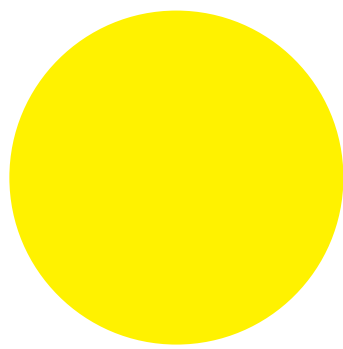


Pezeshkian says consumer protection is shared responsibility of government, producers



UK air base accusations plot to advance anti-Iran campaign: *Tehran*

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE



America's endless wars yield another defeat

Empire of intervention meets its limits



AFC Champions League:

Nekounam blames fatigue, disrupted preparations after Al Shamal stalemate



Hafezieh is eternal soul of Persian poetry

Kites fly for Gaza, Minab children in Tehran



A woman prepares a kite at a festival held in memory of children killed in the Gaza Strip and a primary school in southern Iran during conflicts in Tehran, Iran, on October 13, 2026.

Tehran no longer fazed by renewed Western accusations

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Britain has formally accused Iran of possible involvement in a suspected plot targeting RAF Fairford, though it has yet to make detailed evidence public. Tehran has denied the allegation. Soon afterward, the foreign ministers of 29 countries, including the US, Britain, France, Germany, Canada and Australia, issued a joint statement backing Britain's assessment and accusing Iran of orchestrating assassination plots, arson, sabotage, cyberattacks and other hostile acts against their countries and allies. The timing of these accusations and the joint statement may signal a Western push to close ranks against Iran. However, international affairs expert Afjfeh Abedi told Iran Daily that such efforts are nothing new



and no longer worry Tehran. She said Iran would continue to push back against such allegations while remaining prepared for any possible scenario.

IRAN DAILY: At a time when tensions between Iran and the United States are mounting and negotiations have reached a deadlock, what objectives and consequences could lie behind such statements and allegations? To what extent can these developments be viewed as part of an effort to increase political and security pressure on Iran or lay the groundwork for possible future action against the country?

ABEDI: The allegations of Iran's involvement in the Fairford incident, the propaganda surrounding the alleged role of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps in the incident, and this joint statement can be viewed within the framework of coordinated efforts by the United States, Israel and Britain to put pressure on Iran. Iranophobia is nothing new. Cooperation between the CIA, Mossad

and MI6 against Iran has a history spanning more than five decades, dating back to before the [1979] Islamic Revolution. These allegations against Iran are not unprecedented; they are also part of ongoing efforts to prepare the political climate for further acts of aggression against the country.

In my view, Iran is no longer concerned by the publication of such allegations and has prepared itself for all possible scenarios. The high level of hostility, cooperation and coordination among the United States, Israel and Europe against Iran is also nothing new, and there is no reason for Iran to be alarmed by their coordination against it. On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, the NATO secretary-general also acknowledged that the European Union had directly cooperated in the recent war against Iran. Therefore, any new hostile action undertaken with their cooperation would not be unprecedented.

What diplomatic, legal and media resources can Iran draw on to re-

spond effectively to these allegations and present its position to international public opinion? In this context, what role can international media and legal institutions play in preventing unsubstantiated accusations from becoming the basis for security and political decisions?

As a matter of course, the relevant institutions, including the Foreign Ministry, the government and the judiciary, can use Iran's embassies, its missions to the United Nations and direct contacts with the governments that signed the statement to demand specific evidence supporting their endorsement of these allegations.

Holding briefings for diplomats from the signatory countries and requesting written, evidence-based responses regarding the allegation of Iranian involvement in the RAF Fairford incident could help prevent the repeated use of politically motivated accusations against Iran. However, the reality is that, at a time when the International Criminal Court faces sanctions for its efforts to pursue legal proceedings over

Israeli crimes, international court judges are subjected to pressure and sanctions, and human rights rapporteurs investigating Israeli crimes in Gaza and Lebanon are threatened with death, with even their families facing threats to their safety, international law cannot be expected to deliver much more.

Of course, efforts to strengthen the standing of international legal institutions should be supported, and legal mechanisms should continue to be used. But the defining logic of the current era is power. Iran must remain prepared for any form of US-Israeli or European aggression.

Could diplomatic coordination with countries aligned with Iran and the use of international organizations' capabilities prevent a broader consensus from forming against Iran?

Iran can emphasize, within the framework of international law, the need to produce evidence, respect the jurisdiction of judicial bodies and refrain from attributing responsibility without sufficient supporting documentation.

The key point, however, is that Western countries, along with those that fear pressure from the United States, Israel and Britain and align themselves with their hostile positions toward Iran, are not acting according to sound reasoning that would allow them to be held accountable.

In this regard, while maintaining active diplomacy, Iran should pursue new political and legal initiatives with countries that do not align with the Western-Zionist axis and are critical of it. The aim should be to prevent the further erosion of international legal mechanisms.

Given Iran's relations with countries such as Russia, China and some regional states, how much potential do these countries have to counter political campaigns against Tehran and prevent further escalation? Could diplomatic coordination with these countries, together with the use of international organizations, prevent a broader consensus from forming against Iran?

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UK air base accusations plot to advance anti-Iran campaign: *Tehran*

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry strongly condemned recent claims by British officials linking Iran to an alleged security incident at the US-run RAF Fairford air base, describing the move as a despicable plot designed to advance an anti-Iran campaign. The Foreign Ministry in a statement on Monday also said the claims are aimed at evading accountability for Britain's role in the US-Israeli military aggression against Iran. The ministry rejected the allegations outright, stressing that the British government cannot escape its political and legal responsibility, or the potential consequences of its claims, by relying on vague language without presenting any solid evidence or proof. The ministry specifically criticized the use of terms such as "highly likely" and "almost certainly" as a blatant attempt to lend false credibility to the attribution while sidestepping

accountability for baseless accusations. The statement highlighted Britain's well-known track record of fabricating security-related allegations against other nations, noting that such practices have, in some instances, contributed to tensions and destructive conflicts in West Asia. Tehran insisted that the British government must be held accountable for persisting in this dangerous approach that undermines international peace and security.

'False flag' operation

Categorically rejecting the accusations, the Foreign Ministry held the British government, as well as the planners and perpetrators of this clumsy "false flag" operation, fully responsible for all consequences arising from the fabrication. British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said on Monday that the suspected plot against the RAF base in Fairford was

"almost certainly" directed by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC). The allegation came as the UK announced sanctions on two Iranians over alleged "hostile activity." "We will not tolerate these threats on our soil," Burnham told parliament, promising that the government "will crack down on Iran's use of criminal networks, using our full range of powers to target them and their funding streams".

Sanctions against Iran

He added that the UK will "bring further sanctions to restrict the capacity of Iran and the IRGC to do us harm." The Fairford base in south-west England has been used by US bombers to conduct strikes against Iranian territory. Britain authorized Washington in March to use the base for specific attacks against Iranian missiles. US bombers and other military aircraft have subsequently been



Munitions sit beside runway as an American Rockwell B1 Lancer heavy bomber departs for home at RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire, Britain, on October 4, 2026.
● GETTY IMAGES

seen operating from the base, which is the only facility on mainland Britain used by the United States for this purpose. British authorities arrested several men near the facility in late September on suspicion of terrorism and explosives offences. The suspects were later released on bail, and no conclusive

evidence of an Iranian link has been publicly presented. Iranian officials have repeatedly described attempts to connect Tehran to the episode as unfounded speculation, particularly in the wake of the joint US-Israeli aggression against the Islamic Republic. Tehran has made clear that

Britain's participation in facilitating attacks on Iran, through the provision of bases and facilities, cannot be obscured by media campaigns or evidence-free claims. The Islamic Republic reserves the right to respond appropriately to protect its rights and interests against such provocations.

Deputy FM: Iran ready for diplomacy but fully prepared to defend itself

International Desk

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said Tehran remains open to all diplomatic processes while remaining prepared to defend itself against any new aggression. Speaking to Al Arabiya on Monday night, Gharibabadi said that Tehran is finalizing its response to the American side's observations and views regarding the proposal Iran presented in New York to end the US-Israeli aggression against Iran. He said Iran would convey its final position through mediators after consultations. "Tehran remains ready for diplomacy, provided that what is raised is realistic," Gharibabadi said. He stressed that Iran has always welcomed diplomacy and has never fallen short in engaging in dialogue with any party. He underlined that Iran's readiness to defend itself and to fight is no less than its readiness to negotiate.



Kazem Gharibabadi
● IRNA

Continued participation in talks, he added, reflects Tehran's political flexibility and its commitment to the diplomatic process. At the same time, the United States must return to fulfilling its commitments under a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries in Pakistan and must take corrective steps. Gharibabadi emphasized that Iran has not violated any of its commitments. "As long as the American side has completely disregarded all of its commitments, Iran cannot be expected to show further flexibility," he said. In a separate interview with RIA Novosti, Gharibabadi warned that if the US once again opts for military action against Iran,

the consequences will extend beyond the region, stressing that the US must adapt to regional realities and pursue diplomatic solutions. Gharibabadi said the situation is clear and that it is Washington that needs to adjust to the realities of the region and seek solutions based on diplomacy. He warned that repeating past mistakes by resorting to military scenarios and threats would lead to consequences that would reach well beyond the region. The war started with US and Israeli attacks on Iran, while Washington and Tehran were locked in negotiations on Iran's nuclear program. The warring parties agreed a memorandum of understanding in June that spelled out a framework for a permanent resolution to the conflict, but the US violations of the agreement prompted a resumption of military operations. Negotiations have effectively been at an impasse since then, and recent indirect talks between the US and Iran on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly failed to produce a breakthrough.

Baqaei: Recent developments offer opportunity to rethink Persian Gulf security

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said recent conflicts in the region have created an opportunity for countries in the region to discuss the future of Persian Gulf security from a more realistic perspective. The Foreign Ministry spokesman in an interview with Tunisia's Al Chourouk newspaper said the military presence of foreign powers is the main source of insecurity and that Persian Gulf security should be ensured by regional states themselves. "I think the developments of recent months have contained important lessons for all countries in the region," Baqaei said, reiterating Tehran's longstanding position that regional security must be provided by the countries of the region. Iran has long stressed the need to establish a regional security arrangement, Baqaei said, adding that the future should be built around a framework in which regional countries safeguard their own security without interference from extra-regional powers. However, he stressed that such an arrangement would not take shape overnight but



Esmaeil Baqaei
● IRNA

dialogue among regional states and progress towards a shared understanding of regional security mechanisms would constitute an important and necessary step. He said Iran consistently respected the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of countries in the region. Iran's fundamental policy, Baqaei said, is based on good-unneighborly relations, expanding ties with regional countries across various fields and promoting regional cooperation. Iran launched attacks on US military bases in regional countries, especially Persian Gulf Arab states, after the US and Israel launched their unprovoked aggression against Iran in February. Tehran has always warned regional countries hosting US troops about allowing the US to target Iran from their territories.

Yemen threatens to hit Riyadh airport, refinery if Saudi strikes Sana'a

International Desk

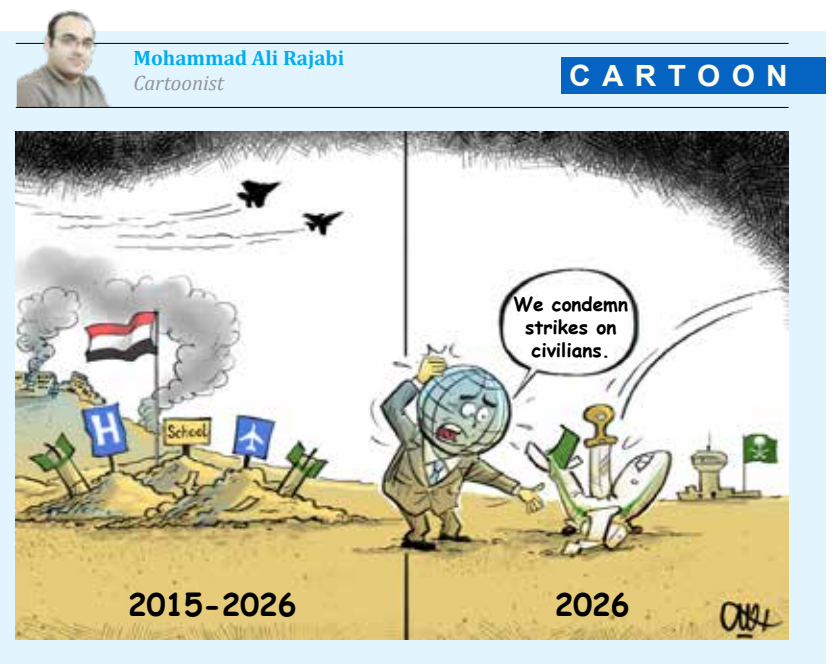
Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement warned on Tuesday its forces would target Riyadh's airport, a refinery, and an Aramco facility in Dammam if the Saudi-led coalition follows through on its threat to strike an oil facility in Sana'a. "The Yemeni Armed Forces urge all citizens to immediately evacuate and move away from targets that our forces will strike should the Saudi enemy target" a site in Sanaa, military spokesman Yahya Saree posted on X, identifying the three targets as Aramco's headquarters in Dammam, as well as the airport and an Aramco refinery in Riyadh. The warning came after the Saudi-led coalition signaled an imminent attack on an oil facility in Yemen's capital on Tuesday, warning civilians in the surrounding area to get out.



Yahya Saree

After a series of attacks on the kingdom's airports and oil facilities, it was the first time the coalition has issued an evacuation order for Yemen's Sana'a since their war flared up again in July. The coalition demanded "that civilians evacuate the site of the Yemen Petroleum Company, the al-Sabaha Central Station in Sana'a... for their own safety", said spokesman Turki al-Maliki on X, referring to a site on the western outskirts of the capital. An attack on Riyadh's international airport on Saturday left 14 people dead, rocking the world's top crude

oil exporter and deepening the war in Yemen. The kingdom was still weathering fresh attacks on Tuesday, with the coalition saying its forces intercepted three drones north of Riyadh. Many countries have since issued travel warnings to their citizens in Saudi Arabia, most recently France, which told its citizens to avoid the airports in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam on Tuesday. Traffic in perennially gridlocked Riyadh was noticeably lighter this week, as remote learning for all schools and work-from-home orders for some companies took effect, according to AFP journalists in the capital. Saudi Arabia faces a major economic contraction this year, the International Monetary Fund said on Tuesday, predicting a regional drop over Iran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.



Pezeshkian says consumer protection is shared responsibility of government, producers

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for effective oversight, transparency and accountability by the government and producers to protect consumer rights and ensure the quality and safety of goods and services.

In a message marking World Standards Day and Standards Week on Tuesday, Pezeshkian described standardization as essential to social justice, public trust and improved quality of life, stressing the need to promote standards across all areas of society, his website, president.ir reported.

He said standards should extend beyond technical production rules and product quality assessments to cover public health and safety, service quality, efficiency and the fair use of resources.

Consumers have the right to be confident in the safety, quality and health standards of the goods and services they receive, while producers should operate under clear, fair and reliable regulations,



he said. Pezeshkian also stressed the need for continuous assessment and broader implementation of standards, saying compliance could improve the quality of Iranian products, strengthen their competitiveness and enhance

the country's position in global markets. Turning to resource use, he said effective standards could help improve energy consumption management, reduce waste and support the development of clean energy.

Pezeshkian called on the National Standards Organization of Iran to strengthen coordination among government agencies and expand effective oversight to improve quality, safeguard public rights and achieve measurable, lasting results.

ECONOMIC LENS

Threats for UAE in US-Israeli war against Iran



By Golzar Aghaei
Economic policy specialist

ANALYSIS
EXCLUSIVE

The UAE is not a neutral observer but a vulnerable actor in the US-Israeli war against Iran. Once a mainly economic player, it has become an interventionist security actor. It faces a fundamental contradiction: as a US ally hosting American military bases, it is a target of Iranian retaliation; yet as Iran's financial and commercial hub, it has strong economic interests in continued engagement with Tehran. The note examines the UAE's resulting opportunities and threats across three levels: economic balance sheet, financial network, and strategic position.

Direct costs

According to LuxuryEstate, the Dubai Financial Market Real Estate Index fell about 30% from 16,910 points on February 27, 2026, to roughly 11,500 by March 14, 2026, after US-Israeli strikes on Iran triggered Iranian retaliation. Drone attacks on Dubai International Airport, the Burj Al Arab area, and the Dubai International Financial Centre forced a two-day market closure; Emaar led the sell-off. Separately, the UAE's heavy reliance on the Strait of Hormuz became a critical wartime vulnerability, with its crude oil and natural gas exports through the strait effectively dropping to zero.

Structural threats

Risk of a financial "bubble" dependent on Iran: The US Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), in its 2025 report, estimated that about \$9 billion in suspicious transactions in 2024 were linked to Iran's banking network

through the UAE. These figures show that part of the UAE's "attractiveness" for Iran is precisely what puts it under US pressure.

Credit risk and flight of large-scale capital: The war challenged the assumption that the UAE is a "safe haven." According to reports, wealthy investors are transferring their long-term assets to Singapore and Switzerland, although they maintain part of their operations in Dubai. This pattern erodes the country's long-term tax and fee base.

Bottom line

Studies show that, on the opportunities side, the UAE's reliance on one trillion dirhams in foreign exchange reserves, its current account surplus, and its decentralized financial structure have enabled it to withstand war shocks. More importantly, blocking Iran's financial network can put Tehran in a foreign exchange squeeze. On the threats side, Dubai's economic dependence on attracting capital has exposed it to doubled US pressure, and the decline in Dubai's real estate index, capital flight to Singapore and Switzerland, and the suspension of Fujairah port operations show that being a "safe haven" has become a strategic liability under war conditions.

This paper is the fourth in a series on the political economy of the US-Israeli war against Iran. In the following issues, the series will examine in detail the role of each beneficiary country. Saudi Arabia will be the subject of the fifth report (Report 5).

IMF forecasts Iran's economy to grow 3.6% in 2027

Economy Desk

The International Monetary Fund expects Iran's economy to return to growth in 2027, expanding by 3.6% after a projected contraction of 7.6% in 2026, according to a report cited by Tasnim news agency.

The IMF's World Economic Outlook also forecasts a slowdown in inflation next year, with the rate expected to fall to 42% in 2027 from 78.6% in 2026.

Iran's current account balance is projected to move from a deficit equivalent to 1.2% of gross domestic product in 2026 to a surplus of 1.2% of GDP in 2027, the report said.



The fund also expects a slight improvement in the labor

market, forecasting Iran's unemployment rate to decline

to 9% in 2027 from 9.2% this year.

The projections point to an improvement in Iran's key economic indicators next year, despite US efforts to maintain sanctions against the country, according to the report.

The country, already under decades of Western sanctions over its nuclear activities, has faced a new wave of US sanctions on its aviation sector. 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.

Oman-Iran trade rises 12% to \$970m in first seven months

Economy Desk

Trade between Oman and Iran rose 12% year-on-year to \$970 million in the first seven months of 2026, with Omani re-exports to Iran increasing 64%, according to Oman's National Centre for Statistics, cited by Eqtesad-e Moaser. Bilateral trade totaled \$865 million in the same period in 2025, the report said.

The increase came amid intensified military conflict in the Persian Gulf since March and disruptions to transport routes.

Iran was Oman's largest re-export destination in the January-July period, with re-exports to the country reaching \$765 million, up 64% from a year earlier, according to the report. The growth partly offset disruptions to Iran's maritime trade through the United Arab Emirates.

A large share of Iran's trade had been routed through the UAE's Jebel Ali port.

When the UAE announced that Iranian vessels would not be allowed to load or unload cargo there, a significant portion of that trade effectively ground to a halt. The increase in Omani trade with Iran also comes as US naval restrictions continue to affect Iran's southern ports. Washington imposed the blockade as part of a pressure campaign following a 40-day US-Israeli conflict that began in late February, constraining Tehran's trade options.

In response, Iran has been working to diversify its logistics corridors, redirecting cargo flows toward northern ports and hubs in Pakistan, India and Oman. Meanwhile, Oman's direct exports to Iran rose more than fourfold to \$25 million in the first seven months of 2026, up from \$6 million in the same period last year.

By contrast, Omani imports from Iran fell 54% to \$180 million in January-July, compared with \$394 million a year earlier.

Key port exports over 5m tons of oil products despite US sanctions

Economy Desk

Iran exported 5.14n tons of petroleum products through Shahid Rajaei port in the six months to September 22, using 325 vessels despite US sanctions and regional military tensions, a provincial port official said.

Hamidreza Mohammad-Hosseini Takhti, director general of Hormozgan Province's Ports and Maritime Organization, said cargo shipments had continued without interruption despite tighter financial restrictions and difficulties caused by US sanctions, Fars News Agency reported.

The period covered a 40-day war waged by the United States and Israel against Iran in late February. The US military subsequently imposed two naval blockades affecting Iranian ports and vessels in the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean. The second blockade began in mid-July and remains in place.



US President Donald Trump's administration continued to tighten sanctions on Iran during the conflict.

Iran has faced US sanctions since 2018, when Washington launched what it called a "maximum pressure" campaign.

More recent measures included secondary sanctions designed to deter

buyers from trading in Iranian oil and petroleum products.

Shahid Rajaei port lies on Iran's southern coast near the Strait of Hormuz. Its location near major international shipping routes and the International North-South Transport Corridor makes it a key gateway for the country's imports and exports.

America's endless wars yield another defeat

Empire of intervention meets its limits



By Saman Sofalgar

Political researcher

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The departure of US forces from Iraq on September 30, 2026, marks more than the conclusion of a military mission. It exposes the widening gap between Washington's ambitions and its ability to shape the political order of the Middle East. More than two decades after invading Iraq in the name of security, democracy, and regional transformation, the United States is ending its coalition military mission in a country still struggling with political fragmentation, contested sovereignty, and the enduring consequences of foreign intervention. Washington will undoubtedly present the withdrawal as evidence of success, pointing to the territorial defeat of Daesh (ISIS) and the transfer of security responsibilities to Iraqi forces. Yet this account leaves a fundamental question unanswered: if American military intervention was intended to create a more secure and stable regional order, why has the pursuit of that objective generated so many prolonged conflicts, costly occupations, and unresolved crises? The withdrawal from Iraq offers a sobering answer. American power has proved remarkably effective at destroying existing political arrangements, but far less capable of establishing durable alternatives. The United States has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to invade, occupy, and strike. What remains far less convincing is its capacity to translate those military advantages into sustainable political outcomes. The latest departure also coincides with a major confrontation involving Iran, which has increased the risks facing American forces across the region. Although the withdrawal followed a timetable negotiated by Baghdad and Washington in 2024, the subsequent war has intensified the pressures surrounding the US military presence. This distinction is essential: the conflict with Iran did not originate the withdrawal process, but it has exposed the vulnerabilities of a regional strategy built around forward deployments and military coercion. Iraq is therefore not merely the story of an American mission coming to an end. It is a revealing episode in the longer history of Washington's interventionist ambitions and of the limits those ambitions have encountered.

Iraq War: a strategic disaster of Washington's own making

The invasion of Iraq in 2003 was justified in part by allegations that Saddam Hussein's government possessed weapons of mass destruction. Those stockpiles were never found. The Bush administration also argued that removing Saddam Hussein would open the way to democracy and stability. Instead, the dismantling of state institutions, the collapse of public security, and the escalation of sectarian violence helped create conditions for prolonged



insurgency and political instability.

These consequences were not simply unfortunate side effects unrelated to the invasion. They exposed fundamental failures in the planning and assumptions underpinning the occupation. Washington underestimated the complexity of Iraqi society, the consequences of dismantling state structures, and the difficulty of constructing a legitimate political order under foreign military control.

The rise of ISIS became one of the most devastating manifestations of this failure. In 2014, the United States returned militarily to Iraq to help defeat an organization that had seized substantial territory. American airpower, intelligence, training, and logistical assistance contributed significantly to the campaign, while Iraqi security forces and other local actors bore much of the fighting and sacrifice. The territorial defeat of ISIS was a genuine military achievement. But it cannot retroactively validate the invasion that preceded it, nor can it erase the strategic consequences of the decisions that helped destabilize Iraq. Washington found itself fighting a dangerous threat in an environment profoundly shaped by the aftermath of its own intervention.

This is the central contradiction of America's post-9/11 wars: policies presented as instruments of stability have repeatedly produced new security challenges, requiring additional deployments, new military campaigns, and ever more expansive definitions of success. The failure, therefore, lies not in the claim that the United States achieved nothing in Iraq. It lies in the enormous disparity between the scale of its ambitions and the durability of its results.

Withdrawal and the limits of American primacy

The end of the US-led coalition mission should not be mistaken for a sudden military collapse. The transition was negotiated in advance, and Washington had already committed itself to a phased change in its military relationship with Baghdad. The September 2024 agreement established the framework for ending the coalition's military mission in Iraq, with the transition extending into 2026. Washington has also emphasized that security cooperation can continue through bilateral arrangements. But the existence of a timetable does not eliminate the strategic significance of the outcome. A withdrawal can be planned and still reflect the recognition that

a military presence has reached the limits of its political usefulness. For years, Washington maintained that its regional deployments were essential to counterterrorism, deterrence, and the preservation of American influence. Yet a military footprint is not an end in itself. Its value depends on whether it advances achievable political objectives at a sustainable cost.

Iraq illustrates the dangers of confusing military presence with strategic control. American forces could influence the battlefield, support local partners, and conduct so-called counterterrorism operations. They could not guarantee political cohesion, resolve competing power centers, or permanently insulate Iraq from regional rivalries. Afghanistan provided an even more dramatic warning. After two decades of intervention and enormous expenditure, the collapse of the Afghan government in 2021 exposed the fragility of a political order heavily dependent on foreign military support.

Taken together, Iraq and Afghanistan raise uncomfortable questions about the assumptions behind American military primacy. If Washington can defeat adversaries on the battlefield but cannot reliably secure the political arrangements it seeks to estab-



A patrol passes through a control point at Ain Al-Asad Air Base, Iraq, on July 4, 2021.

● CHRISTIE R. SMITH/
US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



Washington will undoubtedly present the withdrawal from Iraq as evidence of success, pointing to the territorial defeat of Daesh (ISIS) and the transfer of security responsibilities to Iraqi forces. Yet this account leaves a fundamental question unanswered: if American military intervention was intended to create a more secure and stable regional order, why has the pursuit of that objective generated so many prolonged conflicts, costly occupations, and unresolved crises?

lish, then its military superiority has more limited strategic value than its advocates often acknowledge.

The empire of intervention encounters its limits not necessarily when it loses a conventional battle, but when the costs of maintaining its ambitions begin to outweigh the results those ambitions can deliver.

Iran and the rising costs of America's regional strategy

The war involving Iran has added a new and consequential dimension to this strategic dilemma. Since the United States and Israel launched their campaign against Iran on February 28, 2026, American military installations and other facilities across the region have faced heightened threats. Attacks in Iraq's Kurdistan Region have demonstrated how quickly a wider confrontation can expose the vulnerabilities of US deployments and place Iraq itself at risk of being drawn into a conflict it did not choose. The implications extend beyond the immediate security of individual bases. They raise questions about the sustainability of a regional posture that depends on maintaining exposed military positions amid escalating rivalries and the prospect of retaliation. A powerful military can impose enormous costs on its adversaries. But the ability to inflict damage is not synonymous with the ability to dictate political outcomes. Escalation can also generate countermeasures, expand the geographical reach of a conflict, and increase the risks borne by the forces deployed to contain it. In this context, the departure from Iraq acquires an additional strategic significance. The withdrawal process was already underway before the war with Iran. Nevertheless, the conflict has reinforced the pressures surrounding the American presence and demonstrated the potential costs of maintaining military positions within an increasingly volatile regional environment.

It would be inaccurate to claim that Iran alone forced Washington to leave Iraq. It is equally mistaken, however, to ignore how the war has changed the strategic circumstances in which the withdrawal has been completed. From a critical perspective, the central question is whether Washington can continue to rely on military deployments as the principal foundation of its regional influence when those deployments increasingly expose it to the very instability its policies claim to contain.

Human and political cost of intervention

The strategic debate must also account for the people who have lived through the consequences of these policies. Iraqis have endured invasion, occupation, insurgency, sectarian violence, displacement, and the destruction of essential infrastructure. The country's subsequent political development cannot be explained exclusively by American decisions, and Iraqi political actors retain responsibility for their own choices. Nevertheless, the scale of the disruption initiated by the 2003 invasion



A member of an anti-Iran Kurdish party inspects the damage following an attack in the Koya district of Erbil, Iraq.

● SAFIN HAMID/AFP

remains central to any serious assessment of its legacy. The language of counterterrorism has often obscured this broader record. Military operations can be measured in territory recovered, targets struck, or militants eliminated. The consequences of intervention are more difficult to quantify: weakened institutions, diminished public trust, prolonged insecurity, and the political fragmentation that can persist long after foreign troops leave. Nor does withdrawal automatically resolve these problems. Iraq still faces the challenge of strengthening its institutions, managing competing armed groups, and maintaining its independence amid regional competition. The departure of foreign forces creates an opportunity to reinforce national sovereignty, but the outcome will depend on the ability of Iraqi leaders to translate that opportunity into effective governance. For Washington, the lesson is

equally important. A foreign military presence may create leverage in the short term, but it can also generate resentment, expose personnel to retaliation, and entangle the intervening power in disputes it cannot settle on its own. The claim that intervention is necessary to preserve stability must therefore be judged against the instability that intervention itself can produce.

A retreat from Iraq, or a reckoning with strategic failure?

The United States will retain important sources of influence in the Middle East after the end of its coalition military mission in Iraq. Diplomatic relationships, economic ties, intelligence cooperation, and bilateral security arrangements will continue to shape its regional position. The withdrawal does not mean that American power has disappeared. But preserving influence is not the same as achieving the ob-

jectives that originally justified a war. Washington invaded Iraq promising a transformed political order. More than two decades later, the end of its military mission highlights the limits of its ability to determine the country's future through sustained military involvement. The confrontation with Iran makes this reckoning more urgent. If escalation increases the dangers facing American forces without producing a durable political settlement, repeating the same strategy under a different name will not resolve the underlying problem. The fundamental issue is not whether the United States possesses sufficient military power to fight another war. It is whether military intervention can deliver the political outcomes Washington repeatedly promises and whether the costs imposed on the societies in which it intervenes can be justified by the results. Iraq offers little reason for complacency about those as-

sumptions. Its history since 2003 demonstrates that overwhelming force cannot substitute for political legitimacy, that occupation does not guarantee stability, and that tactical victories can coexist with profound strategic disappointment. The departure of US forces is thus both the completion of a negotiated transition and a warning about the limitations of American interventionism. Washington may describe the end of the mission as a success against ISIS. Yet the larger record is far more complicated: an invasion that destabilized a state, a prolonged military commitment that failed to meet its goals, and a regional strategy now operating under the additional pressures of war with Iran. For more than two decades, Iraq has been a test of the proposition that American military power can remake the Middle East. The withdrawal does not settle every argument about US influence, nor does it deter-



mine the region's future. It does, however, expose the enduring gap between the ambition to dominate events and the ability to shape their consequences. The most important lesson is that military supremacy cannot guarantee strategic success. Unless Washington draws that conclusion from Iraq, the end of this mission may become merely

A member of the Iraqi security forces flashes the victory sign during a military parade in Baghdad on September 30, 2026, marking the withdrawal of the US-led coalition from Iraq. ● AHMAD AL-RUBAYE/AFP

another pause in a cycle of intervention, escalation, and diminishing returns.

And so this is how it ends

'Shock and awe' curdles into 'Aw, shucks'

By Mark Thompson
Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist
OPINION

The US ended its military campaign in Iraq on September 30, as the final American combat troops based there left the country. Their departure ended 23 years of fitful fighting. They found no weapons of mass destruction, which was the battering ram President George W. Bush and his combative coterie used to scaremonger the US to invade in 2003. We captured Saddam Hussein, and the Iraqis hanged him in 2006. We toppled his Ba'athist regime, only to see it replaced with a government that today is riven with next-door Iran's influence. It's important to remember how this war looks from the other end of the telescope. Two weeks before it began, The Bunker asked Air Force General Richard Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, how the Pentagon's ballyhooed "shock and awe" campaign would unfold. "If asked to go into conflict in Iraq, what you'd like to do is have it be a short conflict," he responded. "The best way to do that would be to have such a shock on the system that the Iraqi regime would have to assume early on the end was inevitable." Well, you know what they say about assume. In fact, a fellow Air Force officer, Colonel Clarence Lollar, spelled it out in 1964, 39 years before Myers used the word to explain why the Iraq war would be short: "Mister, when you have an important job to do, never assume. When you look at the word, you can see it is made up of three parts — 'ass,' 'u,' and 'me.' When you rely on assumptions, sooner or later it will make an ass of both of us." Turns out toppling Saddam was only the beginning of a generation-long campaign that cost 4,418 US troops their lives. It will end up costing US taxpayers an estimated \$2.9 trillion through 2050, including veterans' care yet unbilled.



The Bunker spent years reporting on the war, and its spasmodic successes like toppling Baghdad, hunting down Saddam in his "spider hole," and the jittery calm wrought by "the surge" of US troops into Iraq in 2007. But he also told the stories of those killed, as well as those who killed themselves (and their family). He wrote about the more than 30,000 physically wounded, as well as the roughly 15%

of the 1.5 million US troops who served in Iraq who came home mentally maimed. He covered the military's inadequate, and sometimes fatal, efforts to render aid, even among those trying to deliver it. He reported on the war's deadly impact on recruiters back home. He wrote about those captured, dead or alive, as they used to say in the Westens. Not to mention the 3,600 contractors, and perhaps 200,000

Iraqi civilians, killed in the war. The stories were tough to report, tough to write, and they remain tough to read. But in the hurly-burly of today's world, the heroes at the heart of these stories must never be forgotten. We must remember and honor their sacrifice, even as we ponder its wisdom, given its paltry prize. Otherwise, it might happen again.



American soldiers wait out a sandstorm listening to BBC on shortwave radio in Iraq in 2003. Not good news at this point with reports of American casualties and the war not going well. ● CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Turns out toppling Saddam was only the beginning of a generation-long campaign that cost 4,418 US troops their lives. It will end up costing US taxpayers an estimated \$2.9 trillion through 2050, including veterans' care yet unbilled. Not to mention the 3,600 contractors, and perhaps 200,000 Iraqi civilians, killed in the war.

A US Marine watches as a statue of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein topples in 2003. ● GORAN TOMASEVIC/REUTERS

Long overdue, but it must be done right. The same day the US military pulled out of Iraq, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth pledged to continue his campaign to shrink the Pentagon's nearly 1,000-strong corps of generals and admirals by 20% (he's currently about halfway there). "The media calls that a purge," he said. "I call it accountability, and long overdue." Accountability, of course, is in the eye of the beholder. We here at the Project On Government Oversight have long fought to cut the US military's senior ranks. "We have more officers than we need — and we're running the risk of creating a military force of bureaucrats rather than warriors," Executive Director Danielle Brian said ... in 1998. The numbers don't lie: The ranks of generals and admirals, as their share of the entire US military, has grown by 40% since Vietnam. But the cutting has to be smart. Based on the results of the Iran war — so far — it's plain that neither Hegseth nor his military high command knows how to wage war smartly. Promoting the right military personnel is just as challenging. Bazookaing brass that displease the boss doesn't automatically lead to a lighter and, to coin a phrase, lethaler fighting force. Based on Hegseth's track record, his thinning of the herd is likely to be more about politics and partisanship than proficiency and prowess. "This is just a less personal version of the purge he's already been executing since taking office," Virginia Burger, a Marine veteran now here at POGO's Center for Defense Information, says. "By announcing he's cutting the generals by 20%, he has justification for refusing to promote scores of officers without even having to pull their names from [promotion] lists. This just lets him continue to remove senior leaders who are in the strongest positions to oppose him and his actions."

The full article first appeared on The Bunker.

AFC Champions League:

Nekounam blames fatigue, disrupted preparations after Al Shamal stalemate

Sports Desk

Tractor head coach Javad Nekounam rued his team's disrupted preparations after the Persian Gulf Pro League outfit shared the spoils with Qatar's Al Shamal SC in a goalless draw on matchday two of the AFC Champions League Elite in Muscat, Oman, on Monday.

Amid restrictions on Iranian airlines, Tractor players stepped onto the pitch at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, which served as the Iranian club's home venue for the day, following an exhausting multi-stage trip that included overland travel through Iraq. They had only one training session before the game.

Nekounam nevertheless believed his team, having suffered a 1-0 defeat against the UAE's Shabab Al Ahli in its opener, did enough to secure its first victory in the league phase of the continental club competition. "We had a good analysis of our opponents, but we had no time to train. I don't think we gave them many chances, and the one or two opportunities they created came in the final 15 minutes," he said.

"We knew we would struggle towards the end because of the fatigue caused by the lengthy trip. The substitutions did not work well, and the substitutes' poor performances put additional pressure on the team, preventing us from winning. "We should have taken the three points, and we are disappointed about that. Just as we performed brilliantly in our last league match [against Esteghlal], we played very well here despite spending 18 hours or perhaps even longer travelling."

Nekounam went on to praise his team's performance against an Al Shamal side featuring 11 foreign players. The Qatari club had come close to defeating Saudi Pro League side Al Ittihad Club on its competition debut before the international break, only to settle for a 1-1 home draw after conceding a stoppage-time equalizer.

"We controlled the game, performed well and created plenty of scoring chances. We gave everything, taking shots and attempting headers, but the ball just would not go into the net," he said. "The conditions were there for us to win, but unfortunately, it did not happen.



Tractor striker Shahriar Moghanlou (R) is challenged by Al Shamal's Federico Bais during a goalless draw in the AFC Champions League Elite in Muscat, Oman, on October 12, 2026.

● FFIRI

late on. Even so, the team played brilliantly," Nekounam concluded by thanking Tractor's supporters, many of whom had travelled long distances to back their team.

"I am grateful to our fans. Tractor have supporters all over the world, and today, fans came from distant cities and countries. I thank them for that. We are sorry that we could not win. They certainly understand our team's situation."

Tractor will be aiming to turn its fortunes around when it takes on in-form UAE side Al Ain FC away from home in a fortnight.

Brilliant Blues

The other Iranian club in the competition, Esteghlal, meanwhile, maintained its perfect record in the league phase, defeating Qatar's Al Gharafa 2-1 in Al Rayyan. Prolific winger Jasir Asani, who was a doubt for the game because of an injury

concern, started on the bench but was introduced in the 32nd minute after young midfielder Amirmohammad Razzaqinia was forced off injured. Asani needed just five minutes to make his mark with a sensational strike, unleashing a spectacular 20-yard shot that dipped beyond Ahmad Kone's fingertips and into the top corner.

In an eventful six minutes of first-half stoppage time, Kone made a superb save from Saeid Saharkhizan, while his opposite number, Habib Farabbasi, kept out Al Gharafa's Adam Ounas's effort before center-back Aref Aqasi made a timely interception to deny Abdulrahman Faiz Al Rashidi on the rebound. The home side's strong start to the second half paid off three minutes in when Ferjani Sassi emerged from a pack of bodies inside the Esteghlal box to side-foot the ball past Farabbasi for the equalizer.

The visitors, however, took advantage of slack goalkeeping by Kone just past the hour mark to restore the lead. Fullback Hossein Goudarzi was given too much space on the left and struck from range, with his effort bouncing off the

goalkeeper's palms and rolling into the bottom-left corner.

"With all due respect to our opponents, I think the better team won today, and we could have scored more goals," said Esteghlal head coach Sohrab Bakhtiarzadeh, whose team had defeated Qatari side Al Sadd 3-0 in its opening game.

"Al Gharafa also had a few goalscoring opportunities, but we did well to keep them at bay.

"The three points were very important, and the effort and dedication of the Esteghlal players were commendable. I salute them all and thank them for their performance."

While pleased with his side's attacking display, Bakhtiarzadeh also acknowledged the challenges posed by the weather and injuries to Asani, who went off in the 67th minute, and Razzaqinia.

"The weather conditions were tough, and the injuries to two players also made our job difficult, but my players were able to defend and showed their dedication."

Esteghlal will be back in action against Shabab Al Ahli at Dubai's Rashid Stadium on October 27.

From Olympic glory to Grand Prix gold:
Salimi shines again in Paris

WORLD TAEKWONDO – Two years after becoming Olympic champion in the French capital, Iran's Arian Salimi returned to the top of the podium at the Paris 2026 World Taekwondo Grand Prix.



Iran's Arian Salimi celebrates after his victory in the men's +80kg final at the Paris 2026 World Taekwondo Grand Prix on October 10, 2026.

● WORLD TAEKWONDO

His men's +80kg triumph came against a familiar opponent in Great Britain's Caden Cunningham, the silver medalist at Paris 2024. Once again, Salimi

Cerdan hosting the Grand Prix, but the challenge of overcoming Cunningham was just as demanding. Cunningham took a fiercely contested opening round 14-9, leaving Salimi needing a response to keep his hopes of gold alive. He delivered, winning the second round before sealing victory with an 11-7 success in the decider.

"I was a little surprised by how the final went. I landed a lot of kicks on his body protector that had scored points for me in previous matches, but in this fight, I was more tired and didn't have the same power I had shown earlier in the competition. Caden also fought very intelligently and with great concentration," he said.

For Salimi, the chance to face Cunningham in another final in Paris gave the occasion extra significance.

"I had always wanted to fight him again because I believe our Olympic final was one of the most beautiful fights in the history of Taekwondo. But I never imagined that we would meet again in Paris, in another final," he said. "I'm also really happy to see Caden back competing at this level again."

His success in Paris contributed to a double gold for Iran on the opening day, alongside Abolfazl Zandi's victory in the men's -58kg. For Salimi, it also offered another opportunity to embrace the challenges that continue to drive him

after reaching the sport's highest stage.

"Every athlete dreams of becoming an Olympic champion, but it really comes with a huge responsibility. People have high expectations of you, and you become a role model in everything you do: your behavior, the way you celebrate a victory, the way you fight, and even the way you maintain your motivation," he said.

Rather than focusing solely on results, Salimi draws motivation from the demands of competition itself. "But I focus on my journey. I don't spend too much time thinking about Olympic ranking points or tournament grades. I love challenges, I love fighting, and I love being able to control difficult situations," he said.

"When I compete, I feel alive. I love those moments when I have to breathe deeper, draw on everything I have, and push myself to the limit."

With another Paris gold secured, that appetite for competition remains central to his ambitions.

"My next goal is to keep improving and perform better in my next competition. I want to enjoy what I do even more than before," Salimi said.

"For me, it's not just about winning medals. I want to keep challenging myself, developing as a fighter, and enjoying every moment of this journey."

Jamshidi hopes
Asian Games bronze heralds
new era for Iranian padel

● ISNA

Sports Desk

Iranian padel player Amir-mohammad Jamshidi hopes his historic bronze medal at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games will mark the beginning of a sustained run of international success for the sport in the country. Jamshidi teamed up with Farshid Shahi to defeat Hani Golestani and Arya Roghani in straight sets in an all-Iranian third-place match in the men's pairs event at the multi-sport event.

"Thanks to the strong support we received from the Iranian federation, we were able to compete in various tournaments before the Asian Games, which played a major role in improving our seeding and made our path somewhat easier," Jamshidi

told IRNA on Tuesday. Jamshidi and Shahi came within touching distance of a place in the final after winning the first set against the Malaysian pair in the semifinal, before ultimately losing 2-1 (1-6, 6-4, 6-1).

"We were so well prepared that we could see ourselves on the podium. Putting aside the unpredictable nature of sport, we should have reached the final," he said. "We started the semifinal well, but the match unfolded in a way that prevented us from achieving our goal, and we had to settle for the bronze-medal match."

"Iranian padel has embarked on a path that can lead to greater success, and we are at the beginning of a journey that can bring many achievements," he said.

Hafezieh is eternal soul of Persian poetry

Iranica Desk

Hafezieh, the mausoleum of the celebrated Persian poet Hafez, lies in the northern part of Shiraz, near the seasonal dry riverbed and the Mosalla gardens. The Qur'an Gate, one of the city's historic landmarks, stands approximately 1.5 to 2 kilometers to the northeast.

Centuries ago, this part of Shiraz was a vast plain known as Mosalla, which marked the northernmost edge of the old city, ISNA wrote.

According to historical accounts, national and religious ceremonies were held in the area around present-day Hafezieh whenever a ruler entered Shiraz through its old northern gateway. Accompanied by traditional musicians playing drums and trumpets, the ruler would then proceed into the inhabited part of the city.

Khawaja Shams al-Din Muhammad, better known as Hafez, was born in Shiraz around 1315-1318 CE and learned the Holy Qur'an at a traditional religious school in the city, committing it to memory — a distinction reflected in his pen name, Hafez.

He lived during the rule of the Inju and Muzaffarid dynasties in Shiraz and maintained connections with the courts of several rulers of the period.

Hafez died around 1390 CE and was buried in the Mosalla cemetery, the area where his mausoleum stands today.

Over the centuries, his tomb has undergone numerous restorations and reconstructions, including during the Timurid, Safavid, Afsharid and Zand periods.

About 65 years after the poet's death, Shams al-Din Muhammad Yaghma'i, vizier to the Timurid ruler Abu'l-Qasim Babur Mirza, who governed Fars, commissioned the construction of the first dome and surrounding enclosure at the site.

The tomb continued to receive attention under the Safavids and Afsharids. The poet's gravestone and four of the 20 col-



● visitiran.ir

umns supporting the Hafezieh portico date from the Zand period.

During the Qajar era, a structure resembling the shrine buildings commonly associated with revered religious figures was erected over the grave.

The mausoleum took on its present architectural character around 90 years ago, during the early Pahlavi period, following an initiative by Ali-Asghar Hekmat, then minister of education. French archaeologist André Godard, who was serving as the country's director-general of archaeology, prepared the architectural plans. The project was assigned to Ali Riazi, head of the education department in Fars Province, with Ali Sami overseeing its implementation. The Qajar-era structure was demolished and replaced with a new design featuring eight columns, intended to evoke the eighth century AH, the period in which Hafez lived. A dome was

also added, its shape said to recall the distinctive headwear of dervishes and mystics. Sixteen additional columns were incorporated into the portico, bringing the total to 20.

The financing of the mausoleum's expansion has also attracted historical interest. In his account, Jalali Naeini wrote that Hekmat, seeking to restore and expand the tombs of Hafez and the poet Sa'di, discovered that the national budget contained no allocation for such projects. According to Naeini, the gold covering the door of the khangah, or Sufi lodge, associated with Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardabili was sold to raise funds. The proceeds were reportedly used to finance the construction and expansion of the two poets' mausoleums.

Hafezieh's architectural design has inspired a wide range of interpretations, particularly concerning its relationship with Iranian mysticism. Research pa-

pers and architectural analyses have linked the visitor's route, the number of steps, the dome and the columns to concepts such as spiritual progression, liberation from material concerns and the pursuit of truth. However, not all the symbolic meanings attributed to these architectural features have been documented as explicit intentions of Godard, the architect behind the present-day design. The complex is also widely regarded as a garden in its own right. Visitors arriving after touring Shiraz's Eram, Delgosha, Jahan Nama and Afifabad gardens often ask their guides whether Hafezieh is another garden. The answer is yes, in a sense: Godard drew on the principles of traditional Persian garden design, including symmetry, in shaping the site.

According to Mahshid Motamed's doctoral research in architecture, the modern complex took shape in 1930, after

Hekmat's proposal to renovate the garden surrounding the tomb was approved.

The central hall was extended on both sides, and Godard developed his plans with reference to the surviving Zand-era structure. Hafezieh covers approximately two hectares and consists of northern and southern courtyards separated by a portico.

The complex has four entrances: the main entrance to the south, two entrances on the western side and another to the northeast.

The portico, which dates in part to the Zand period, measures 56 meters in length and eight meters in width. It is supported by 20 stone columns, each five meters high. Originally, the hall consisted of four columns and four rooms, although the rooms were subsequently removed from the main structure. Two rooms now stand to its east and west, one used by the cultural

heritage authorities and the other serving as the mausoleum's administrative office.

The four-column portico commissioned under Karim Khan Zand forms the core of the hall. A closer look reveals a distinction between its four approximately 250-year-old columns and the 16 columns added around 90 years ago. Faint traces of floral ornamentation remain visible on the older pillars. Marble slabs line the walls on either side of the portico. Standing higher than the surrounding sections of Hafezieh, the hall divides the complex into its northern and southern courtyards.

Today, the site is organized into four distinct areas. The northern courtyard contains Hafez's tomb, orange trees and two large rectangular pools to the east and west. These pools supply water to the larger basins in the entrance garden.

One of the pools originally stood at the center of Hafezieh during the Qajar period but was moved to a corner during the Pahlavi-era reconstruction. The second pool, positioned opposite the first to preserve the garden's symmetry, was transferred to Hafezieh from Bagh-e Nazar, another historic garden in Shiraz. Among the complex's most distinctive features is Hafez's gravestone, which stands about one meter above ground level and is surrounded by five circular tiers of steps.

During Nowruz, the Persian New Year, large crowds gather at Hafezieh.

Above the tomb rises a copper dome, shaped like the segmented cap traditionally associated with dervishes. It rests on eight columns, each approximately 10 meters high, and its interior is decorated with intricate haft-rang tilework, a traditional form of multicolored Persian tiling. The enduring appeal of Hafezieh may lie in more than its gravestone, dome or columns. Its significance rests in the connection it sustains between Hafez's poetry, the traditions of Persian garden design and the historical memory of Shiraz.



● ISNA

Forgotten village discovered in Dasht-e Barm Forest

Field surveys and documentation covered a range of features, including the village's physical layout and place-name history, the architecture of its surviving houses and buildings, energy sources used by its inhabitants, historic gravestones and pottery, as well as other aspects of daily life. The findings have been documented and presented in a research paper, Abbaspour said.

Several clues uncovered during the investigation indicate that Ru'een dates back at least to the Safavid period, which ruled Iran from the 16th to the early 18th century, according to Abbaspour. The clearest evidence comes from dates of death inscribed on gravestones that remain legible today. The oldest recorded inscription commemorates a woman who died in Jumada al-Awwal

1110 AH, corresponding to the late Safavid period.

Several other box-shaped tombstones remain in the village's cemeteries, although severe erosion has made their inscriptions unreadable. Comparisons between the architecture of Ru'een's surviving houses and that of other villages in the region, whose histories also extend back to the Safavid era, further support the conclusion that the settlement was established at least as early as that period. Abbaspour added that archival research and historical documents indicate that the Dasht-e Barm Forest enjoyed considerable prosperity during the Safavid era. Historical records also mention prominent figures who lived in the region at the time.

Fieldwork identified the village's residential area and two cemeter-



● ISNA

Iranica Desk

The remains of Ru'een, an abandoned and long-forgotten village in the Dasht-e Barm Forest near Kazerun in southern Iran's Fars Province, have been identified and documented by cultural heritage researchers.

Mohsen Abbaspour, a researcher and cultural heritage expert, told ISNA that the discovery was made during a year-long research project investigating historic forest settlements in the oak woodlands of Dasht-e Barm, part of the

southern Zagros Mountains. The team came across the remains of a village that had been deserted for many years and whose existence had not been recorded in any of the available databases, he said.

Abbaspour explained that an examination of ancient epitaphs in the village's two historic cemeteries, where some of the deceased were identified by the name Ru'eeni, together with ethnographic information gathered from neighboring villages, established the settlement's name.

ies situated on opposite sides of a seasonal river. Researchers also documented the remains of terraced gardens covering approximately 21 hectares.

Comparisons with other Safavid-era settlements in the region suggest that Ru'een's inhabitants, in addition to raising livestock, relied on horticulture, growing trees suited to the local climate, including figs, plums and walnuts. The pottery analysis also provided further evidence supporting the village's Safavid-era origins and suggested that the settle-

ment had once been a thriving community. Residents used a variety of pottery implements featuring simple decorative finishes, as well as stone tools, for everyday activities, Abbaspour said. He expressed hope that the process of registering and publicizing the site would pave the way for visits by researchers and tourists interested in Iran's historic rural settlements.

The Dasht-e Barm Forest lies about 30 kilometers north of Kazerun, along the road connecting the city to Shiraz.

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Tehran orchestra brings Schubert's Italian style to stage

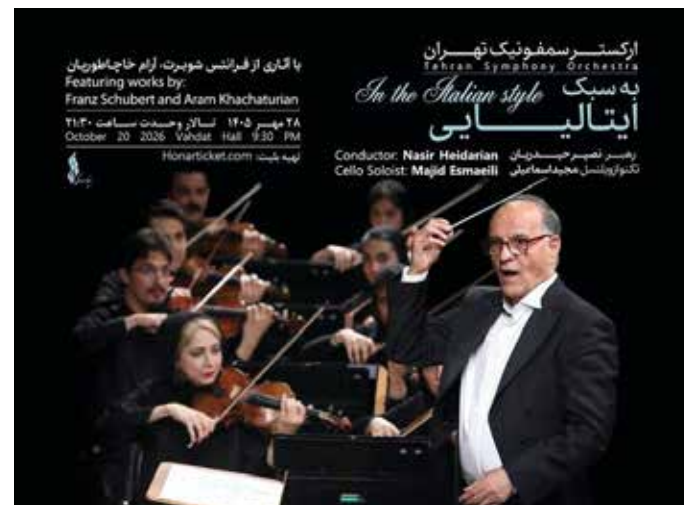
Social Desk

The Tehran Symphony Orchestra will bring works by Franz Schubert and Aram Khachaturian to the iconic Vahdat Hall in Tehran on October 20. The concert, titled 'In the Italian Style,' will open with Schubert's overture 'In the Italian Style,' followed by Khachaturian's

'Concerto-Rhapsody,' featuring Esmaeili on cello. Schubert's Symphony No. 2 will close the evening, IRNA reported on Tuesday. Conducting by Nassir Heidarian leading the performance, cellist Majid Esmaeili appearing as soloist. The performance is part of the orchestra's autumn program and follows a series of concerts at Vahdat Hall, one of

Tehran's main music venues. Schubert's overture 'In the Italian Style,' composed in 1817, reflects the influence of Italian opera, particularly the lively style associated with Gioachino Rossini. Khachaturian's 'Concerto-Rhapsody' for cello, written in 1963, combines lyrical passages with technically demanding sections. Schubert's Symphony No. 2, composed in

1814-1815, is an early work that reflects his engagement with the classical symphonic tradition. The latest concert continues the orchestra's efforts to bring classical music to audiences in the Iranian capital through a mix of works from the European repertoire and programs featuring Iranian composers. The Tehran Symphony Orchestra has presented a range of classical



and themed performances in recent months, making Vahdat Hall a regular venue for its concerts.

Iran's living heritage can cement resilience in times of crisis: Minister



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's living cultural heritage can help communities withstand war, insecurity and natural disasters by preserving social ties and collective identity, the cultural heritage minister said, urging stronger regional cooperation to protect traditional knowledge and practices. Reza Salehi-Amiri made the remarks in a message marking the opening of the seventh session of the Governing Council of the Tehran-based Regional Research Center for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. The meeting, held in Tehran coincided with World Day for Intangible

Cultural Heritage on October 17. Crises threaten not only physical infrastructure but also social trust and people's sense of belonging, Salehi-Amiri said. Collective rituals, cultural memory and traditional knowledge can help rebuild those connections and sustain community life. "Despite damage to the infrastructure in recent months, Iran has continued efforts to identify, document and teach intangible heritage", he said, referring to a 40-day war waged by the United States and Israel against the country in late February. Cultural preservation, he added, remains a priority even under difficult

conditions. The center's 2026-2027 action plan will focus on traditional knowledge related to water, customary resource management, traditional health and healing practices, food heritage and local food systems. It will also examine how living heritage can support climate adaptation and resilience. "Three specialized capacity-building programs are planned in Iran, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to expand training and strengthen regional cooperation," he said. Salehi-Amiri said the center's performance should not be judged by the number of meetings or training courses it holds. Instead, its

success should be measured by its impact on countries' ability to safeguard living heritage and fulfill their commitments under UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. He described cultural diversity as a basis for national cohesion and dialogue among nations. Lasting unity, he said, comes from recognizing cultural differences and bolstering a shared sense of belonging. Salehi-Amiri called for greater scientific and regional cooperation to preserve living traditions, promote mutual understanding and support closer ties among countries.

Kites fly for Gaza, Minab children in Tehran

Social Desk

About 200 schoolchildren gathered at Pardisan Park in Tehran to fly kites in memory of children killed in Gaza and Minab, a southern Iranian city where a US missile strike on a school killed dozens of people, during an event to link solidarity with war victims to children's rights and environmental protection on Monday. The event comes amid the heavy toll of conflict on children in both places. UNICEF reported that at least 21,700 children had been killed in the Gaza Strip as of June 30, 2026, following the full-fledged war by Israel on the Palestinian

territory in October 2023. A strike on Shajareh Tayyebbeh primary school in Minab on February 28, the first day of the US-Israeli war against Iran, killed 168 people, most of them children. Organized by Iran's Department of Environment and Tehran Municipality, the gathering featured kites carrying images and symbols of friendship and safety, IRNA reported. Arman Khorsand, head of the Department of Environment's Center for International Affairs and Conventions, said the kite-flying event aimed to show solidarity with children in Gaza and Minab and draw public

attention to the impact of war on kids. Khorsand said honoring victims and strengthening international solidarity could help prevent further abuses. Mohammad Madadi, head of the department's environmental education center, said such activities could foster empathy, social responsibility and awareness of children's rights and environmental protection. During the event, a kite designed in memory of children killed in Gaza and Minab was signed by the head of Iran's Department of Environment and family members of two Minab victims.

Tehran no longer ...

Russia and China can influence the course of current developments through diplomatic cooperation with Iran, participation in multilateral dialogue and the use of their positions on the UN Security Council. The current situation is entirely the result of the United States and Europe exploiting international institutions for their own purposes. Such cooperation could help prevent further erosion of international institutions and international law. These hostile measures against Iran will gradually be directed against other independent countries around

the world as well. The US-Israeli and European effort is aimed at establishing control over all political, legal, economic and security channels worldwide. Any actor that opposes this effort is regarded as an enemy. It is worth recalling the remarks of Josep Borrell, the former EU foreign policy chief, who described Europe, or the West, as a garden and the world beyond the West as a wild jungle. This is the belief held by all Western-Zionist leaders. Some express it openly, while others may not voice it, but nevertheless hold and remain committed to it.

Invitation to Participate in Public Tender

Tender No.: 14010354

Project Title: Metallurgy Group



Machine Sazi Arak Co. (MSA) hereby invites qualified and eligible companies to participate in Public tender for following items and according to attached technical specification:

1-Nitrogenized Low Carbon Ferro Chrome – Cr: 65-70 % C: Max 0.5 % N: 6 -7 % Si: Max 1.5% P, S: Max 0.03 % Size: 10-80 mm - QTY: 10 Tons
Interested and qualified bidders are invited to obtain the Tender Documents/ supplementary technical information from commercial department, Mr. Talebi, under e-mail address of commercial8@msa.ir and submit their bids in accordance with the requirements, terms, and conditions specified therein
The manufacture must be in list.

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- ▶ **Tender Issuing Authority:** Machine Sazi Arak (MSA)
- ▶ **Tender Number:** 14010354
- ▶ **Scope of Work/Supply:** supply Nitrogenized Low Carbon Ferro Chrome for Metallurgy group.
- ▶ **Date of Publication:** 20/October/2026
- ▶ **Date of receiving the tender Documents:** 21/Oct/2026 (please contact Mr. Talebi, under e-mail address of commercial8@msa.ir to receive tender documents)
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- ▶ **Place of Submission:** MSA Shop in Arak or through Email: Technical proposals to emails: a-mashayekh@msa.ir, commercial5@msa.ir, commercial8@msa.ir and commercial proposal only to email STC@MSA.IR
- ▶ **Bid Validity Period:** [10 Days]
- ▶ **Bid Security:** Bank Guarantee or valid company cheque valuing around 5% of the total value of the tender

Tender Documents

The Tender Documents including:

Envelope A

-The technical offer
- Technical specifications & requirement and also MPS, ITP, Drawing should be send by nominated email.

Envelope B

- The tender guarantees should be submit as hard copy to Mr. Talebi by duly time.

Envelope c

-The commercial offer considering all necessary term condition.
Should be sent through sealed and signed envelope to MSA Company in Arak or by email to STC@MSA.IR By duly time.

Department / Contact Person: Commercial dep. / Mr. Talebi the related Senior Commercial Specialist

Address: Arak, Sanat Square, Machine Sazi Arak Co. (MSA), Foreign Commercial dep.

Email Address: commercial8@msa.ir, commercial5@msa.ir, a-mashayekh@msa.ir

Telephone: 08632172909

Bidders are required to carefully review all tender documents and submit their bids in full compliance with the specified requirements.

Machine Sazi Arak Co. (MSA) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations, without incurring any liability to the bidders.

For further information and clarification, please contact:

Mr. Talebi, Tel no. 08632172909

Procurement and Commercial Deputy Dep