strait of Hormuz.

"We are fully prepared for the time for the war to be resumed, and I repeat, we stand firm in the face of any new aggression, even if it comes to a doomsday war," Araghchi said when asked about a Wall Street Journal report that Trump could seek to resume bombing after the US midterm elections. "At the same time, we stand ready for diplomacy. It is up to President Trump to choose."

Iran had offered a deal last week to reopen the strait and resume normal maritime passage through the critical global oil chokepoint within seven days, as part of a plan conveyed to the US through mediator

Qatar on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Trump said Saturday that he had turned down that proposal, telling reporters: "I rejected their deal. They want to make a deal where they open the strait immediately because they're losing so badly." Araghchi told moderator Kristen Welker on Sunday that despite Trump's public comments, the rejection had still not been officially communicated to Iran via mediators. He reaffirmed that Iran was ready to reopen the strait as part of an agreement to end the conflict, adding that in return, "we want our monies, our assets, which are illegally frozen,

to be released. We want to be able to sell our oil."

Araghchi said the conditions were "not new" and were things the US has already committed itself to previously, referring to the memorandum of understanding that the two countries signed in June that laid out plans for a temporary ceasefire. That agreement collapsed within days after fresh strikes were exchanged.

"If you ask us, there is no reason why we should go back to diplomacy," Araghchi said. "But I am still trying diplomacy because I think we shouldn't miss any chance for peace."

"We don't care about US midterm elections," the Iranian official added. "We care about our national interests."

Prior to Araghchi's interview, US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz told "Meet the Press" that the deal was rejected for "a number of reasons," suggesting the US could not permit Iran "to have access to billions in frozen funds."

Iran condemns US aviation sanctions as worrying move

International Desk

Iran's Human Rights Headquarters condemned US aviation sanctions against the country, saying restrictions on access to services, equipment, spare parts and technical capabilities needed for civil aviation raise concerns from a human rights and international law perspective. In a statement, the headquarters said civil aviation was not merely an economic or commercial activity, but an area directly linked to the safety, health and lives of people.

It said the measures were concerning from the perspective of human rights, international law and the principles governing the international civil aviation system.

Back on Sept. 8, the US Department of the Treasury announced that it had targeted a number of individuals, companies and networks linked to Iran's aviation sector as part of its sanctions measures. According to the US side, the scope of the action also includes foreign individuals and intermediaries, as well as networks involved in supplying aircraft, technology and services needed by Iran's aviation industry.

The United States has imposed restrictions on the entire aviation industry in Iran and vowed to take a hard line against companies that assist it. As the sanctions took effect last Wednesday, major airlines were forced to cancel international flights after several coun-



tries implemented bans.

Iran has lodged a complaint with the United Nations over the US sanctions against its aviation sector.

"To defend the legitimate rights of the aviation industry and counter illegal restrictions imposed by America, Iran has drafted and submitted a formal protest to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)," said civil aviation chief Abouzar Shiroudi, according to IRNA. The ICAO is a UN agency based in Montreal, Canada that sets and regulates standards for civil aviation.

"In cooperation with the foreign ministry, we have also filed a complaint with the International Court of Justice at The Hague," Shiroudi added.

For Iranians wishing to enter or exit their country, destinations in neighboring Turkey are now the primary options for flights.

Routes also remain available to Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Russia, Malaysia and Thailand, with flights to the United Arab Emirates suspended.

Tehran: Saudi strikes on Yemen violate principles of UN Charter

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry in a statement on Monday said Saudi Arabia's deadly attacks on various parts of Yemen violate fundamental principles of the United Nations' Charter.

The ministry strongly condemned the Saudi airstrikes on a market in Taiz Province on Sunday afternoon, which killed more than 50 people and wounded dozens, as well as airstrikes on the cities of Khab and Al-Shaaf.

It said the continued violation of Yemen's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, along with aggressive operations against the country's cities and villages as well as the continuation of economic blockade of the country violate fundamental principles of the

UN Charter and runs counter to Islamic principles and teachings.

The ministry reiterated Iran's principled position on the situation in Yemen and said Tehran is ready to help resolve the differences between the two Arab neighboring countries.

Yemeni Armed Forces spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Saree has announced that Saudi fighter jets carried out two attacks on the main market around noon local time in Taiz, killing and injuring approximately 50 civilians.

Saree also noted that the same jets carried out four additional attacks on the province of Jawf, as well as strikes on the Khab and Al-Shaaf districts.

Saree warned that the unjust shedding of civilian blood would carry "huge

costs" for the Saudi regime.

According to Yemeni military sources, the Saudi regime has carried out over 1,059 attacks on Yemen since July, following a Saudi strike on the main airport in the capital, Sana'a, which triggered a new round of intense conflict between the two countries.

In response to the relentless Saudi aggression, the Yemeni Armed Forces have launched a lightning offensive, seizing control of Yemen's entire Red Sea coast, including the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait.

The Yemeni military has also imposed a blockade on Saudi energy exports, severely compounding the economic pressure already exerted by Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz to US-linked shipping.



Aviation chief says Tehran files ICAO complaint over US restrictions



Economy Desk

Iran has filed a formal complaint with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) over US restrictions on the country's aviation industry and is pursuing diplomatic

efforts to restore suspended flight routes, the head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization said on Monday.

"The Civil Aviation Organization is pursuing the necessary measures, using all legal instruments and in close coordination

with the country's diplomatic apparatus, to remove obstacles and resume all flights on routes that were previously active," Abouzar Shiroudi told IRNA. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said last week that Iranian airlines would be "shut

down" from Sept. 16 as Washington moved to tighten pressure on Iran's aviation sector. On Sept. 8, the US Treasury Department sanctioned 27 Iranian airlines as part of a broader campaign announced on Aug. 24, warning that foreign companies supporting Iran's aviation industry could face sanctions and restrictions on access to the US financial system. Shiroudi said Iran's formal protest had been submitted to ICAO as part of efforts to defend the rights of its aviation industry and challenge "the unlawful US restrictions." He said the complaint detailed Iran's objections and supporting documents concerning disruptions to flight operations. Preventing flights amounted to a violation of bilateral agreements under which countries allow each other's airlines to use their airports, Shiroudi said. He added that Iran had also sent letters to countries where flights had been suspended, seeking explanations for the cancellations.

Regarding flights to Baghdad and Najaf, Shiroudi said the Iraqi government, parliament and Civil Aviation Authority were actively working to resume services. Flights to Najaf were expected to resume first, followed by Baghdad, he said. Neighboring Iraq has joined several countries, including the United Arab Emirates, in enforcing US measures. China has rejected the Trump administration's sanctions targeting Iran's aviation sector, calling unilateral US sanctions "illegal." Reports have emerged that Iraq had lifted its ban on Iranian airlines, but Shiroudi told ISNA that Iran's Civil Aviation Organization had not yet received an official directive confirming the move and that negotiations to restore flights were continuing. "The organization is negotiating and following up on the resumption of flights to Iraq, but there is no specific timetable for this," Shiroudi said. Shiroudi denied reports that flights to Najaf would resume on Wednesday, Sept. 30, say-

ing no official directive had yet been issued to lift the ban on Iranian airlines. He said the reports had appeared in Iraqi media and that the Iraqi government had not yet responded to them.

The Iraqi government said on Saturday that Iraq was holding talks with the United States to secure an exemption from the ban on Iranian airlines, which has disrupted travel for patients, students and pilgrims.

Connecting Flights Remain in Use

Meanwhile, connecting flights through regional aviation hubs, including Istanbul, have been used as an alternative since restrictions were imposed on direct flights to Europe, Shiroudi said, adding that the arrangement remains in place. He also said the organization was prioritizing efforts to re-open routes that had been temporarily suspended because of recent regional and wartime conditions following the 40-day US-Israeli strikes against Iran.

NIPC restores 60% of war-damaged petrochemical capacity



Economy Desk

Iran has restored about 60% of its petrochemical production capacity damaged during the 40-day US-Israeli war, the head of the National Iranian Petrochemical Company (NIPC) said on Monday, as the industry rebuilds facilities in its main hubs. NIPC CEO Omid Shakeri told reporters that the damage from the war, which began in late February, fell into two main categories: utility systems and specific process units. Reconstruction efforts in both areas are continuing, he said, according to IRNA.

"About 60% of the lost capacity has so far returned to production," Shakeri said.

Air strikes in April hit facilities in Mahshahr, Khuzestan province, and Asaluyeh, Bushehr province, as well as petrochemical plants in Tabriz and Marvdasht (Shiraz), according to official reports. Iran's nominal petrochemical production capacity

had reached 100 million tons per year, with actual output at around 80 million tons, according to figures previously reported by Iranian officials. Shakeri said the Oil Ministry's management was seeking to restore most of the lost production capacity by the end of the year (March 21, 2027). He added, however, that the industry faced more difficult conditions this year because of gas supply constraints during the cold season and damage to the refining sector. Shakeri did not give a figure for the amount of production capacity lost, but Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad said earlier this month that the strikes had damaged utility units supplying steam, electricity and nitrogen to production units, as well as some processing units, initially causing a significant loss of capacity that affected parts of the supply chain. Shakeri stressed that stable production depended on a reliable energy supply. In previous years, he

said, rising household gas consumption during winter had led to involuntary restrictions on petrochemical plants. This year, he added, a 230 million cubic meter reduction in refining capacity had made public cooperation in managing consumption even more important. Shakeri's emphasis on reliable energy supply came as Iran was planning to import electricity from Turkey and Azerbaijan during the winter, with imports potentially reaching about 1,000 megawatts if petrochemical companies succeed in purchasing power from Turkey. Iran has begun negotiations with Turkey to secure electricity imports for its petrochemical industry after power plants serving the sector were damaged during the war. Shakeri also said the industry had maintained stable exports despite war and sanctions, rejecting reports of problems with the repatriation of export earnings and saying all export procedures were monitored by the Central Bank. He added that companies return the remainder of their earnings after deducting permitted foreign-currency needs, with the sector's repatriation rate above 90%, and that petrochemical exports differ from oil exports because companies sell their products directly and return the resulting foreign currency.

Iran boosts border terminals, northern ports to keep goods flowing under maritime blockade

Essential goods discharges jump more than 90%, ports chief says

Economy Desk

Iran's roads minister said the country has strengthened rail and road border terminals and northern ports to keep goods entering and moving across the country after a US maritime blockade from the south, while the head of the Ports and Maritime Organization said essential goods discharges at northern ports rose more than 90%.

"With the cooperation of various agencies, increasing the transfer of goods through some rail borders was put on the agenda," Roads and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadeq said, according to the Mehr news agency. Sadeq said that when the maritime blockade was imposed, Iran had to find routes that could break the blockade and keep goods flowing into the country without disruption. She said this required special attention to Iran's territorial capacities, prompting the country to focus on rail and road border terminals as well as northern ports and to use those capacities to keep goods moving. Sadeq noted the difference in capacity between Iran's northern and southern ports, saying the volume of goods entering through southern ports, particularly containerized cargo, is not comparable to the capacity of northern ports. However, she said, using northern port capacity became important once maritime routes were restricted.

Since late February, when a US-Israeli coalition launched a 40-day war, Iran has been operating under wartime conditions as well as a US maritime blockade from the south.

Iran, already under decades of Western sanctions over its nuclear activities, has faced a new wave of US sanctions, with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent saying last week that Iranian airlines



would be shut down from Sept. 23 through secondary sanctions on foreign aviation service providers.

Relatedly, the head of the Ports and Maritime Organization said on Monday that essential goods discharges at northern ports had risen more than 90%, pointing to 24-hour port and customs operations and a significant drop in the time needed to unload vessels and the dwell time of goods at port terminals and transit borders.

Mohammad Shakibi-Nasab, speaking to reporters on Monday, outlined the organization's latest steps to develop capacity and improve efficiency at Iranian ports, especially in the north, according to the IRNA.

"In the area of cargo storage, in addition to operational capacity inside the ports, more than 55% of storage capacity now exists in areas around the ports under customs supervision, and optimal use of these facilities has eased the process of warehousing and storing goods," he said.

"One of the main concerns of traders was the supply of strategic equipment at northern ports, and in this regard, part of the loading and unloading equipment was transferred from southern ports to the north of the country,"

he said.

The deputy roads minister, citing figures recorded this year, said that compared with the same period last year, northern ports saw a rise of more than 90% in essential goods discharges and a roughly 65% increase in the discharge and loading of other goods.

He said northern ports accounted for about 18% of the country's total essential goods discharges in previous years, but that share has now jumped to about 31%, a bright horizon that will become clearer with continued software and hardware programs and the equipping of northern ports.

Ship unloading time cut from 10 days to under 3

The ports chief also addressed concerns about cargo dwelling at port areas, saying transit warehousing is a technical process and a global standard. He said direct truck loading could take up to a week to unload a ship, while rapid transfer to port transit warehouses cuts that to about three days. With mechanized grain terminals and improved methods, ships that once took 10 days to unload are now fully discharged in 2.5 to 3 days, he said, calling it a strategic achievement built on teamwork across the logistics chain.

Iran war's climate, environmental, and human security fallout

By Alejandro Martin Rodriguez, Joy Arkeh, Sarah Yerkes

Fellows at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

OPINION

In a region already much affected by climate impacts and conflict dynamics, the continuation of the Iran war will reinforce their relationship and, in turn, result in serious humanitarian consequences.

Since the beginning of the US-Israeli strikes on Iran in late February, analysts and policymakers have focused their attention on the geopolitical, economic, and energy-related fallout that a prolonged conflict brings to the world. So far, the war in Iran has claimed the lives of soldiers and civilians, including more than 100 children killed in a US strike on an Iranian elementary school; disrupted economic systems, costing the United States \$2 billion each day; and shocked energy markets.

However, one of the war's most serious consequences is also one of its least reported. Whereas the true cost of the war is only beginning to be tallied, one thing is already clear: It is worsening the climate crisis and degrading human security in an already climate-vulnerable region. Yet most discussion has not centered around the environmental, climate, and human mobility implications of the conflict.

The onset of the new Iran war is expected to reinforce the threat-multiplying relationship between conflict and climate impacts, resulting in serious humanitarian consequences. These have led to displacement in the past, not only in the region but on a global scale. Here, we assess the different ways in which the conflict is exacerbating climate, environmental, and human vulnerabilities in West Asia, and how they could lead to increased displacement. This article looks at worsening water scarcity, threats to public health, exacerbated forest and farmland fires, increasing greenhouse gas emissions, and weakened state capacity as pressing consequences of renewed and increased conflict between parties in the Middle East.

Worsening water scarcity

The water resource situation in West Asia is already at a critical stage, with per capita water availability below the water stress threshold in the region. At the start of Operation Epic Fury, Iran and the Persian Gulf region had already been experiencing a climate-induced drought for more than five years. In neighboring Iraq, 2025 marked the worst drought on record since 1933. The Iran war is worsening this fragile context, with strikes targeting civilian and industrial infrastructure that includes oil facilities and chemical plants, releasing toxic residues that pollute waterways. This is of particular concern for Iran, where water resources had already been depleted by drought and mismanagement.

Since the beginning of the war, desalination plants have been struck and water reservoirs have been damaged. Last March, Iran accused the United States of attacking Qeshm Island and its desalination plant, which provides water for 30

villages. In June, Iran again announced that two of its water reservoirs had been targeted and damaged, causing thousands of people to lose access to drinking water; the Iranian government criticized American strikes as responsible for the worsening water situation in towns such as Jask and Sirik. Previously, attacks on water pipelines by Israel had also "decimated large sections of Gaza's water infrastructure."

Other civilian and industrial infrastructure has also been targeted. This includes attacks on oil facilities and chemical plants, polluting fragile waterways, which could lead to contaminated food, water, and air with severe health consequences for vulnerable populations, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

These new attacks could exacerbate an ongoing climate displacement crisis. In southern Iraq, climate-induced water stress has already forced rural populations to move into cities. Many are now at risk of being displaced again, this time not by climate change but by conflict. And while data about displacement in Iran is limited, estimates suggest that at least tens of thousands of Iranians are internally displaced yearly by drought and other climate impacts, such as floods or land degradation. If access to clean water is deteriorated further — via increased attacks on desalination plants, for instance — even wealthy populations in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia would likely find their capacity to stay in their homes compromised.

Conflict-related threats to public health

Conflict-linked pollution in West Asia goes beyond the contamination of water resources. On March 7, 2026, air strikes hit four oil storage and refinery sites in and around Tehran. The strikes resulted in fires that produced a phenomenon referred to as "black rain": oil mixed with precipitation, impacting a metro area of 9–15 million people. The situation was so bad that the WHO issued a warning about dangerous air pollution following the strikes. The strikes caused air to be contaminated with sulfuric acid and trace metals. This has had direct impacts on public health, and residents reported experiencing headaches and breathing dif-

ficulties following the attack. Short-term exposure to black rain can also lead to eye and skin irritation and can exacerbate existing asthma and pulmonary conditions. And because the exact combination of contaminants is not known, the impacts of chronic and long-term exposure to contaminated soil, water, and crops are yet to be determined.

More broadly, the ongoing conflict has led to serious challenges to Iran's water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions, causing an elevated risk of respiratory infections, diarrhea, and other communicable illnesses, which disproportionately impact women and children as populations are displaced and people overcrowd shelters. More than 3.2 million people in Iran and up to 700,000 in Lebanon are estimated to have been internally displaced since the beginning of the war. In Lebanon, the WHO has pointed to heightened risks of cholera as well as measles, chickenpox, and scabies. And an increase in human displacement due to war has already contributed to a 25 percent gap in essential noncommunicable disease medicines (including insulin).

Though not directly related to climate change, the region's health care facilities have also experienced direct threats, with 18 verified attacks on health care facilities in Iran and 25 in Lebanon since February 28. Additionally, attacks on Iran's central vaccine production and epidemiological tracking hub have hobbled the country's ability to produce vaccines and monitor outbreaks. Damage to health care infrastructure is both direct and indirect, with power outages, fuel shortages, and staff displacement disabling medical care even in facilities that have remained out of the line of fire.

An additional public health impact of the ongoing conflict is the psychosocial toll and mental health consequences of the continued war. According to the WHO, in populations exposed to armed conflict, around 10 percent will develop serious mental health challenges and another 10 percent will develop mental health-related, functionally impairing behavioral changes. The impact is even worse on children, who experience disruptions to school, housing, and family stability that all serve as drivers for childhood anxiety, hyperactivity, and other mental health concerns that can persist well beyond the



Black smoke rises following US-Israel attacks targeting oil storage, including the Shahrn oil depot, in Tehran, Iran, on March 8, 2026.

● FATEMEH BAHRAMI/AA



Though not directly related to climate change, the region's health care facilities have also experienced direct threats, with 18 verified attacks on health care facilities in Iran and 25 in Lebanon since February 28. Additionally, attacks on Iran's central vaccine production and epidemiological tracking hub have hobbled the country's ability to produce vaccines and monitor outbreaks. Damage to health care infrastructure is both direct and indirect, with power outages, fuel shortages, and staff displacement disabling medical care even in facilities that have remained out of the line of fire.



A stray cat sits at the top of stairs that shows the aftermath of a dangerous "black rain" caused by US-Israeli air strikes on oil depots in Tehran, Iran, on March 8, 2026. The phenomenon is usually created by precipitations mixed with large amounts of soot, carbon and other pollutants in the air.

● HADI ZAND/ISNA

end of conflict.

The impact of the conflict on public health is well documented and further exacerbated by the decline in humanitarian assistance globally. The eastern Mediterranean region was already home to nearly half of all people globally requiring humanitarian assistance before the conflict started. Furthermore, the WHO's own global logistics hub in Dubai faced disruption early in the conflict due to airspace closure, impacting its ability to distribute medical supplies to more than 1.5 million people across 25 countries.

Exacerbating forest and farmland fires

West Asia's arid conditions, which have worsened as a result of climate change, make it particularly vulnerable to forest and farmland fires. Conflict exacerbates the risk of fires, with Armed Conflict Location & Event Data recording almost 200 incidents of fires caused by attacks from Hezbollah or the Israel Defense Forces in Israel and Lebanon between October 2023 and July 2024. More recent attacks have particularly affected farmland, and the Lebanese Agriculture Ministry reported in late March 2026 that 22 percent of the country's cultivated land had been damaged in the previous month. This, combined with the worsened global fertilizer crisis caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, could lead to disastrous food insecurity forcing populations to leave their homes. Wildfires in the region have also triggered more displacement in recent years, and this phenomenon can be expected to increase as conflict-related fires become more common.

Extreme climate variability in recent years has exposed the Middle East to increased fire risk occurrences, but 90 percent of fires are ignited as a result of anthropogenic factors like destructive land management practices and military activities. Burning farmland and economically essential crops in fertile hotspots is done for political gain during conflict across the Middle East, and because areas under conflict are less accessible, land management regulations are less enforceable.

Food systems that farmers rely on for self-sufficient livelihood are pressured by the weaponization of environmentally harmful contaminants as a conflict tactic. In summer 2026, Israel has turned to the use of white phosphorus and glyphosate in southern Lebanon to retaliate against Hezbollah's attack on Israel following Israel's assassination of Iran's leader. The displacement of farmers who can no longer work, along with significant chemical exposure, has halted 78 percent of agricultural activity in the region — a national hub for citrus, olive, and tobacco production. Lebanon's minister of environment has labeled attacks on her country's forests, agricultural lands, marine ecosystems, water resources, and atmospheric quality an "act of ecocide": the mass damage, destruction, or loss of ecosystems.

The use of agricultural herbicide and arson in cultivated land — including tear gas, which intensifies the spreading of fire — is also common in Palestine. Palestinian territories have seen an escalation in targeted infrastructure attacks since the

beginning of the Iran war. In Gaza, only 1.5 percent of agricultural land remains unharmed. Damage assessments are already difficult to conduct in remote rural areas. With conflict exacerbating climate impacts, the process of environmental monitoring after fires is made more complicated. Iran's rural towns of Zanzan and Tabriz struggled with disaster management after fires spread following Israel- and US-led attacks on their military facilities, exposing the local population to highly toxic dioxins and furans.

Increasing greenhouse gas emissions

As mentioned earlier, emissions from military activity exacerbate the climate crisis, and the Iran war is no exception. In just the first two weeks of the war, an estimated 5 million tonnes of CO₂ were emitted into the atmosphere. This means the war is burning carbon at a faster rate than 84 countries combined. Greenhouse gases come from a variety of sources, including the destruction of homes, buildings, and fuel reserves; the fuel consumed in combat operations; and the embodied carbon of military equipment. Existing infrastructure may be the primary target, but attacks are also wiping out the opportunity to build more resilient societies in the region. In the long term, emissions generated by the conflict will compound with those generated by post-war reconstruction efforts in the region. When the war ends, analysts expect military spending in the region and globally to rise, in the face of an increasingly volatile geopolitical landscape. This will inevitably lead to higher military emissions. For instance, based on the White House's April 2026 Pentagon budget request of around \$1.5 trillion, submitted in the context of the ongoing conflict with Iran, experts estimate that 267 megatonnes more carbon pollution could be sent into the atmosphere. This is 53 times more than the estimated CO₂ emissions produced during the first two weeks of the war. As the conflict develops, secondary impacts will also lead to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Many countries, particularly in Asia, are switching from gas to coal because of the volatility of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) market in the wake of the war. LNG had played a key role in the energy security of these economies, particularly following Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine in 2022. However, the Iran war is causing gas cargoes in the Persian Gulf to be delayed, rerouted, or priced out by maritime insurance premiums. The consequence has been countries like India increasing their coal consumption to meet the high demand for energy in the summer, or countries like Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam "boosting coal-fired power". Ultimately, the war creates a double burden on the climate crisis: more emissions, accelerating climate impacts, and less funding to invest in mitigating them through the transition to renewables or building adaptation and resilience. Conversely, the greenhouse gas emissions generated by military activity throughout the conflict will compound the medium- and long-term climate pressures already bearing down on the region. All of this evidence shows a reinforcing relationship: a climate crisis compounding a war and a war compounding a climate crisis.

Weakening state capacity

The war in Iran is not only impacting environmental and climate stressors in the region. It is also preventing governments from investing in much-needed resilience and adaptation measures that could help address existing challenges. This is happening not long after the so-called great aid recession, with eight of the 10 largest humanitarian donors having reduced their funding since 2022. Historically, weakened governance systems have led to revolts and conflicts over water, energy, and food shortages that have triggered exacerbated displacement — disproportionately harming refugees, farmers, and women. While the Persian Gulf has adopted cleaner energy alternatives, the war has exposed the consequences of a policy of water overconsumption and energy-intensive systems (such as desalination plants) now under heightened threat. Furthermore, with re-



A chef lights a fire with wood and coal to prepare food for his restaurant following a regional gas shortage in Guwahati, India, on March 19, 2026.
● ANUPAM NATH/AP

mittance streams from foreign workers in Persian Gulf countries facing increased risk, the future of the region's social contract looks uncertain. So far, the Iran war has also caused an estimated \$58 billion in damage to energy infrastructure, and the region's tourism revenue is declining around \$600 million a day, further diminishing Persian Gulf governments' capacity to invest resources in the adaptation and resilience of their societies. In the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, sustainable development mega projects are being shelved to make fiscal room for repairing battered energy infrastructure and strengthening defense capabilities. While the economies of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar are more dependent on oil revenues, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are not immune to the macroeconomic pressures of a volatile energy market, in addition to the climate stressors that exacerbate resource scarcity. Rising fuel and insurance costs for Persian Gulf shipping carriers, abetted by an unreliable cease-fire, undermine the promise of deals like an Abu Dhabi port group's \$22 million dirham investment to develop Khalifa Port, which houses the world's three largest shipping lines: CMA CGM, COSCO, and MSC. At best, these Persian Gulf countries will experience a dip in foreign capital flows and tourism and a spike in risk premiums for investors. Together, these changes may subvert the Persian Gulf's long-standing image as a prosperous business hub for expats. Along with expanding budget deficits across Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, crack-downs against Shia minorities in Bahrain and Kuwait have increased since the Iran war, further depleting the Persian Gulf's governance capacity; some are experiencing displacement after having their citizenship revoked. In the long run, a diverse resource market in the Persian Gulf cannot function fully without a diverse labor market to participate in it. On the other hand, resource-dependent, debt-burdened countries like Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, and Morocco face more structural challenges that complicate the reversal of economic and social devastation. In Iraq, oil infrastructure is under persistent attack, and fuel prices are rapidly rising after a 70 percent slash in electricity imports from Iran, which has deepened preexisting public frustration over unemployment, affordability, and state capacity in managing conflict. Supply shocks also limit energy availability used to sustain food supply chains and agroproduction, which involve irri-

gation, refrigeration, and transportation — processes made more costly by rising temperatures and extreme heat waves plaguing the region in the summer. Historically, food insecurity and inflation were significant stimuli for unrest during the Arab Spring; and underdeveloped, conflict-exposed countries, where farmer populations make large contributions to GDP, suffer disproportionately from the consequences of food insecurity. Yemen serves as the region's most severe example of food insecurity that is exacerbated by high displacement rates. Countries like Syria and Palestine are affected to similarly acute degrees. The impact of the US-Iran war on food inflation has eroded purchasing power, lowered demand for higher-value agricultural commodities, and raised input and production costs for farmers. These realities negate the labor opportunities that traditionally exist in farming for displaced populations. The seasonal nature of employment in the agricultural sector, which has become increasingly jeopardized by shorter rainfall and increased drought cycles, further alienates displaced and rural households. Persian Gulf states, which are highly dependent on food imports for staples like soybeans, vegetable oils, and corn, are also primary exporters of ammonia, urea, and sulfur — fertilizers that farmers in Egypt and Morocco heavily rely on for production. Morocco is one of the Persian Gulf's largest importers of sulfur, a key agricultural fertilizer. Egypt's protracted battle with inflation and indebtedness to foreign grants and loans (to finance delayed megaprojects after a rise in oil prices) has sharpened social grievances among consumers grappling with poverty. Lebanon represents an even more concerning case of debt accumulation and fragile governance delivery systems that are unable to keep up with proliferating displacement, overcrowding shelters, and spreading climate-induced diseases, caused by Israel's escalating military incursions in the south. With 33 percent of Lebanon's GDP dependent on remittances from the Persian Gulf countries, the better-off segments of Lebanon's population are not spared from livelihood uncertainties and government mistrust. Lastly, the rerouting of humanitarian aid delivery through longer aviation routes — that originally traveled through the Strait of Hormuz — and the global deprioritization of postconflict reconstruction funds by major donors like the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs have pushed socioeconomically fragile and resource-poor states into deeper



Family members gather their belongings after an air strike on an apartment block in Tehran, Iran, on March 12, 2026.
● ALAA AL MARJANI/REUTERS



Ultimately, the war creates a double burden on the climate crisis: more emissions, accelerating climate impacts, and less funding to invest in mitigating them through the transition to renewables or building adaptation and resilience. Conversely, the greenhouse gas emissions generated by military activity throughout the conflict will compound the medium- and long-term climate pressures already bearing down on the region. All of this evidence shows a reinforcing relationship: a climate crisis compounding a war and a war compounding a climate crisis.

instability. Humanitarian organizations seeking to help displaced Iranians only have access to a third of the funding required to sustain emergency relief efforts. In Lebanon and Palestine, infrastructure damage by Israel has led to immobility and delays across aid carriers, entrapping would-be aid recipients in a state of displacement. Extreme reliance on international aid and the absence of a framework for regional integration and cooperation in response to the Iran war will only compound MENA governments' struggles in coping with resource insecurity and displacement in a context of mounting conflict and climate stressors.

What next? pressing policy decisions

The Iran war has had immediate consequences for global geopolitics, economic growth, human security, and energy markets. It also has a climate vulnerability dimension. Understanding the environmental and climate fallout of the conflict can help policymakers identify how to minimize its potential consequences. It can also help observers assess the extent to which desalination plants in Iran or cultivated land in Lebanon are being prioritized as common targets of military strategy, against a background of the logic of war increasingly colliding with the logic of climate vulnerability. And at the same time, it can help countries that are concerned about a new migration wave in the Middle East — like the one that followed the Syrian War — think about how to prevent such a wave, or at least prepare for it. The Iran conflict has made clear that war and climate change interact in dangerous ways, amplifying negative impacts on societies and economies with both short- and long-term consequences. Policymakers who seek to alleviate these harms should no longer silo their responses to conflict and to climate. The single most important action that could address this threat-multiplying relationship is to cease hostilities and end the conflict permanently. In the meantime, policymakers must integrate climate and environmental vulnerability outputs into security and military assessments, to better understand the impact of conflict on populations, governance, and military capacities. Such integration would require a range of actions, such as analyzing how rapid- and slow-onset events that undermine rural livelihoods or increase water and food insecurity interact with military tactics, or considering how military personnel on the front lines respond to climate impacts. Additionally, to prevent or minimize human suffering, policymakers must invest in adaptation and resilience so that their societies are better equipped to respond to climate shocks, including those exacerbated by conflict. This would lead to more resilient populations, less easily exploited by military tactics that build impact via climate and environmental vulnerabilities. And to address the displacement challenges brought about by both climate and conflict, policymakers should prioritize cost-effective interventions and financial support for climate mobility action, such as disaster preparedness and response or planned relocations. Finally, policymakers and civil society actors should take advantage of this moment of policy plasticity to localize energy and food systems and increase investment in renewable sources of energy that are less vulnerable to geopolitical impacts. Such energy efficiency investments and increase in renewables in China and Spain, for instance, have made those countries less vulnerable to the energy impacts of the war. These policies offer opportunities for cost-effective interventions that can support people — especially the most socioeconomically vulnerable populations — as they experience climate impacts, including those exacerbated by conflict. Although the Persian Gulf has struggled with developing a coordinated approach to the climate and energy crises, the war presents a new opportunity for countries in the Persian Gulf and the broader Middle East to strengthen their adaptive resilience through more integrated clean energy and water infrastructures.

The full article was first published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.



Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games:

Alamian settles for bronze in table tennis, Karimi wins historic weightlifting bronze



Sports Desk

Iranian table tennis player Noshad Alamian had his impressive run in the men's singles event come to an end at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games after suffering a semifinal defeat to Chinese world No. 1 Wang Chuqin on Monday. Having defeated the host's world No. 4 Tomokazu Harimoto in a seven-game quarterfinal thriller, Alamian lost 4-1 (11-4, 11-7, 9-11, 11-4, 11-6) to the decorated Chinese, who won the doubles and team golds at the Paris 2024 Olympics as well as the singles title at the 2025 World Championships, to collect the third Asian Games bronze medal of his career.

Alamian was part of the Iranian trio that won the team bronze at Hangzhou 2022 and also teamed with his younger brother, Nima, for a third-place finish in the doubles event.

Kurash silver

Elsewhere at the multi-sport event, Ramin Ahmadzadeh



Iran's Noshad Alamian won the men's singles bronze in the table tennis event at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games.

● IRNA

added a silver medal to Iran's haul after suffering a setback in the final of the men's -81kg division of the kurash competition. The Iranian claimed emphatic 10-0 victories against opponents from Thailand and Turkmenistan before defeating Japan's Ken Oyoshi 3-0 in the semifinals. However, a late injury during his last-four victory ultimately cost him in the final, where he was beaten 3-0 by Uzbekistan's Akxror Ziyodullaev.

Back on track

Iran's men's water polo team got back to winning ways on Monday, recovering from a 12-8 setback against China the previous day to defeat South Korea 15-11 in Group B. The two sides were tied 4-4 at the end of the first quarter and

6-6 at halftime, but Iran won the third quarter 6-2 to secure a second win in three games, having routed Singapore 19-8 in its opener.

Volleyball victory

Iran secured a second successive victory in the men's volleyball competition, defeating Thailand 3-0 (25-18, 25-18, 25-15) in Pool B. Outside hitters Pouria Hosseinkhanzadeh and Ali Haqqarast led the scoring for Iran with 13 points apiece, while star opposite Amin Esmaeilnejad finished with eight, as Italian head coach Roberto Piazza's side secured a place in the quarterfinals ahead of its final preliminary-stage game against Indonesia today. Meanwhile, Mandegar Farzami and Meshkatolzahra Safi, who had secured Iran's first victories in the women's tennis event at the Asian Games since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, saw their campaigns come to an end in the women's singles second round. Farzami suffered a 2-0 defeat

(6-1, 6-1) against Joanna Garland of Chinese Taipei, while Safi was beaten by China's former world No. 22 Zhang Shuai in similar fashion, losing 6-1, 6-0. In weightlifting, former world champion Mirmostafa Javadi endured a below-par campaign in the men's 85kg class, finishing fifth.

Javadi opened with a successful 158kg snatch lift but failed to hoist 163kg and 164kg on his next two attempts, finishing fourth in the discipline with his opening mark.

The Iranian once again made a promising start in the clean and jerk, successfully lifting 200kg on his first attempt. However, he failed with 209kg and 217kg on his next two attempts, finishing fourth in the clean and jerk with 200kg and fifth overall with a total of 358kg.

Iranian shooter Hanieh Rostamian also had a disappointing campaign in the women's individual 25m pistol event. Rostamian, who topped the qualification with a 587-25x

performance, scored 14 in the final to finish seventh, failing to add to her mixed-team bronze earlier in the Games.

Weightlifting history

A weightlifting milestone was achieved for Iran on Sunday as Reihaneh Karimi won the country's maiden women's medal in the history of the Asian Games, claiming an impressive bronze in the 77kg category.

The Iranian failed with her opening 103kg attempt in the snatch but successfully lifted the same weight on her second attempt before completing a 107kg lift on her third.

In the clean and jerk, Karimi successfully lifted 131kg and 136kg with her first two attempts but failed to hoist

140kg on her third.

Her total of 243kg was enough to earn her the bronze medal. China's He Renxiu claimed gold with a total of 258kg, while Kazakhstan's Ayanat Zhumagali took silver with 246kg.

Karimi's historic achievement came after she lifted 26kg more than her previous personal bests, while she also defeated South Korea's Kim Yi-seul, a former world bronze medalist, in the battle for bronze.

"Thank God, Reihaneh managed to win the bronze medal and make history today," Iran's women's head coach Elham Hosseini said.

"We have been in the training camp for a long time, away from our families and facing many difficulties. Reihaneh deserved to win the silver medal today. She gave everything she had and fought hard for it."

Hosseini dedicated the medal to the Iranian people for "supporting the country's athletes during difficult times."



Iranian weightlifter Reihaneh Karimi celebrates after a successful lift in the women's 77kg event at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games in Japan on September 27, 2026.

● IRNA



FIBA West Asia Super League:

Shahrdari falls to Sagesse in Final 8 opener

Sports Desk

Iran's Shahrdari Gorgan got off to a losing start at the FIBA West Asia Super League Final 8 on Sunday, suffering a 103-97 defeat against Sagesse SC in Group B in Zouk Mikael, Lebanon.

The home side needed some late-game heroics from star forward Youssef Khayat, who finished with 19 points and seven rebounds, coming through with two truly crucial plays to help Sagesse avert disaster after the Iranian team tied the game at 97-all behind a 9-0 run.

Khayat knocked down the go-ahead jumper for a 99-97 lead with 46.2 seconds to go, and then hauled down D'Angelo Harrison's missed three-pointer on the other end to get the possession back.

The game would never be in doubt after Jamal Jones pushed the lead to 101-97 before coming through with a big swat on Harrison's attempt from the corner with only 7.4 seconds remaining.

That stop led to an emphatic end to the tightly contested affair, with athletic winger Deshawndre Washington rising up for an unmolested two-handed slam with 2.9 seconds left to settle the final score.

As the final buzzer rang, all of their faithful filled the Nouhad Nawfal Sports Complex with cheers and adoration as they witnessed their team finally beat Gorgan in WASL after losing their first three meetings.

"We're very happy," said head coach Joe Ghattas. "We deserve to grab a win. I believe the last time



Sagesse forward Youssef Khayat (23) dunks during a victory over Shahrdari Gorgan at the FIBA West Asia Super League Final 8 in Zouk Mikael, Lebanon, on Sept. 27, 2026.

● FIBA

we played Gorgan on our court, we lost the game in the last two to three minutes ... Great way to start

the tournament." Washington top-scored for Sagesse with 27 points, along with 10 re-

bounds and seven assists, eventually earning Player of the Game honors after the American forward

posted an efficiency rating of 40.

Jones finished with 25 points and three of the team's four blocks. Gerard Hadidian also made his presence felt, especially in the game's early stages, with 18 points as four players finished in double figures for the winners.

Sagesse faces Al Ula Club today in a battle for the provisional lead in Group B. The Saudi side beat the undermanned Al Arabi SC of Qatar 96-72 earlier.

"Every win is important for us," said the former player-turned-bench tactician. "We came here to play hard every single night. We need to grab every win to go to the next stage, which is the semi-finals."

Harrison, on the other hand, led Gorgan with 31 points in a comeback that

fell just short. Stefan Jankovic had 23 points, nine rebounds and five assists, while Jordan Stevens added a 22-3-6 stat line in 40 minutes.

It was this same trioka that powered their fourth-quarter assault, with Jankovic and Stevens, together with Amirhossein Azari, powering the aforementioned run that erased their opponents' 97-88 lead.

Jankovic could have given them the lead but only split his free throws and tied the game instead. It proved to be their final charge, as Stevens and Harrison could no longer find the mark while Sagesse had their way.

Bronze medalists at the 2024 Final 8, Gorgan will try to barge into the win column when it takes on the Red Devils of Qatar today.

Iranica Desk

Bijar is home to around 600 historic sites and nearly 60 historic bathhouses, offering considerable potential for cultural tourism, according to Seyyed Hadi Hosseini, an adviser to Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and a board member of the Fund for the Development and Restoration of Historic and Cultural Buildings. Speaking to ISNA following a one-day visit to Bijar, Hosseini stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation among local communities, artists and officials to further develop the city's cultural heritage and tourism potential. "Cooperation between the people, particularly artists, and officials needs to be strengthened," Hosseini said, adding that greater public participation could create new opportunities in the fields of art, history and cultural heritage. Hosseini said Bijar's approximately 600 historic sites and 60 traditional bathhouses reflect the area's long history and rich cultural heritage. He also emphasized the importance of introducing

Bijar's heritage, handicrafts seen as key tourism assets

younger generations to Iran's historical heritage. Educational programs, regular conferences and media initiatives, he said, should be expanded to raise public awareness of the country's cultural and historical resources. According to Hosseini, broadcasters, news agencies, artists, journalists and cultural organizations can play a greater role in introducing the heritage of Bijar and other historic areas of Iran to the public. Hosseini identified the city's limited recognition as a tourism destination as one of its key challenges. He said developing Bijar as a tourism destination could create new opportunities for local economic development, given its historical, cultural and artistic resources. Hosseini also called on residents of Bijar and Kurdistan Province to invest in tourism-related businesses,



Owsheqoon Baba Tower
● eligasht.com

including traditional accommodation and hotels. He said the necessary incentives and support could be provided to expand accommodation infrastructure and encourage visitors to stay longer in the city. The historic bazaar of Bijar was also highlighted as one of the city's important cultural assets. Hosseini described the ba-

zaar as a historically significant structure that has survived despite damage inflicted on the city over the course of its history, including during Russian attacks on Bijar. He said one of the objectives of his visit was to examine plans for rehabilitating the historic bazaar. According to Hosseini, efforts will be made in cooperation with



Bijar rug
● wikipedia.org

the governor, provincial cultural heritage officials and other authorities to address existing problems and restore the remaining

sections of the bazaar, particularly its covered areas. He expressed hope that continued cooperation among local authorities and communities would lead to further progress in the development and rehabilitation of Bijar's historic and tourism assets during future visits. Hosseini also outlined measures being considered to support local handicraft producers and artists. One initiative involves providing insurance coverage for master artisans and craftspeople working in carpet weaving and other handicraft fields. He also announced plans to launch a dedicated platform for handicraft producers. The proposed platform would allow artisans to showcase and sell their products, obtain raw materials directly, and access services such

as insurance and financial assistance. Hosseini said the project is in the final stages of contracting with the implementing organization and expressed hope that it could become operational by the end of the year. He added that the initiative could help ease some of the economic challenges facing artisans and artists. At the end of his visit, Hosseini thanked the people of Bijar for their resilience and cooperation. He said Iran's historical continuity has been closely connected to its deep cultural roots and to the communities that have continued to live in and preserve its historic settlements. Hosseini concluded that protecting Iran's cultural and historical heritage requires continued cooperation and shared responsibility between local communities and public officials.

Reading Room

Iranica Desk

A new volume exploring Iran's long tradition of earthen architecture and the challenges facing its preservation has been published as the third installment of the On Conservation series. Titled *On Conservation: Soil, Adobe and Earthen Architecture*, the book has been compiled by veteran heritage conservation expert Rasoul Vatan-Doust, with the collaboration of Parisa Abdollahi, and published by Dadkin Publishing. The volume brings together contributions from researchers and specialists in architecture and conservation, examining Iran's earthen heritage from historical, technical, cultural, social and environmental perspectives, according to IBNA. Earthen architecture is among the oldest forms of construction in Iran and around the world. The use of earthen building materials in Iran dates back more than 10,000 years, according to the book. Over millennia, basic natural resources — soil, water, straw and sunlight — were transformed into durable building materials used for homes, mosques, caravanserais, fortifications and urban walls. Adobe, generally produced by mixing clay-rich soil with sand and water and, in some cases, straw before being dried in the sun, became particularly well suited to Iran's arid and semi-arid climate. Its availability, relatively low cost, thermal properties and adaptability made it a fundamental material in traditional Iranian architecture. But the book argues that earthen architecture represents much more than an ancient construction technique. It is also a striking example of the relationship between human communities and their natural environment. Over centuries, earthen construction evolved in response to local climates, social needs and cultural practices, becoming an

integral part of the historical identity of numerous Iranian cities and villages. Yazd, Naïen, Kashan, Tabas and Isfahan are among the places where this tradition remains visible. Historic structures such as Bam Citadel, the Jaame Mosques of Naïen, Ardestan and Zavareh, as well as traditional houses in Yazd and Kashan, demonstrate the artistic and technical possibilities of earthen materials. One of the key reasons many earthen buildings have survived for centuries, the book notes, is the continuous maintenance carried out by local communities.

Traditional conservation practices included regularly replastering walls, strengthening supporting structures and applying fresh layers of mud to roofs. Such activities were once part of everyday life rather than exceptional conservation projects. The continued transmission of this local knowledge helped ensure the survival of many earthen structures across generations. Despite its historical and cultural importance, earthen architecture is increasingly vulnerable to a range of threats. Natural factors, including moisture, rainfall, earthquakes, wind

are also becoming increasingly disconnected from the knowledge and values associated with earthen architecture. Greater awareness among conservation professionals, architects and the wider public is therefore considered essential to ensuring the survival of this heritage. The book does not advocate replacing modern architecture with traditional earthen construction. Instead, it calls for greater interaction between traditional knowledge and contemporary architectural practices. According to the volume, earthen architecture can continue

to play a role in contemporary construction if traditional techniques are combined with modern research and technologies. Such an approach could also provide environmentally compatible solutions at a time when sustainable construction has become an increasingly important concern. The authors point to several measures that could contribute to the preservation and revival of earthen architecture, including further research, updating conservation and construction techniques, educating younger generations, documenting successful projects, strengthening local economies and promoting cultural tourism. Iran is not alone in possessing a rich tradition of earthen archi-

ture. Similar forms of construction can be found across Yemen, Morocco, Mali, Egypt, China and Peru, where earthen buildings form an important part of local cultural heritage. Historic Sana'a in Yemen, the earthen cities of Morocco, the remains of Chan Chan in Peru, traditional settlements along the Nile in Egypt and the Great Mosque of Djenné in Mali are among the examples highlighted in the book. These international experiences demonstrate that preserving earthen architecture requires more than technical interven-

Urban Development," brought together Iranian and international specialists to examine the relationship between traditional earthen architecture and contemporary urban development. The book also calls for the development of national guidelines and a locally adapted charter for the conservation, maintenance and restoration of Iran's earthen heritage. While international organizations, including the International Scientific Committee on Earthen Architectural Heritage (ISCEAH) and ICCROM, have undertaken work in this field, the authors argue that Iran requires conservation guidelines adapted to its own historical, climatic and cultural circumstances. The new volume grew out of papers presented at the First Conference on Earthen Architecture and Urbanism and Its Role in the Sustainable Development of Contemporary Iranian Architecture, held at the National Museum of Iran in October 2024. The event was organized with the cooperation of several Iranian heritage and museum institutions, including the Cultural Heritage Department of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, the National Museum of Iran and the Iranian National Committee of the International Council of Museums. At its core, *On Conservation: Soil, Adobe and Earthen Architecture* presents earthen architecture not simply as a remnant of the past, but as a living component of Iran's cultural identity and a potential source of knowledge for sustainable architecture in the future. Its central message is that preserving this heritage requires a combination of traditional knowledge and contemporary research, community participation and education, alongside attention to the technical, cultural, social and economic dimensions of conservation.

New book explores Iran's ancient earthen architecture



erosion and temperature fluctuations, can cause significant deterioration. Human factors have also become increasingly important. The decline of traditional building knowledge, the use of industrial materials that may be incompatible with historic structures, rural migration and the depopulation of historic settlements have all contributed to the deterioration of earthen heritage. The authors therefore stress that conservation cannot be treated solely as a technical matter. Social, cultural and economic considerations must also be taken into account. Vatan-Doust warns that the threat extends beyond the physical deterioration of historic structures. Younger generations

are also becoming increasingly disconnected from the knowledge and values associated with earthen architecture. Greater awareness among conservation professionals, architects and the wider public is therefore considered essential to ensuring the survival of this heritage. The book does not advocate replacing modern architecture with traditional earthen construction. Instead, it calls for greater interaction between traditional knowledge and contemporary architectural practices. According to the volume, earthen architecture can continue

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Iran calls for roadmap to turn Russia cultural ties into sustained cooperation

Iranian National Library, Russian Oriental Manuscripts Institute sign MoU



sian-language specialists, experts in manuscripts and media workers. The program is being held in Moscow, St Petersburg in northwestern Russia, Kazan in western Russia and Astrakhan in southern Russia.

Salehi said Russia's size, population and large Russian-speaking community gave it an important place in Iran's cultural diplomacy.

He estimated that 250 million to 300 million people in countries across the region speak Russian as a first or second language.

He also pointed to the long history of cultural relations between Iran and Russia, saying the first cultural agreement between Iran and the Soviet Union was exchanged in 1966.

The minister said the government should make greater use of the private sector and act more as a facilitator in cultural and artistic cooperation.

He also called for the development of the cultural economy alongside the preservation of cultural identity, describing the cultural days as an "opening for expanding this path".

The comments came as Iranian and Russian cultural institutions stepped up cooperation in several fields.

At the third Iran-Russia Cultural Committee meeting in St Petersburg, Salehi and Russian Culture Minister Olga

Lyubimova discussed new avenues for cultural and artistic cooperation.

Manuscripts, research take center stage

Gholamreza Amirkhani, head of Iran's National Library and Archives, announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Under the agreement, Iranian and Russian researchers will have wider access to manuscripts and other valuable sources held in collections in the two countries.

"The researchers of Iran and Russia will have greater opportunities to make use of the manuscripts and valuable sources held in the collections of the two countries," Amirkhani said.

The agreement covers the exchange of digital resources and researchers, joint research and greater use of scientific expertise in the field of written heritage.

An Iranian delegation also visited the Oriental and Iranian Studies section of the National Library of Russia in St Petersburg and discussed expanding cooperation with Russian officials.

The collection of manuscripts associated with Russian Orientalist Ignaty Krachkovsky includes 34 Persian

works, among them copies of the Divan of Hafez and Anwar-i Sohaili. His personal library also contains works in Persian.

Film, wider cultural ties

Vadim Duda, head of the Russian State Library in Moscow, announced plans for a commemoration of Persian poet Nizami Ganjavi as part of Iran's cultural days in Russia. He also praised the earlier commemoration of Russian poet Alexander Pushkin in Iran.

The cultural program follows Salehi's arrival in Russia on Sept. 24. After a brief stop in Moscow, he travelled to St Petersburg to attend the 12th International Forum of United Cultures, held from Sept. 24 to 26.

During the visit, Salehi met his Russian counterpart, attended the joint cultural committee meeting and visited St Petersburg State University of Culture and Russian cultural and Iranian studies institutions.

Iran and Russia also signed a memorandum on joint film production during the visit, adding cinema to the areas of cooperation being developed between the two countries.

Salehi later returned to Moscow for the official opening of Iran's cultural days, with programs continuing across the four Russian cities.

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Culture Minister Abbas Salehi called for a roadmap and sustained activity to turn cultural exchanges with Russia into longer-term cooperation, saying cultural events should serve as a starting point rather than an end in themselves.

Speaking to Iranian artists in Moscow during Iran's Cultural Days, Salehi described Russia as a priority in Iran's cultural diplomacy and said the two

countries needed a "roadmap and continuity of activities" after the cultural week ends, IRNA reported on Monday. "Iran's cultural days in Russia should be the starting point for sustained interactions between the two countries," Salehi said, calling the participating Iranian artists "cultural ambassadors of the nation".

He said the 168-member Iranian delegation included musicians, visual artists, handicraft producers, filmmakers, theatre professionals, writers, Per-

Iranian animator Ashkan Rahgozar joins Berlin festival jury

Economy Desk

Iranian writer and animator Ashkan Rahgozar has been selected as a jury member for the New Talents competition at the Festival of Animation Berlin, where his feature film Juliet and the King will also be screened outside competition. The New Talents section is dedicated to animated shorts made by students at international film schools. Rahgozar will join the jury assessing the

films in the competition, which is part of the festival running from Oct. 8 to 11 in Berlin, the capital of Germany, IRNA reported on Monday.

His feature Juliet and the King will be shown in the festival's Feature Special program. The official program lists the film as an out-of-competition screening, with a presentation scheduled for Oct. 10 at City Kino Wedding.

Rahgozar will also take part in a festival talk titled "Juliet and

the King: Animation Between Art and Challenge", discussing the making of the film and his experience producing a feature animation in Iran. The talk is part of the festival's professional and supporting program.

The Berlin appearance adds to Rahgozar's previous experience on international cinema and animation juries. In 2021, he served on the jury for the Satoshi Kon Award for Excellence in Animation at Canada's Fantasia International

Film Festival, which selects an award for excellence in animation.

He also served that year on the national competition jury of the Tehran International Short Film Festival and was a jury member at the Thessaloniki Animation Festival in Greece.

The Festival of Animation Berlin's 2026 program features 161 films from 78 countries across its competition and wider film program. The New Talents competition show-

cases student animation from international film schools, while the festival's supporting program includes talks, workshops, professional events and screenings.

Juliet and the King follows an Iranian king who travels to Paris and falls in love with an actress after watching a performance of Romeo and Juliet. He invites her to stage the play in Tehran, but she becomes caught up in tensions among women at the royal court.



Naval blockade opens ...

Unfortunately, before this war, Iran did not make use of its

road and rail capacities to the extent it could have. The war prompted greater attention to these routes so that they could be used as a complement to maritime transport. Naturally, they cannot fully replace maritime routes, but they can provide significant support. For example, goods that are essential for the country, such as basic commodities, food products or sensitive goods that are essential for production, such as machinery, can be transported through these routes. This is already happening.

Three to four train sets are now arriving from China every day. Cargo is also being transported by truck, while shipments are coming from

Turkey and Pakistan. Even through southern routes, cargo is arriving from the ports of neighboring countries along the southern coast. However, the shipments coming through these routes are generally made up of goods for which there is a particularly high level of demand.

What opportunities can the development of regional transport corridors create for Iran? Can Iran make use of its geographical position to strengthen trade with neighboring countries, Central Asia, Russia, China and other Asian markets?

A corridor is not merely an economic or trade issue. Two other dimensions also need to be taken into account. One is the sustainability of routes, and the other is the resilience

of trade. Regardless of the fact that cargo needs to be delivered to a particular destination, what matters is that the route remains continuous and sustainable. A trader may put in a great deal of effort to market products and find a market in Europe, for example. If the cargo arrives late, the route is disrupted or there is an interruption in the flow of goods, that customer will be lost.

Therefore, sustainability is now important, while trade resilience is also crucial. From this perspective, security considerations and non-economic risks must also be minimized. Thus, these corridors not only provide highly reliable support for trade, but can also make a significant contribution to a country's security and resilience and to strengthening its

economy. They provide greater depth, create new jobs and open up new trade opportunities in areas such as cargo transportation and logistics. Therefore, looking at corridors solely from a trade perspective is not enough.

What infrastructure and reforms should be prioritized to increase the share of road and rail transport in foreign trade, particularly in terms of border capacity, customs, rail lines, northern ports and coordination among relevant agencies?

If I were to put it in very academic terms, there are six items that need to be taken into consideration. The first is infrastructure, which I do not think requires much explanation. The second concerns process-

es. At sea, because these processes have been established and defined over a long period of time, they are relatively clear. But in the rail and road sectors, those processes have not yet been fully streamlined. The third issue is inspection and inspection equipment, which requires considerable attention. There are currently significant shortcomings in this area.

The fourth concerns intergovernmental diplomacy. After all, cargo is moving from one country's jurisdiction into another country's jurisdiction, unlike maritime transport. Therefore, diplomacy needs to be highly active and serious. The fifth issue is continuity and precision in managing the flow of work. There needs to be oversight to ensure that the flow of goods continues and re-

mains uninterrupted.

The sixth concerns governance at border terminals, which has come to be referred to as unified management. Effective and proper governance needs to be established at these borders.

Can current circumstances provide an opportunity to redesign and diversify Iran's foreign trade network?

Certainly. In my view, although war is not a good thing, and although sanctions and a blockade genuinely put pressure on the economy and distress the people, the reality is that, if the situation is viewed from another perspective, it is defining new opportunities and revealing new capabilities for Iran. It seems that this is how the situation can be viewed, and these opportunities can be seized.