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 The photo shows a handwritten letter in Persian by a girl who survived a US missile attack on an elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, in late February, to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

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Pezeshkian: Enemies have failed to force Iran to surrender

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday that Iran's enemies are making every effort to force the country to surrender but have so far failed to achieve their objectives either through war or by assassinating the country's leaders and commanders.

"The enemy is doing everything in its power to force our country into surrender, but it failed in the war and could not undermine the country's resolve by martyring our leaders and commanders," Pezeshkian said during a speech at a ceremony held on the occasion of World Post Day in Tehran.

He accused Iran's adversaries of seeking to seize the country's territory and resources, adding that they made little effort to

conceal their intentions.

"They are seeking to take possession of this land and territory, because they do not even shy away from stating this truth. They openly say they want to take control of the oil in these regions and seize their resources," he said.

Pezeshkian said Iran's enemies are using artificial intelligence and advanced equipment to carry out precision strikes, allowing them to identify exactly which locations to target.

He said the targeting of children reflected the adversaries' view that the deaths of young people would help them achieve their sinister objectives.

"They kill innocent people to achieve their goals. It is shameful that these same people speak about humanity, science and knowledge at the United

Nations. Science that becomes a tool for destroying innocent human beings is a disgrace," the president said.

At least 168 children were killed on February 28 after a US missile struck the Shajarah Tayyebah Elementary School in the southern Iranian town of Minab on the first day of the US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

Pezeshkian also accused the United States of complicity in genocide in Gaza, saying the international community is witnessing the events unfolding there.

"What is happening now in Gaza with the complicity of the United States is, in fact, genocide," he said.

He criticized countries that claim to uphold human rights and humanitarian values, saying they are not only turning a blind



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian addresses a ceremony marking World Post Day in Tehran, Iran, on October 12, 2026.
● president.ir

eye to the crimes but, regrettably, supporting them.

"Even those who claim to defend human rights and humanity are

witnessing these events but, instead of simply standing by and letting them pass, they are, unfortunately, supporting them

and endorsing these crimes by supplying weapons and equipment. This situation is truly shameful," Pezeshkian said.

Iran expresses readiness to facilitate political dialogue between Riyadh, Sana'a

International Desk

Iran expressed readiness to facilitate dialogue between Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement and Saudi Arabia to end the ongoing conflict between the two sides.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in a phone conversation with his Saudi counterpart Faisal bin Farhan on Sunday said that Tehran is fully prepared to facilitate a direct political dialogue between Riyadh and Sana'a, stressing that persisting with a military approach in Yemen will only further complicate the regional landscape.

Araghchi expressed deep concern over the worsening situation, stressing that the crises currently plaguing the region fundamentally lack a military solution.

"Insisting on a military approach and disregarding a political solution will only complicate the current situation," Araghchi told the Saudi foreign minister.

He reaffirmed the Islamic Republic's readiness to provide any necessary assistance to help initiate talks between Saudi Arabia and Yemen,



This screen grab taken from CCTV footage released by the Saudi Media Ministry on October 11, 2026, shows the moment King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh was hit by a strike on October 10, 2026.

paving the way for a durable political resolution.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei also on Monday expressed concern about developments on the Arabian Peninsula and reiterated Iran's readiness to facilitate dialogue, noting that escalating tensions would benefit only the Israeli regime.

"We, therefore, do not want hostilities and war to continue between two Muslim countries. Our region is already experiencing enough tension as a result of US and Israeli actions," he said.

Baqaei maintained that the Yemeni people had the right to live with dignity, free from pressure, sanctions, and

blockade, saying that conditions in the country over the past 10 to 12 years were unjustifiable under Islamic principles or international law.

The remarks came as military tensions between Yemen's Ansarullah movement and Saudi Arabia have deteriorated in recent weeks.

At least 14 people have been killed in recent attacks by Ansarullah's forces on Saudi Arabia.

A strike on Riyadh's international airport on Sunday killed one person and wounded 11 others, a day after 13 died in the deadliest strike on Saudi soil in more than a decade.

"The airports and airspace are

exposed to targeting and constitute a theatre of operations for our forces," Ansarullah's military spokesman Yahya Saree wrote on X.

He stressed that Yemeni Armed Forces will continue implementation of the "airport for airport, siege for siege, and escalation for escalation" equation until the Saudi military aggression on Yemen ceases, and the tight blockade against the Arab Peninsula country is lifted completely.

While seizing large swathes of territory along the Red Sea coast in Yemen, the Ansarullah has also attacked Saudi transport hubs, oil facilities and other civilian targets in the world's largest crude exporter.

Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni forces it backs have struggled to contain Ansarullah's advance, despite a counter-offensive aimed at recapturing territory including the area around the Bab al-Mandab strait that is crucial to global energy flows.

The Ansarullah had already controlled the capital Sana'a and most of Yemen's major population centers since the start of the war in 2014.

Regional states witnessed 'ineffectiveness' of US security umbrella: *Armed Forces spokesman*

International Desk

Iranian Armed Forces spokesman Abolfazl Shekarchi said on Monday that regional countries have experienced the ineffectiveness of the United States' alleged security umbrella in practice and should stop relying on Washington for their security.

"Regional countries should leave the shelter of the incapable US security umbrella; Washington is incapable of even securing itself in the region, let alone providing security for others. Continued reliance on the purported US security umbrella will amount to nothing but accepting the heavy costs of a wrong calculation and decision," Shekarchi said in a statement. The Iranian military official advised regional countries to learn from the experience, stressing that Iran will not allow the regional order envisioned by the US and Israel to be re-established in the Middle East.

Shekarchi also accused the US of resorting to fuel smuggling to escape a self-created quagmire in West Asia, in which Washington is becoming increasingly mired.

"But the fundamental question is this: Can maritime banditry, theft and fuel smuggling prevent the inevitable defeat of the United States? Never!" he said.

He added that a US propaganda campaign



Abolfazl Shekarchi
● IRNA

and repeated lies by American officials about control over the Strait of Hormuz would not change realities on the ground. Neither psychological warfare nor media claims, he said, would be able to spare Washington the consequences of its failed strategies.

Shekarchi also said recent insults by delusional and foolish US officials regarding Iran's civilization, history and people reflected Washington's desperation and would only strengthen the resolve of the Iranian people.

"We have repeatedly demonstrated our power and determination to our American and Zionist enemies and their allies," he said.

The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Shekarchi said, are now equipped with greater readiness and capabilities than in the past and would resolutely defend the country's national interests, security and the integrity of the Islamic Republic.

FM spox: Rubio's civilizational rhetoric aimed at 'legitimizing war'

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Ismaeil Baqaei on Monday said portraying current tensions in the Middle East as a confrontation between Iranian and Western civilizations is aimed at "legitimizing war and aggression."

In response to a question about recent civilizational rhetoric by the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Athens, Baqaei said Rubio's comments about Greece's history, Western civilization and the ancient wars between Greece and Iran should be viewed as part of Washington's cognitive war against Iran.

During the speech in Athens on Wednesday, Rubio argued that modern-day Western countries have lost their confidence, weakened their



Esmail Baqaei
● IRNA

industries and militaries, and need renewed ambition and power in the future.

"The Persians plundered the temples, burned the shrines and razed the Acropolis to the ground," Rubio claimed. He subsequently hailed the return of the Athenians and the construction of the Parthenon under Pericles.

"Presenting a distorted interpretation of historical events to justify American

warmongering is both dangerous and an injustice to Greek culture and civilization," Baqaei said.

Baqaei underlined the United States cannot present itself as the representative of Western and Greek civilization. He also rejected attempts to frame relations between Iran and the West as a "clash of civilizations," noting that Iranian civilization had developed through intellectual exchange and engagement with other cultures.

"Iranians have always been competitive, but they have combined competition with interaction. We have never sought to assert our power or sustain our existence by negating others; we have engaged even with our rivals," he said, citing the contribution of Iranian and Muslim scholars to the translation and interpretation of Greek thought.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



National post company unveils smart addressing system, delivery robot

Economy Desk

Iran has unveiled a new generation of standardized addressing services and its first postal delivery robot, along with other technology and infrastructure projects, at a ceremony attended by President Masoud Pezeshkian to mark World Post Day.

The projects, announced by Iran's National Post Company (NPC), focus on developing the national location-based addressing system and modernizing postal infrastructure and operations to improve service accuracy and speed, operational efficiency and public access to postal services, Mehr News Agency reported. One of the main projects unveiled was the third generation of standardized addressing. Based on the national location-based addressing infrastructure known as GNAF, the service allows users to manage and personalize addresses and access location-based services. The ceremony also featured a report on the development of the national address database under President Pezeshkian's administration, which took office in August 2024. According to NPC, rural geocoding coverage has increased from about 4% to 77%, with completion targeted for November.

The country's first postal delivery robot, developed with the participation of knowledge-based companies, was also introduced at the ceremony. Designed to deliver mail and parcels in residential complexes and



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian unveils two stamps as Communications and Information Technology Minister Sattar Hashemi looks on during a ceremony marking World Post Day in Tehran on October 12, 2026. [president.ir](#)

townships, the robot is initially being evaluated for its capabilities as the company explores this new delivery method. Other projects included the commissioning of three sorting centers and five scanner tunnels across eight provinces. The equipment is intended to speed up parcel processing, reduce operational errors and increase the capacity of the postal network. The company also unveiled a system for consolidating sorting data and opened a national center for intelligent monitoring and management of the postal network. These systems integrate operational data to

enable more precise monitoring of network performance, tracking of processes and data-driven decision-making. In the digital services sector, the company also unveiled the Post Man web application, designed to facilitate access to electronic postal services through an integrated platform. Other initiatives included the development of software systems, improvements to digital service security and the expansion of the My Postal Assistant service on the Soroush Plus messaging platform. These initiatives aim to improve user access and expand remote services.

ECONOMIC LENS

Global Economy: Hidden battle for jobs Why China's employment figures matter beyond a single economic statistic



By Mohammadreza Hosseini Aliabad
Researcher in intl economics

ANALYSIS
EXCLUSIVE

Not every battle in the global economy takes place on stock exchanges, in trading halls, or amid tariff disputes. Some of the most consequential economic contests unfold in a place that rarely commands as much attention as financial market indicators: the labor market. This is where governments must strike a balance between economic growth, technological progress, social expectations, and businesses' actual capacity to hire. Viewed from this perspective, China's latest employment figures should not be regarded merely as a report on the performance of a major economy. Rather, they offer a window into one of the most pressing challenges facing the global economy today: translating productive capacity into sustainable employment opportunities.

According to Reuters, China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security announced that the country created 10.52 million new urban jobs during the first nine months of 2026, equivalent to 87.7% of its annual employment target. At first glance, these figures indicate that China is making progress toward meeting its employment objectives. Yet their real significance lies in a question that extends far beyond the country's borders: in an economy where technology is rapidly transforming the structure of production, how can governments ensure that economic growth translates into jobs? For decades, China has relied on industrial production, extensive investment, infrastructure development, and a strong presence in international trade to become one of the central pillars of the global economy. However, its growth model has not remained immune to structural change. Demographic shifts, changing consumption patterns, challenges in the property sector, developments in export markets, and the expansion of artificial intelligence are all reshaping the employment landscape. In this environment, the creation of millions of new jobs represents a notable achievement. Nevertheless, the number of jobs created alone cannot reveal whether the labor market is genuinely stable, resilient, and dynamic.

The central challenge facing today's economy is not simply job creation; it is the quality of employment and its ability to provide workers with economic security. Jobs that offer adequate wages, opportunities for skills development, a reasonable degree of employment security, and prospects for career advancement can help strengthen household consumption and improve economic confidence. By contrast, an expansion in low-productivity, insecure, or inadequately paid employment may fail to produce a meaningful improvement in public welfare, even when overall employment figures are rising. Consequently, any assessment of China's labor market must distinguish between the number of jobs created and their economic quality. This issue also carries significant implications for the global economy. China is not only one of the

world's largest producers of goods; developments within its economy also affect other countries through trade, investment, demand for raw materials, and global supply chains. Sustained employment in China can influence international trade by supporting household incomes and domestic demand. Conversely, weakness in the labor market or declining consumer confidence may generate consequences that extend well beyond national borders. The scale of these effects, however, depends on other variables, including income growth, consumer spending patterns, trade policies, and prevailing global economic conditions. Meanwhile, artificial intelligence and automation are making the employment equation increasingly complex. On the one hand, technology can raise productivity, reduce production costs, and create entirely new industries. On the other, it can transform existing occupations and increase demand for new skills. Economies that fail to invest in education, workforce reskilling, and stronger links between educational institutions and industry may face a widening gap between available employment opportunities and workers' capabilities. Under these circumstances, employment policy can no longer be limited to creating new jobs; it must also facilitate the transition of workers from declining occupations into more productive activities. Nevertheless, a single statistical report should not be taken as conclusive evidence of the overall health of China's economy. A more comprehensive assessment requires examining wage trends, productivity, youth employment, labor force participation, and the distribution of job opportunities across different sectors. Furthermore, achieving 87.7% of the annual employment target means that the remaining portion must still be fulfilled, with the final outcome depending on developments during the closing months of the year. What these figures ultimately demonstrate is the growing importance of employment in the economic competition of the twenty-first century. In a world where countries compete to attract investment, advance technology, and increase their share of international markets, economic advantage is no longer defined solely by production capacity or export volumes. The ability to translate growth into sustainable incomes and high-quality employment is also an essential component of national economic strength. Perhaps the defining question for China and other major economies is not simply how many jobs are created within a given period, but how effectively those jobs contribute to higher productivity, income security, and stronger purchasing power. Ultimately, the success of the global economy cannot be measured solely by output volumes or market valuations. One of its fundamental benchmarks is the ability to create opportunities that connect the benefits of economic growth with people's everyday lives.

TPO says local-currency payments possible with EAEU



Mohammad Ali Dehqan-Dehnavi
[ISNA](#)

Economy Desk

Iran has established the capacity to use national currencies and transfer funds in trade with members of the Eurasian Economic Union despite sanctions and banking restrictions, the head of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran said on Monday, adding that the country's foreign trade volume by weight fell 34% in the first half of the current Iranian year. Mohammad Ali Dehqan-Dehnavi, deputy industry minister and the TPO chief, told a news conference that payment mechanisms and currency transfers were among the main issues in trade relations with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

He said the issue fell under the Central Bank of Iran's remit and that measures to facilitate financial transactions, particularly in trade with Russia, had made considerable progress, IRNA reported. "At present, suitable capacities have been created to expand economic ties with member states of the EAEU in terms of financial transactions, and a significant portion of the remaining obstacles relate to issues such as standards and customs procedures," he said. Dehqan-Dehnavi said tariff barriers had been reduced or eliminated for about 87% of goods covered by the free trade agreement between Iran and the union, which took effect on May 15, 2025. As a result, high tariffs were no longer the main obstacle to exporting most of those goods to markets in the bloc's member states, he said. Iran's export performance had been affected by problems and

restrictions at one point, but positive trends had emerged in some areas, including trade with Asian countries, Dehqan-Dehnavi said. The free trade agreement could help boost Iranian exports by improving access to target markets, he added. **Foreign trade weighs down** Dehqan-Dehnavi also discussed the impact of US-imposed restrictions on maritime transport on Iran's foreign trade. Before the war, about 75% of the country's foreign trade by weight was transported by sea, mainly through the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, he said, ILNA reported. Iran's southern ports remain under a US naval blockade imposed by President Donald Trump in mid-April, aimed at pressuring Tehran into an agreement after a 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February. Already under decades of Western sanctions over its

nuclear programs, the country also faces a new wave of US sanctions targeting its aviation sector. Dehqan-Dehnavi said the aim of the port blockade was to disrupt the 75% share of foreign trade that relied on maritime routes. However, trade data for the first six months of the current Iranian year that began on March 21 showed that the country's foreign trade volume by weight had declined by 34%, he said. He said exports and imports equivalent to 40 percentage points of the trade volume affected by the blockade had been transported by sea using methods available to the private sector, as well as through other corridors and transport routes. He said rail transport was more expensive than maritime shipping, while land-based trade also increased costs and caused congestion at border crossings. He also reported a 20% decline in the value of Iran's foreign trade in the first six months of the current Iranian year.

ISA chief outlines progress as Iran builds more than 30 satellites

Economy Desk

Iran is developing more than 30 satellites as it seeks to expand its domestic space industry and broaden the use of satellite technology across different sectors, the head of the Iranian Space Agency said on Sunday. Hassan Salarieh, head of the agency, said the projects were being carried out by Iranian specialists, whom he described as the country's main asset in the space industry. He made the remarks in the northeastern city of Nishapur. "Iran's space industry has become a domestic, knowledge-based

industry relying on local expertise and manpower over more than two decades of activity, and several programs are underway to develop the industry and its applications across different sectors," said Salarieh, who also serves as deputy communications and information technology minister. Salarieh said the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology was pursuing plans to develop a space-based economy, including an economy built around data and satellite imagery. Several satellites with imaging resolutions of around one meter

or better are currently under development, he said. Satellite constellations for emergency and critical communications, along with other projects, have also been defined by the ministry and are being developed in cooperation with the private sector and other organizations. Salarieh said Iran was among 10 to 12 countries capable of building satellites and launch vehicles, launching satellites, operating launch sites, controlling satellites in orbit and receiving their data. He outlined several achievements in the country's space sector over the past two years,

including its first orbital maneuver using propulsion and the launch of its first heavy payload, weighing about 300 kilograms. He also cited advances in the technology of the Simorgh and Qaem 100 launch vehicles, built by Iran's Defense Ministry. Other milestones included the first launch of the fully indigenous Nahid-2 communications satellite and its performance in orbit. The triple launch of the Paya, Zafar and Kowsar satellites, along with the first launches by the private sector, were also among the developments he highlighted.

2026 Nobel Prize in Literature

Anne Carson, poet who redraws boundaries of literature



By Alireza Sepahvand
Freelance journalist

PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

Canadian poet, translator, essayist, and scholar Anne Carson has won the 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature. Over four decades, by interweaving contemporary poetry with mythology, philosophy, classical literature, and personal experience, she has fashioned one of the most distinctive voices in English literature.

The Swedish Academy announced Anne Carson as the recipient of the 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature on October 8. The selection once again demonstrated that the Nobel Prize in Literature does not necessarily go to a writer who works within the familiar conventions of the novel or classical poetry. Carson is, fundamentally, a writer who eludes formal constraints. Poetry, essays, translation, academic research, drama, memoir, images, and even silence and absence converge in her work.

Carson was born on June 21, 1950, in Toronto, Canada. Her fascination with classical literature took shape during her adolescence, when she encountered the works of Sappho, the great poet of ancient Greece, and began learning Ancient Greek. This interest subsequently determined the course of her professional life.

Carson studied Classics at the University of Toronto, earning her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in the field.

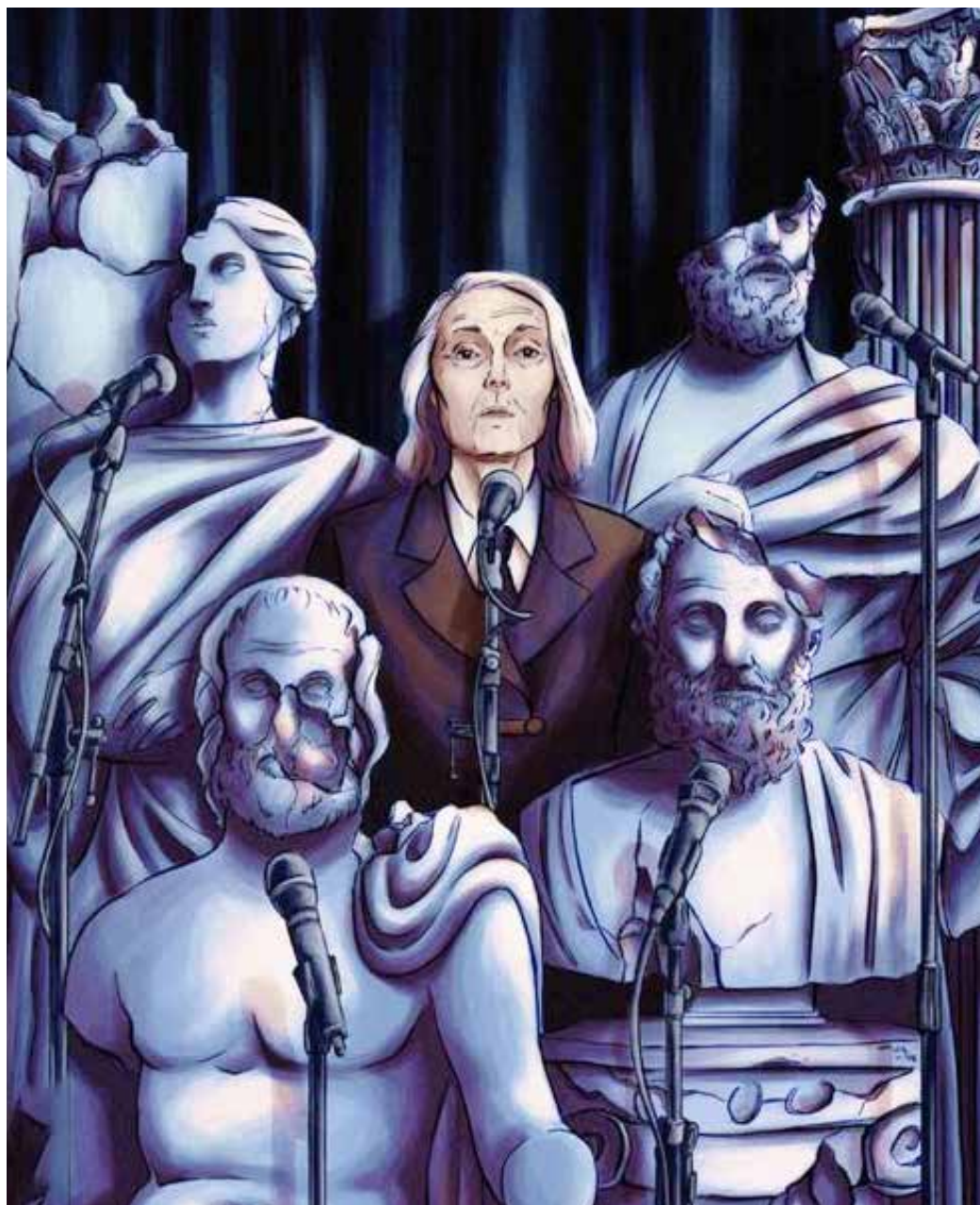
For Carson, however, classical scholarship has never been merely an academic specialization. Ancient Greece is not a remote, historically petrified realm for her, but a world that can still speak to contemporary humanity about love, loss, desire, violence, jealousy, loneliness, and death. This perspective is one of the most salient characteristics of her work.

Carson mines the old texts for what they know about the predicaments of contemporary humanity. She does not merely translate Sappho; she also explores the concept of loss. Carson does not merely recount Greek myths but interlaces them with contemporary human experience. Consequently, her works can be simultaneously profoundly scholarly and intensely personal.

A writer who defies classification

Any attempt to confine Carson's work to a single genre would probably prove futile. She is a poet, yet many of her works do not conform to conventional poetic structures. She is an essayist, yet her essays frequently depart from academic logic. She is a translator, yet her translations are sometimes so inventive that they become autonomous literary creations.

Even in the nomenclature of her works, she disregards conventional boundaries. For example, she has titled one of her notable



● ANNABEL/bookanartist.co

works "The Beauty of the Husband: A Fictional Essay in 29 Tangos". Why tango? Because, in Carson's view, a romantic relationship and its disintegration resemble a dance: the perpetual movement of two people toward and away from each other.

This formal experimentation has made Carson one of the most significant figures in contemporary experimental literature.

Her first major book, "Eros the Bittersweet," was published in 1986. In this work, Carson examines the concepts of love and desire in ancient Greek literature, demonstrating from the outset that literature and philosophi-

cal thought are not separate domains for her.

Carson's international renown, however, took shape more than a decade later, with the publication of "Autobiography of Red" in 1998.

When mythology comes alive again

"Autobiography of Red" is one of Carson's most significant works. In it, the story of Geryon, a red creature in Greek mythology, intertwines with the story of Heracles. Carson, however, does not confine herself to retelling the myth. She transposes the narrative into the contemporary

world, constructing from it an account of love, desire, identity, and loneliness.

In Carson's universe, mythology is not something relegated to the past. Ancient characters can still fall in love, suffer defeat, experience jealousy, and endure loss. This is the juncture at which classical literature becomes modern literature.

Carson suggests to readers that the distance between a Greek myth and the life of contemporary humanity is not nearly as great as it might appear. The form of life has changed, but many of humanity's fundamental anxieties persist.

Love, betrayal, and 'The Beauty of the Husband'

In "The Beauty of the Husband," Carson addresses a far more personal subject: marriage, infidelity, and the disintegration of love. Even here, however, she departs from conventional linear narration. The book comprises 29 sections, and, as its title indicates, its structure resembles a sequence of tangos.

Love in Carson's works is rarely simple or tranquil. It is accompanied by loss, distance, and pain. That which a person desires becomes alluring precisely because it remains unattainable. In this work, Carson also renders beauty a complex problem. Beauty can engender desire, but simultaneously, it can become a source of suffering.

Sappho, the lost poet

One of the most important figures in Carson's literary universe is Sappho, a poet who lived on the island of Lesbos approximately 2,500 years ago and whose oeuvre has largely vanished over the course of history. In "If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho," Carson turns to Sappho's surviving poems. What matters to Carson, however, is not merely the poems themselves, but their absence.

Many of Sappho's poems survive in only a few lines or even a handful of words. Portions of them have disappeared over time. Readers therefore encounter incomplete texts, fragments of a voice that was once whole. Carson transforms this absence into an integral component of the reading experience. Perhaps this is one of the keys to understanding her literary universe: what has vanished sometimes matters as much as what remains.

"Nox" and the experience of grief

This perspective becomes an intensely personal experience in another of Carson's major works, "Nox". It concerns Carson's deceased brother. The book, however, is not merely a collection of elegiac poems. Letters, photographs, translations, images, notes, and poetry are juxtaposed to reconstruct the experience of grief. Here, death is not a complete narrative. On the contrary, death is something that renders narrative incomplete.

Rather than attempting to explain loss, Carson brings the form of the work itself into proximity with the experience of loss. Readers encounter fragments that they must assemble, much like a person who, following the death of a loved one, lives amid the scattered photographs, letters, and memories that remain.

From Helen to Marilyn Monroe

Even when confronting the most celebrated women of mythology, Carson explores the relationship between past and present.

In "Norma Jeane Baker of Troy," the story of Helen of Troy intertwines with the life of Marilyn Monroe. The two women



The selection of Anne Carson for the 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature can be interpreted as a renewed acknowledgment of literature's evolving boundaries. Contemporary literature is no longer necessarily defined by the novel, short story, or classical poetry. She has demonstrated that poetry can constitute research, research can become poetry, translation can be literary creation, and an ancient myth can speak to the life of contemporary humanity.



The photo shows several of Anne Carson's most famous books on display on a table.
● JONATHAN NACKSTRAND/AFP

are separated by thousands of years, yet both have become objects of desire and the gaze of others because of their beauty. Monroe's birth name, Norma Jeane Baker, is placed alongside the name of Helen of Troy, who is recognized in Greek mythology as "the most beautiful woman in the world". Here, Carson poses a fundamental question: when a woman becomes an image by virtue of her beauty, what remains of her authentic self? This question relates to one of her enduring preoccupations: identity, the gaze of others, and the distance between reality and representation.

A translator who reinvented translation
For Carson, translation is not merely a side activity. She is regarded as one of the foremost contemporary translators of classical Greek literature and has translated the works of Sappho, Sophocles, and other classical authors into English. In her view, however, translation is a form of recreation. She does not believe that a translator should merely transfer the words of a writer who lived thousands of years ago into another language. The translator must find a way to revivify the experience of that text in its new linguistic environment. Consequently,

Carson's translations sometimes read like independent poems in their own right.

Why does Carson's Nobel matter?
The selection of Anne Carson for the 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature can be interpreted as a renewed acknowledgment of literature's evolving boundaries. Contemporary literature is no longer necessarily defined by the novel, short story, or classical poetry. The boundaries between genres are dissolving, and Carson is one of the writers who experimented with this approach in practice long before it became widespread.

She has demonstrated that poetry can constitute research, research can become poetry, translation can be literary creation, and an ancient myth can speak to the life of contemporary humanity. Carson has also demonstrated that innovation does not necessarily require abandoning the past. Sometimes, the future of literature emerges from a rereading of the past.

A prize for a distinctive voice
Throughout her literary career, Carson has received numerous awards and distinctions, including the T. S. Eliot Prize, the Grif-

fin Poetry Prize, a MacArthur Fellowship, and the Princess of Asturias Award for Literature. The Nobel Prize, however, occupies a different position. The award now places Carson's name alongside those of writers who have not merely produced significant works but have transformed our understanding of literature itself. At 76, she has reached the pinnacle of world literature without ever attempting to confine herself to a prescribed form. Perhaps the best way to comprehend the significance of this selection is to consider one fundamental characteristic of her work: Carson has always been drawn to things situated be-

tween two states — between past and present, poetry and prose, life and death, love and loss, text and silence. From these interstices, she creates literature. In a world where literature is often produced for speed and immediate consumption, Carson's works ask readers to pause, reread, and perceive what lies between the lines as well. And perhaps this is the defining characteristic of the poet who now holds the 2026 Nobel Prize in Literature: Anne Carson does not write only about things that exist. She writes about things that have been lost, have remained unspoken, or for which words have yet to be readily found.

From grief to 'Hope'

Homayoun Shajarian pays tribute to his parents at new concert series

By Alireza Sepahvand
Freelance journalist

REPORT EXCLUSIVE

Iranian vocalist superstar Homayoun Shajarian has launched a new season of concerts in Shiraz, drawing more than 17,000 people to the opening performances of his "Harja Ke Toei" (Persian for "Wherever You Are") project. The concerts combine celebrated works from the repertoire of classical Persian music with a personal tribute to his late mother, Farkhondeh Golafshan, and his father, legendary vocalist Mohammad Reza Shajarian. Held at the open-air amphitheater of the Shiraz International Exhibition Center, the performances began in mid-October, with three additional shows scheduled following strong public demand. Accompanied by Siavash Ensemble, Shajarian has designed a set list that brings together works by some of the most influential figures in Iranian music, including Mohammad Reza Shajarian, Parviz Meshkatian, Hossein Alizadeh, Kayhan Kalhor, Mohammad Javad Zarrabian and Majid Derakhshani, alongside selections from his own repertoire. The project marks a departure from some of the singer's recent concert programs, placing greater emphasis on the enduring works of classical Persian music and the artistic legacy of earlier generations.

A tribute to his mother through 'Hope'
The opening performances coincided with the first anniversary of his mother's death, as well as the anniversary of his father's passing. On these emotionally significant evenings, Homayoun Shajarian addressed the audience with a prepared statement before performing "Omid" (Persian for "Hope"), a poem by Professor Mehdi Farshad set to music in the traditional Persian vocal style. Explaining the personal significance of the piece, he said the absence of a loved one does not disappear with time; rather, people gradually learn to live with the loss and preserve the person's presence through memories. He added that thinking about his mother and the meaning of loss had reminded him of all those carrying the grief of losing loved ones. Shajarian also expressed sorrow over the deaths of "our innocent



compatriots, particularly children," referring to the young victims of the Minab tragedy who were killed on February 29 as a result of a US air strike on their school. The poem "Hope," he said, does not dwell on darkness but speaks of moving beyond it. Its message centers on the belief that even the most difficult days will pass, love can emerge again, and affection can endure despite suffering. "Perhaps many of us feel the same way: wounded and grieving, yet still hopeful," he said, expressing his wish for a day when the light of love would once again shine brightly over Iran and better days would return. The performance began with verses in the Afshari vocal "avaz" (Persian for "mode"), accompanied by

tar player Radman Tavakoli. Shajarian then performed the poem over "Delangizān," a celebrated instrumental composition by the late Parviz Meshkatian, rendering the verses in the Iraq vocal section of the Afshari mode. He described the performance as a tribute to "all those who had lost their lives innocently".

Remembering Mohammad Reza Shajarian
The third night of the series, held on October 9, coincided with the sixth anniversary of Mohammad Reza Shajarian's death. Addressing the audience, Homayoun Shajarian spoke of the enduring absence of his father, whose influence continues to resonate with audiences and musicians

across Iran. To honor his memory, he performed "Sarv-e Chaman," a setting of a poem by the renowned Persian poet Hafez famously composed by his father. The song is among the works associated with Mohammad Reza Shajarian's celebrated repertoire and provided one of the evening's most poignant moments. The program also featured "Aref-e Hagh" in the Afshari mode, with lyrics by Forughi Bastami and music by Hossein Yousef Zamani, as well as "Az Kafam Raha," based on a poem and melody by Aref Qazvini. Other selections included "Havaye Geryeh," composed by Mohammad Javad Zarrabian to a poem by Simin Behbahani, and "Dar Khial,"



Iranian vocalist superstar Homayoun Shajarian performs on stage for a new season of concerts, dubbed "Harja Ke Toei" (Persian for "Wherever You Are"), in Shiraz, central Iran, in October 2026.



The project marks a departure from some of the singer's recent concert programs, placing greater emphasis on the enduring works of classical Persian music and the artistic legacy of earlier generations. The repertoire moved through several traditional Persian musical modes, including Afshari, Mahur, Esfahan, Mokhalef-e Segah, Bayat-e Tork and Shur, offering audiences a broad survey of the expressive possibilities of classical Persian music.

Iranian vocalist superstar Homayoun Shajarian (c) performs on stage alongside Siavash Ensemble for a new season of concerts, dubbed "Harja Ke Toei" (Persian for "Wherever You Are"), in Shiraz, central Iran, in October 2026.

featuring lyrics by Rumi and music by Majid Derakhshani. Works by Meshkatian and Kalhor also featured prominently, including instrumental pieces from Meshkatian's compositions and selections associated with the album "Shab, Sokoot, Kavir" (Persian for "Night, Silence, Desert"). The repertoire moved through several traditional Persian musical modes, including Afshari, Mahur, Esfahan, Mokhalef-e Segah, Bayat-e Tork and Shur, offering audiences a broad survey of the expressive possibilities of classical Persian music. Instrumental performances by members of Siavash Ensemble provided further opportunities to highlight the ensemble's musicianship. The program included solo performances on the oud, santur and kamancheh, as well as passages featuring the tar and traditional percussion instruments. The concert concluded with "Morph-e Sahar" (Persian for "Bird of Dawn"), one of the best-known songs in the history of Iranian classical music. The performance, featuring lyrics by Mohammad-Taqi Bahar, known as Malek o-Shoara Bahar, and music by Morteza Neydavoud, came in response to repeated requests from the audience. The song has long been associated with Mohammad Reza Shajarian and remains one of the most widely recognized works in his repertoire.

Three additional performances announced
Following the sellout of all eight initially scheduled performances, the organizers announced three additional concerts in Shiraz. The newly added performances are scheduled for October 12 at 7 p.m. local time, October 15 at 10 p.m. and October 16 at 6 p.m. Online reservations and advance ticket sales began on October 9 through the Fidibo platform. Siavash Ensemble features oud player Azad Mirzapour, daf player Hossein Rezaeinejad, santur player Mahyar Tarihi, tar player Radman Tavakoli, kamancheh player Mehrzad Azamikia and tombak player Morteza Momenian. The project is managed by Sahar Forouzan. The production is being held in conjunction with the "Harja Ke Toei" campaign by Digikala Mehr, with support from Digikala and Digipay. Part of the initiative is dedicated to improving educational opportunities and access for students with fewer resources.

Iran's Zarei aiming higher after historic medal at Asian Games



Iran's Zahra Zarei celebrates with the national flag after winning the women's 400m silver medal in the athletics event at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan, on September 26, 2026.

● GETTY IMAGES



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Iran's history-making sprinter Zahra Zarei won silver in the women's 400 meters at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games, drawing renewed attention to Iranian women's athletics. The 30-year-old runner from Manoujan, Kerman Province, has reached a significant stage in her career after improving Iran's national records in the 200m and 400m and is now targeting an Olympic appearance.

Zarei produced a strong finish in the 400m final in Nagoya to secure silver, building on her record-breaking performances at international competitions in Belarus in the buildup to the Asian Games. Earlier in 2026, she won silver in the 400m at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships before rewriting Iran's national records in both sprint events in Belarus. She clocked 51.05 seconds in the 400m to break a national record held by Maryam Tousi for around 14 years. Just hours later, she won the 200m in 23 seconds, also improving the national record. She had previously broken the 400m record with a time of 51.97 seconds at a women's Grand Prix meeting in Bandar Torkaman.

At the Asian Games, Zarei clocked 52.38 seconds to claim silver in the 400m, securing a maiden women's athletics medal for the country in the history of the multi-sport event. She also competed in the 200m, finishing fourth in her preliminary heat in 23.64 seconds and placing 10th overall among 25 competitors, missing out on a place in the final.

Her journey has not been without setbacks. After winning domestic titles earlier in her career, she stepped away from athletics for a period before returning to the track and rebuilding her form through persistent training.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Zarei discussed her experience in Nagoya, the tense final stages of the 400m, her return to athletics, training conditions and future ambitions.

IRAN DAILY: Congratulations on winning silver at the Asian Games in Nagoya. How did you feel after this achievement? Did you expect to reach the podium?

ZAREI: Thank you. This is the highest level of athletics competition in Asia and I'm thrilled to have won this medal for my country. Based on my previous marks, I was optimistic about winning a medal before the competition, and thankfully I achieved that goal.

My personal best is better than the time I recorded in the 400m final, and I wanted to run faster. However, even if I had matched my previous record, it would not have changed my position in the competition. I am happy with the silver medal and hope to upgrade it to gold in future competitions.

As you mentioned, your personal best is faster than your time in Nagoya. Why couldn't you reproduce that performance?

Naturally, when you enter a competition in good shape, you try to achieve the best possible result. My goal was to deliver my best performance, improve my previous record and even fight for the gold medal.

I hoped that the race conditions might give me a chance to win gold, because things can happen during a race that change the outcome. Ultimately, the conditions and the competition against my rivals were decisive. I won silver, and overall I am satisfied with my performance and result.

How much do you need to improve to compete at the World Championships and win gold?

My personal best is around 51.05 seconds, which is faster than my time in Nagoya. To win gold at future Asian competitions, I need to arrive in better shape, improve my time and reach the 49-second mark. Achieving that target requires consistent training and suitable conditions.

Who was your main rival in the final, and what was the race like against her?

My main rival was Bahraini runner Salwa Eid Naser, who is a former world champion. She is of African descent but competes for Bahrain. Athletes of this caliber make competition in Asian athletics more challenging for others. As we saw at these Games, several Bahraini runners are of African descent and possess considerable ability.

Given the level of competition in

Nagoya, what is your plan for competing at the World Championships and challenging the world's best runners?

I need to improve my time to compete at the World Championships. Some very fast times are recorded at the global level, and I must make further progress to compete with the best in the world. This goal can be pursued through proper training, planning and regular participation in competitions.

What was the most difficult moment of the 400m final?

The final 100 meters were particularly crucial. The competition becomes tighter at that stage, and you have to maintain your strength and concentration. I gave everything I had to achieve the best possible result, and thankfully I crossed the finish line with the silver medal.

How long did you train to reach this level of fitness and compete at the Asian Games? Did you have suitable training conditions?

I trained extensively for these Games and tried to maintain my fitness. Even during the war, our training did not stop. I did my best to keep up with my program despite the circumstances and prepare for the competition.

Iranian women have achieved greater success in several sports, including athletics, in recent years. What do you think has contributed

to this progress?

I think part of this progress is down to the athletes' own efforts and the support provided by the federation and sports authorities. When athletes have opportunities to train and compete, they can demonstrate their abilities more effectively.

However, support needs to increase to sustain this progress, and better facilities should be made available to female athletes in the country.

What are the athletics facilities like in Manoujan and Kerman Province? Do you face limitations in training?

We do not have suitable facilities for professional athletics in my hometown. We do not even have an athletics track, which makes things difficult for me. To train in better conditions and use a track, I have to travel to Kerman or Tehran.

If a standard track and proper facilities were available in our city, athletes could train more easily without having to travel elsewhere to access suitable facilities.

How would standard tracks and specialized facilities in smaller cities affect the future of Iranian athletics?

They would have a significant impact. There is a great deal of talent in different cities, but not everyone has access to the facilities needed to progress. If proper tracks, coaches and

ment were available, athletes could pursue professional careers in their hometowns.

This would help individual athletes improve while also making it easier to identify more talent.

When did you first become interested in athletics, and what encouraged you to pursue it seriously?

I was interested in athletics from the beginning and gradually realized that I could make progress in the sport. As I continued training and competing, my motivation grew, and I decided to take athletics more seriously. Seeing the results of my efforts strengthened my interest in the sport.

Did you face opposition or discouragement from people around you at the beginning of your career?

At first, some people believed athletics did not offer a promising future and that I should not pursue it professionally. However, I believed in my interest and abilities and tried to continue on my chosen path.

Now that I have won a medal at the Asian Games, I am happy that I did not abandon my decision.

After winning Asian Games silver, what are your goals for the next stage of your career?

My main goal now is to compete at the Olympic Games. I want to improve day by day, better my times and qualify for the Olympics. To achieve this, I

must work harder and make further progress in my technique and physical fitness.

Do you believe winning an Olympic medal is an achievable goal for you?

I am optimistic about achieving my goal and believe that, with more precise planning and suitable facilities, I can work toward it. Naturally, Olympic competition is extremely difficult, and I need to raise my level of preparation. I hope that, with greater support and better training, I can move closer to this goal and win a medal at the Olympics.

How do you assess the position of Iranian women's athletics compared with Asia's leading countries?

We are still some distance behind the leading countries and need to work harder to reach their level. Some countries have better facilities and training conditions, and their athletes gain more experience in international competitions.

With investment in facilities, education and regular participation in competitions, Iranian women can make further progress.

Is the current financial and employment support sufficient for you to continue your professional career?

Athletes need adequate financial support to train without worry and concentrate on competitions. The existing support is important, but conditions should be created to reduce athletes' financial concerns so they can devote more time and energy to training.

What do you think of the rewards offered to medal winners? Are they commensurate with athletes' efforts and achievements?

I believe the rewards should be increased. Athletes work for years and overcome many difficulties to reach this level. Appropriate rewards can provide greater motivation and help athletes continue their professional careers with more focus and peace of mind.

Finally, what message would you like to send to the people of Iran?

I dedicate my medal to the people of my country and hope this achievement has made them happy. I thank everyone who has supported me and hope to achieve better results in future competitions and make the Iranian people proud with even more valuable medals.



Ramdani House reveals layers of Sari's history

Iranica Desk

Amid the old alleyways of Sari, the capital city of Mazandaran Province, some houses still preserve traces of the lifestyle and architectural traditions of past generations. Ramdani House is one such historic building, showcasing aspects of the city's traditional architecture through its distinctive structure, wooden elements and Orsi windows — traditional Persian lattice windows. The house offers a glimpse into the domestic architecture and everyday life of a bygone era.

The house's location is significant, as historic residences were once part of an interconnected urban landscape. Together with bazaars, mosques, cisterns and other public spaces, these buildings helped shape the rhythm of everyday life in the city, according to IRNA. Ramdani House is recognized as a building dating back to the Qajar era and was inscribed on Iran's National Heritage List. Its national registration signifies more than its age; it also reflects the building's architectural and historical importance and underscores the need to preserve such heritage sites. One of the notable features of Ramdani House is its architectural layout. The complex consists of two buildings arranged around a central courtyard. The front building has two floors, and its entrance portal is one of the structure's most distinctive features. In traditional historic houses,



the entrance served a purpose beyond simply providing access to the building. Its design helped regulate the transition between the public space of the alley and the private space of the home. At Ramdani House, the front building served as the entrance and vestibule. This space was used to accommodate visitors and conduct certain activities without requiring direct access to the main living areas of the house. The central courtyard is another key feature of traditional Iranian houses. Rather than serving merely as an open space between buildings, it formed an integral part of the family's daily life. Such courtyards provided natural light to the rooms, created an open space within the residential complex and connected different sections of the house. Perhaps one of the most appeal-

ing aspects of Ramdani House for visitors is its architectural detailing. The upper floor of the front building features rooms adorned with wooden decorations, Orsi windows — traditional Persian lattice windows — and plaster skylights that allow natural light to filter into the interior. Orsi windows are a distinctive feature of traditional Iranian architecture. Designed to slide vertically within their frames, these windows provided natural light and ventilation while enhancing the beauty of interior spaces in many historic homes. Their presence at Ramdani House reflects the attention its builders paid to architectural detail and the quality of the interior environment. Plaster skylights are another architectural feature that stands out in descriptions of Ramdani House. The combination of wood, plaster

and other building materials gave the interiors a distinctive character and helped define the house's architectural identity. According to available information about the building, the rooms on the upper floor of the front building were used to accommodate guests. This arrangement offers insight into how large historic houses were organized. In traditional homes, spaces were typically divided according to their intended use, with separate areas designated for guests, family members and other visitors.



At Ramdani House, the entrance and vestibule in the front section, along with the guest rooms on the upper floor, suggest that the building's design was shaped, to some extent, by the lifestyle and social relationships of the family who lived there. In this sense, the house was more than a collection

of walls and rooms; it also reflected how people used and experienced domestic spaces in the past. Although Ramdani House is primarily recognized as a building dating back to the Qajar era, its history extends beyond that period. The second building, located behind the main structure, underwent major alterations in the early Pahlavi period. These alterations make Ramdani House a notable example of a historic building that evolved over time to meet the changing needs of its occupants. Indeed, many

and urban development can all damage buildings constructed using traditional materials and techniques. Ramdani House has also undergone restoration and conservation work aimed at preserving the structure and improving its condition. Reported restoration work at Ramdani House has included repairs to the roof's timber framework, restoration of the building's walls, removal of later additions, replacement of deteriorated mortar joints, and repair and removal of the cement render on the southern façade. During some restoration operations, the interior plasterwork of the second building was also removed, revealing arched recesses dating back to the Qajar period. This highlights the importance of proper restoration practices for historic buildings. Layers added in later periods can sometimes conceal elements of a structure's original architecture, while restoration work can reveal further details about its original design. For many travelers, Sari is a destination for exploring the natural beauty of Mazandaran Province. However, the city also has a rich historical and architectural heritage. Ramdani House is one example of how a city's history is preserved not only in religious buildings, palaces and major monuments, but also in the historic homes that reflect the everyday lives of past generations.

Reading Room

Exploring changing city through Tehran in Travelogues

Iranica Desk

Tehran is a city that has breathed between grandeur and turmoil throughout its history. Its streets tell stories of an ancient civilization and deeply rooted traditions, while its bazaars reflect the dynamism of its people. Yet the history of Iran's capital cannot be understood solely through official records, political events and the lives of kings. Much of the city's past lies hidden in its alleyways, markets, homes and the details of everyday life — details that were sometimes recorded by travelers and foreign observers. Tehran in Travelogues, by Mehrshad Kazemi, a researcher and cultural tourism professional, is a book that seeks to uncover lesser-known layers of the capital's history. Drawing on approximately 200 travel accounts written by Iranian and foreign travelers, diplomats and religious missionaries, the book traces Tehran's physical, social and cultural transformations from earlier periods through the first Pahlavi era. Published by Saless Publication, the book received a positive response upon the release of its first edition and has since reached a second edition, according to IBNA. One of the most important features of travelogues is their ability to offer an outside perspective on a city. According to Kazemi, Tehran cannot be fully understood through official and domestic sources alone. Travelers arriving with different cultural, social and political backgrounds sometimes noticed details that

local residents of the time considered so commonplace that they saw little reason to record them. Descriptions of streets, bazaars, houses, clothing, modes of transportation, social customs, public health, education and religious ceremonies can all provide a more tangible picture of life in Tehran in earlier times. From this perspective, travelogues do not replace domestic sources; they complement them. While official records tend to focus on government, politics and major events, travel accounts also make it possible to explore social history and everyday life. A brief description of a market or neighborhood may reveal aspects of social relationships and people's lifestyles that are rarely documented in official records. Nevertheless, these historical sources must be approached with caution. Travel writers were not necessarily impartial observers. Each arrived in Iran with a particular cultural, political and religious background, and some were engaged in diplomatic, military, commercial or religious missions. It is therefore important to distinguish between what they actually observed, how they interpreted their observations and the judgments they formed through the lens of their own cultural assumptions. The length of a traveler's stay in Iran, their familiarity with Persian and the nature of their interactions with Iranian society also influenced their accounts. However, not every error or misunderstanding should be attributed to deliberate bias; cultural differences and limited information



may also have shaped some narratives. Comparing travelogues with one another and examining them alongside documents, maps, memoirs, newspapers, photographs and architectural evidence is therefore essential to developing a more reliable picture of Tehran's past. Travelogues are, in effect, a two-way mirror: they provide information about Tehran while also

revealing how foreign observers perceived Iranian society. A description of a neighborhood, bazaar, historic building or religious ceremony not only illuminates the subject itself but also reflects the writer's values and assumptions. In this sense, travelogues are not merely sources for the history of Tehran; they are also part of the history of how the city came to be perceived around the world. Although many travelers focused on the royal court, prominent figures, embassies and affluent social groups, their accounts also contain valuable information about ordinary people. Shopkeepers and artisans, markets, neighborhoods, public bathhouses, food, clothing, transportation and everyday social interactions all form part of Tehran's social landscape that can be reconstructed through these writings. Descriptions of women and family life are equally significant.

However, many foreign travelers had limited access to the private quarters of Iranian households, known as the Andaruni. Their accounts, therefore, cannot be regarded as complete or definitive representations of women's lives during that period. Travelogues also make it possible to trace Tehran's transformation over time. Once a small settlement, the city gradually developed into a major capital and a metropolis moving toward modernity. Changes in the city's walls and gates, streets, bazaars, palaces, schools, embassies, public buildings, transportation systems and public health can be followed through accounts from different historical periods. Tehran's history thus emerges not as a collection of isolated events, but as a continuous process of urban and social transformation. Travel writers from different countries also approached Tehran from different perspectives.

Some British accounts placed greater emphasis on political and economic affairs and Iran's relationship with India. French writers often showed an interest in cultural studies, Iranian studies and archaeology, while certain Russian accounts focused more heavily on military and geopolitical concerns. Some Japanese travelers, meanwhile, viewed Iranian society from a different cultural perspective. These distinctions, however, should not be generalized to all writers from a particular country. The publication of travelogues in the writers' home countries also influenced how foreign audiences came to understand Iran. Intended for politicians, merchants, scholars and general readers, these accounts helped shape perceptions of Tehran and Iranian society. Yet the images they presented were not always complete or free from error and must be examined within their historical and cultural contexts. By bringing together and comparing these diverse accounts, Tehran in Travelogues seeks to offer a multilayered portrait of Iran's capital, placing official history alongside social history and the everyday experiences of its residents. The value of this research lies in its exploration of Tehran's past not only through palaces, prominent monuments and political events, but also through the alleyways, bazaars and lives of the people who have shaped the city's identity over generations. Seen through the eyes of travelers, Tehran emerges not merely as a city with a turbulent past, but as a place whose many stories continue to deepen our understanding of its history and cultural identity.

Araghchi vows international push over deadly Minab school strike

‘Do not let my friends be forgotten,’ surviving pupil demands



Social Desk

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi pledged to pursue legal and international action over a US strike on a primary school in southern Iran that killed 168 people, most of them children, after receiving a letter from a pupil who survived the attack. Araghchi said the letter from Fatemeh-Zahra Sheikhabadi, a survivor of the Shajareh Tayyebah School in Minab, had reinforced

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi opens a letter written by a girl who survived a US missile attack on an elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, in late February, as he attends a conference in Tehran on October 11, 2026.

● IRNA

the Foreign Ministry’s responsibility to document the incident and hold those responsible to account. The school was struck by Tomahawk missiles on the first day of the US-Israeli war against Iran. The attack killed 168 people, most of them girls and boys attending the school. In an Instagram post on Sunday, Araghchi said he had received the letter on the sidelines of an international conference titled “Ecocide: The Silent Crime”. “I consider it my duty to take Fatemeh-Zahra’s voice and the story of Minab’s children to international forums and not allow the passage of time to push the truth of this tragedy and the need for accountability into the background,” he said.

In her letter, Fatemeh-Zahra remembers classmates Niyayesh, Sonaz, Zeinab and Baran, who were killed in the strike. “I survived, but they are no longer here,” she writes, adding that she is still asking why she remains alive while her friends are gone. The pupil also questions why the United Nations has not acted over the incident or done more to protect children’s rights. Referring to children’s right to education and play, she asks: “Why did this have to happen to us? Why can’t we be together anymore?” Araghchi said the letter represented more than a call for sympathy for the families of the children killed. “Our real responsibility is to document the truth, pursue legal and international action, and

hold those who carried out and ordered this crime accountable,” he wrote. The top diplomat also said the names of children killed in Minab and Lamerd, in southern Iran, should endure “not only in people’s memories, but also in the pursuit of justice”. In the letter, Fatemeh-Zahra describes returning to her school desk and looking at the empty seat beside her. Before the attack, she writes, she and her friends studied, laughed, played and made bracelets from palm leaves. “Please do not let my friends be forgotten,” she ends with an appeal. Araghchi said he would work to ensure their stories reached the international community.

Tehran launches metro-based city tourism scheme

Social Desk

Tehran has launched a metro-based tourism program to help residents and visitors explore the Iranian capital’s historical and cultural attractions, with tourism maps installed at 24 stations in the first phase, a municipal official said Monday. Amir Ghasemi, head of Tehran Municipality’s tourism headquarters said the project began two years ago with specialized research and has now moved

into implementation with the unveiling of tourism maps at stations, IRNA reported. Forty stations across the network have been identified as having tourism potential, and another 16 are expected to receive maps by March 20, he added. The maps cover historical, cultural and heritage sites, as well as public services and restaurants within 500 meters of each station. Visitors can scan QR codes on the maps

to save digital copies to their smartphones. Ghasemi said the program was designed to help Tehran residents take advantage of currently free public transportation to explore the city. He described the metro as a key tourism resource that had previously received insufficient attention. “Tour guides will be based at tourist attractions and lead specialized tours for groups and visitors who use the maps to travel between destinations,”

Ghasemi said. He added that the initiative had received positive feedback from the metro network and tourism centers. It aims to strengthen residents’ bonds to their urban environment and help establish Tehran as an international tourism destination. “The program’s reach will depend on how effectively the maps connect metro journeys with visits to the city’s cultural and historical sites,” he pointed out.



● HAMSHAHHRI

China backs region-led ...

During President Xi Jinping’s recent meeting with Donald Trump, the two sides discussed the Iranian nuclear issue and the importance of keeping international waterways open for navigation. How do you see these discussions affecting China’s position toward Iran and the future of Iran-US negotiations? The consensus between the Chinese and US presidents on Iran’s nuclear issue is actually consistent with Tehran’s stated position: Iran does not seek nuclear weapons. Keeping the Strait of Hormuz open also serves Iran’s interests better than closing it. In my view, these discussions have not harmed Iran’s national interests. Beijing’s position was already the same before this meeting between the two presidents. For negotiations to succeed, both Iran and the United States will need to make some compromises.

China has close and growing

relations with both Iran and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Has the current crisis made this balancing policy more difficult, or could it give Beijing a stronger position to build a new regional framework for cooperation between Iran and its Arab neighbors? In early 2016, President Xi Jinping visited Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iran in succession. Ten years later, measured by growth in trade and investment, Iran’s cooperation with China has lagged far behind that of Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Beijing has indeed pursued a balanced diplomatic approach in the Middle East for many years. In economic cooperation, however, China is clearly more likely to choose countries that offer favorable conditions for cooperation. China’s good relations with countries along the Persian Gulf help Beijing engage with all parties on building a new regional framework, but its success ultimately depends on the countries of the region themselves.

Iranian festival takes music performances into villages

Arts & Culture Desk

The 18th Iran’s Regional Music Festival will send artists in campervans to villages and nomadic areas for the first time, bringing traditional music to local communities beyond concert halls, festival secretary Pirouz Arjmand said on Monday. The festival will run from November 30 to December 5, 2026, in Kerman, southeastern Iran, and artists will travel across Kerman province and perform with local musicians, linking regional music with tourism, Arjmand said. Programs scheduled in seven cities across the province. Organizers aim to extend activities beyond the provincial capital to other cities and areas with rich cultural histories, helping residents feel part of the event, IRNA reported. “The festival will focus on preserving the authenticity of regional music, reviving local rituals, supporting younger generations and documenting the works of master musicians,”



Arjmand said. Plans also include instrument-making workshops and programs to revive local traditions. Organizers will record performances and artists’

accounts to build a lasting archive of this cultural heritage. The festival will open with a parade of artists and musical performances along the route from Arg Square to Ganjali Khan

Square in Kerman. Kerman’s Culture and Arts Hall will be the main performance venue, while the historic Ganjali Khan Caravanserai will host some events. Artists from countries along the historic Silk Road, including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Iraq, have been invited to the international section. The move could widen access to cultural programs in rural communities, but its lasting impact will depend on continued activities after the festival and sustained support for local musicians. At the conference, Mahdi Shafiei, deputy culture minister for artistic affairs talked about the importance of regional music and described the festival a way to boost historical memory, cultural identity and the voices of communities across Iran. He said the country’s cultural unity lay in bringing together different languages, traditions and stories rather than making them uniform.