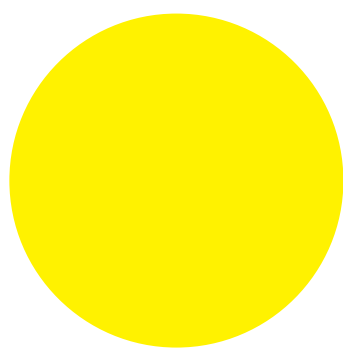


Iranian doctor selected for WHO cancer award



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The photo shows a container ship sinking in the Strait of Hormuz after hitting a sea mine on October 14, 2026.

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Economic resilience requires both domestic measures, diplomatic progress

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Iran can strengthen its economic resilience through targeted domestic measures, closer trade ties with neighboring countries and progress in foreign policy, economic expert Alireza Katani said. Practical steps can help manage external pressures, he added, but cannot fully replace diplomatic progress.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Katani said the government could prioritize essential imports if restrictions on foreign trade and access to foreign currency intensified. One short-term option would be to limit imports of non-essential goods so that available resources could be directed toward basic commodities and urgent needs.

"By rationing and restricting imports of luxury and non-essential goods, the government can secure essential needs and basic commodities for the public, provided other conditions remain unchanged," Katani said. He added that limited foreign-exchange interventions, including Dutch auctions, could help manage expectations in the currency market. Katani noted that the Central Bank of Iran was already using both approaches. However, he cautioned that not every movement in the exchange rate could be addressed through monetary measures. Some fluctuations, he said, were closely tied to political developments and conditions beyond the central bank's direct control.

Protecting livelihoods

The analyst said external restrictions could eventually affect domestic prices, particularly if they continued over a longer period. Higher import costs and difficulties accessing goods would make it unrealistic to assume that administrative price controls could prevent all price increases indefinitely. "We cannot ignore existing risks to prices and assume that administrative price controls will work in the long term," he said. Rather than relying on fixed prices alone, Katani argued, the government should reduce the impact of difficult conditions on lower-income households and ensure families can meet basic needs.

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When monsters walk among us

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Container ship sinks in Strait of Hormuz after hitting mine in unauthorized route

International Desk

Iran said a container ship that intended to pass through an unauthorized route in the Strait of Hormuz sank on Wednesday after striking a naval mine.

According to the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy said in a statement that the violating container ship exploded after striking a naval mine and catching fire.

"The vessel, which was carrying more than 2,500 containers, sank on Wednesday morning in the southern waters of the strait because of the intensity of the fire," the IRGC Navy's said.

The IRGC Navy also cautioned local vessels navigating the area, saying: "Local vessels and fishermen must exercise the utmost safety when navigating this route so they do not collide with containers floating on the water."

The incident comes amid a series of maritime developments reported by the IRGC Navy in recent days involving commercial vessels attempting to use routes that

Tehran considers unauthorized.

On Monday, the IRGC reported that an oil tanker had struck a naval mine in the Strait of Hormuz after disregarding warnings and attempting to navigate an unauthorized route. The incident followed two similar cases involving oil tankers over the preceding days.

The IRGC Navy also announced on October 9 that its forces had struck a liquefied petroleum gas carrier attempting to pass through an unauthorized route south of the strait.

Warning to violating vessels

In its recent statements, the IRGC has warned vessels against ignoring its navigation restrictions, saying ships switching off their navigation and identification systems would be treated as hostile.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's hydrocarbons usually transit, has become the main theatre of conflict in the war between Iran and the US.

Iran closed the strait in response to the

latest round of US-Israeli aggression, preventing US and allied ships from navigating the strategic waterway.

The move resulted in a significant increase in oil and energy prices across the globe, especially in the US, forcing Washington and the International Energy Agency (IEA) to release their strategic resources several times.

Following the signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Tehran opened the Strait of Hormuz, but after the US violated the MoU by blockading Iranian ports, Iran's Armed Forces closed the maritime corridor once again.

Fishermen injured in drone incident

In another incident in the Strait of Hormuz, three Iranian fishermen were injured after a fishing boat was struck in an incident involving an unidentified drone near Sirik in southern Iran's Hormozgan Province, the provincial governor's office said.

The vessel was struck while sailing about 18 nautical miles from Bondaran village in



The photo shows a container ship sinking in the Strait of Hormuz after hitting a sea mine on October 14, 2026.
● defapress.ir

Sirik county.
The United States regularly conducts drone surveillance over the Persian Gulf and has

in recent months struck targets in southern Iran that it claimed were used to disrupt navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.

Settlement of navigation in Hormuz hinges on progress in US-Iran talks: *Oman*

International Desk

Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Albusaidi said on Wednesday that discussions with Iran on temporary navigation arrangements in Strait of Hormuz have been almost concluded but a permanent settlement remained linked to progress in broader US-Iran negotiations. The Omani foreign minister made the remarks in a joint press conference with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar in Islamabad after they discussed security and freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz and Bab Al-Mandab, two strategic waterways whose disruption has raised concerns about global energy and food security. Iran's restrictions on shipping through Hormuz, which handled roughly a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas trade before the conflict, have disrupted energy supplies and driven up costs for import-dependent economies, including Pakistan. Oman, which shares the strait with Iran, has been engaged in discussions with Tehran over navigation arrangements while supporting broader diplomatic efforts to resolve the US-Iran conflict.

"We are committed as far as the



Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Albusaidi (r) shakes hands with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar upon his arrival in Islamabad, Pakistan, on October 14, 2026.
● PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

Sultanate of Oman is concerned to free navigation, unhindered navigation, and the return of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz because of its vitality to the global economy and to the region," Albusaidi said. He said Oman would support efforts toward that objective, adding that discussions with Iran on temporary navigation arrangements were almost concluded, while a permanent settlement remained linked to progress in broader US-Iran negotiations. Both ministers emphasized diplomacy as the preferred means of addressing regional disputes and preventing further escalation. "Both Oman and Pakistan attach great importance to dialogue and diplomacy as essential means of addressing regional challenges, easing tensions, and promoting peace and stability," Albusaidi said. "Oman truly appreciates Pakistan's

constructive role in facilitating dialogue and supporting diplomatic efforts in the region, including its role in the negotiations between Iran and the United States." Iran has maintained heightened restrictions on navigation in the Strait of Hormuz since the start of the US-Israeli military aggression against the country on Feb. 28, citing security concerns and the need to safeguard its sovereignty. Iran and Oman have been engaged in negotiations for months over arrangements for safe navigation through the strategic waterway. On August 25, the two countries announced discussions on a phased framework that would initially establish a temporary joint maritime corridor, alongside a joint mine-clearance project. The framework is aimed at restoring safe navigation while preserving the sovereignty and sovereign rights of coastal states.

Ansarullah say targeted Saudi oil giant Aramco, airport, refinery

International Desk

Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement said on Wednesday its forces targeted facilities belonging to Saudi oil giant Aramco as well as Riyadh airport, as they vowed to conduct more attacks.

"The Yemeni Armed Forces carried out a high-quality military operation targeting Aramco in Dhahran, in the Eastern Province, King Khalid International Airport, and the Aramco refinery in Riyadh. This was carried out using a large number of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and drones," military spokesperson Yahya Saree said, adding "operations toward Saudi depths will continue in the coming days, targeting Saudi enemy airports and oil facilities". Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude oil exporter, has in recent days come under sustained attack in a dramatic escalation in the war with Yemen's resistance movement.

It has hit back with strikes against the group's stronghold in the Yemeni capital Sana'a, which for years has been under their grip.

Earlier, a Saudi energy ministry official said a building belonging to Aramco in Dhahran was struck, resulting in a "limited fire" but "no casualties or fatalities".

Dhahran is home to Aramco's headquarters, a vast complex comprising numerous buildings and residential compounds. Most strikes on Saudi Arabia have targeted infrastructure on the outskirts of the capital, but the barrages appear to be getting



● AFP

closer to the city center.

The Saudi-led coalition meanwhile struck oil sites across western Yemen, with spokesman Turki Al-Malki saying the attacks targeted facilities used to supply Ansarullah's effort to "threaten the kingdom, Yemen, the southern Red Sea and waterways".

Saudi Arabia has supported Yemen's government in south militarily against Ansarullah since 2015 in a long-running civil war that has created a humanitarian crisis.

The latest escalation follows a strike on Riyadh's international airport on Saturday that left 13 people dead in the worst attack on the kingdom since 2015.

The Saudi cabinet vowed in a meeting led by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman that it "will not allow its security or freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab Strait to be threatened".

Many countries have issued travel warnings to their citizens in Saudi Arabia, with France telling its nationals on Tuesday to avoid Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam airports.

Economic resilience requires ...

Direct financial assistance and coupon-based support could help protect vulnerable support, he said. Such measures would direct public resources toward households most in need while helping maintain access to essential goods during periods of external pressure.

Katani acknowledged that sustaining domestic production under these conditions would be difficult. When businesses face higher costs, uncertainty and obstacles to obtaining inputs, the government has limited room to resolve every problem quickly. Production could recover more effectively if the political outlook improved and macroeconomic stability strengthened.

Expanding regional trade

Katani said Iran could make greater use of its extensive land borders to maintain access to goods and recover part of the trade capacity disrupted through maritime routes. Neighboring countries could provide additional channels for

commerce, helping diversify routes used to bring in essential supplies.

"Iran can use the extensive capacity of its land borders and recover part of the maritime trade it has lost," he said. Informal trade could also play a significant role in supplying goods needed in the country, particularly when formal channels face obstacles.

Practical steps could make cross-border commerce more efficient. Faster customs clearance and agreements with neighboring states to facilitate the movement of people and goods would help reduce delays and ease trade. Greater use of regional routes could also spread risks across different channels rather than leaving businesses dependent on a narrow set of options.

Role of diplomacy

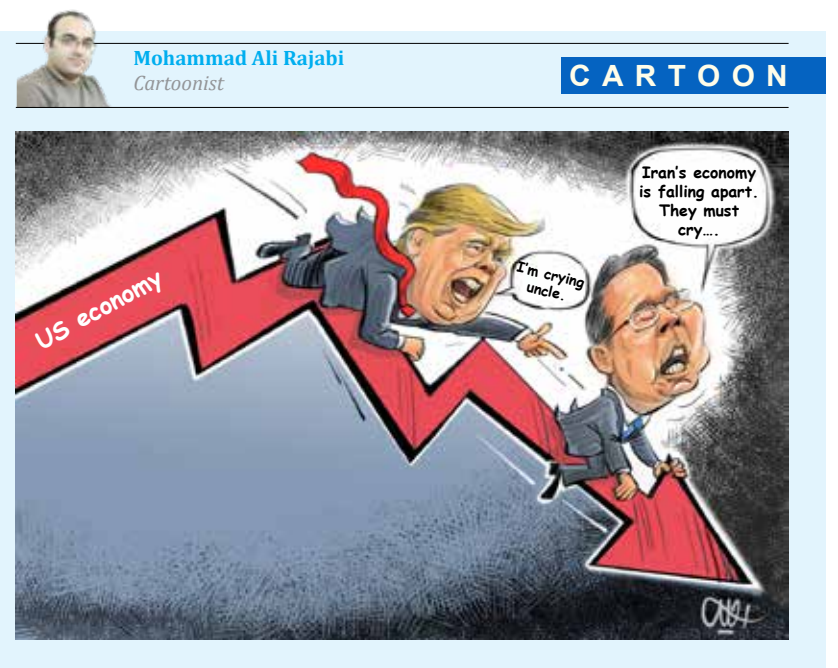
Despite the value of domestic measures and regional cooperation, Katani argued that the main difficulties facing Iran's economy in recent years have been political. Substantial economic improvement

would be difficult without a meaningful change in the political outlook, he said.

"The problem with Iran's economy in recent years has, first and foremost, been political," he said. "If there is no significant diplomatic breakthrough, economic conditions will not see a substantial improvement either."

Katani said the immediate objective should be to limit the impact of external constraints while keeping essential economic activity running. Facilitating trade with neighboring countries, managing energy consumption and prioritizing imports could all contribute to greater stability. These steps, however, should be seen as ways to manage difficult conditions, nor substitutes for progress in foreign policy.

Katani said Iran's ability to withstand external economic pressure would depend partly on how effectively the government used its available resources and trade links. But without progress in foreign policy, the scope for a sustained economic recovery would remain limited.



CBI governor rejects claims of Iran’s economic collapse as ‘illusion’



Central Bank of Iran Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati (L) and Economy and Finance Minister Ali Madanizadeh attend an International Monetary Fund meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, on October 14, 2026. ● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iran’s economy has shown strong resilience despite the US-Israeli war and Washington’s maximum-pressure campaign, Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati said, dismissing claims that the country’s economy was on the verge of collapse. “Claims that Iran’s economy is collapsing are an illusion,” Hemmati said at an International Monetary Fund (IMF) meeting in Bangkok. Iran faces a US naval blockade imposed by President Donald Trump in mid-April

to pressure Tehran into an agreement following a 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February. The blockade aims to reduce Iran’s oil exports to zero and drain state coffers. In his latest remarks, Trump described Iran as a failed country, saying, “They have no economy. They have 300 percent inflation. They have no money.” Iran, which has faced decades of Western sanctions over its nuclear activities, has also been hit by a new round of US sanctions targeting its aviation sector. Hemmati said the central bank had

played an important role in maintaining economic stability by supplying foreign currency for essential goods and medicines and helping to curb accelerating inflation despite US sanctions and economic pressure, according to IRNA. The central bank’s priorities are to curb inflation, stabilize inflation expectations, maintain financial stability and ensure the continued operation of banking and payment systems, Hemmati said. He added that the bank remained committed to monetary discipline, strengthening policy frameworks and

addressing macroeconomic imbalances, while noting that external shocks and financial constraints limited the scope and effectiveness of policymaking. According to a report cited by Tasnim news agency on Tuesday, the IMF’s World Economic Outlook projects Iran’s economy will contract by 7.6% in 2026 before returning to growth of 3.6% in 2027. Inflation is forecast to ease to 42% in 2027 from 78.6% in 2026. Iran’s national currency has fallen to record lows in recent weeks, with the US dollar trading at more than 2.5 million rials on the open market.

Hemmati said continued instability in the region was affecting energy markets, transportation, trade and investment. He said stability required respect for sovereignty and legitimate security concerns, alongside cooperation based on mutual responsibility and shared interests. These developments, he added, called for a clearer and more proactive response from the IMF in line with its mandate to promote international monetary cooperation and oversee the effective functioning of the international

monetary system. Hemmati said he expected the fund, in its bilateral and multilateral surveillance activities, to examine the economic effects of war, sanctions and restrictions on international payments with the same rigor it applied to domestic policies. That responsibility required applying consistent standards to all members and maintaining active dialogue among them on measures needed to mitigate those effects, he said. The 2026 annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank Group are being held in Bangkok, the Thai capital, from October 12 to 18.

CBI chief meets Algerian counterpart On the sidelines of the meetings, Hemmati held talks with Bank of Algeria Governor Mohamed Lamine Lebbou to discuss monetary, banking and trade relations between the two countries. The talks focused on expanding economic cooperation and strengthening bilateral trade. Hemmati reaffirmed Tehran’s commitment to developing and consolidating economic relations with friendly countries. The Algerian central bank governor welcomed the meeting and expressed his country’s readiness to expand economic and banking cooperation with Iran. He also stressed the need to follow up on existing agreements in the interests of both nations.

Iran, Eurasian bloc agree on trade goods list

Economy Desk

Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) have agreed on a list of goods for trade, as Tehran seeks to expand exports and imports with the five-member bloc and remove technical barriers facing businesses. Iranian Industry, Mines and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak said the infrastructure needed to exchange the selected goods was in place. He made the remarks during a meeting with Andrey Slepnev, trade minister of the Eurasian Economic Commission, in Tehran, IRIBNEWS reported on Wednesday. Atabak said Iran was ready to broaden economic cooperation with EAEU member states. Both sides had drawn up lists of goods for trade, with Iran selecting items based on its production capacity and domestic needs, he said. He stressed that the timing of the negotiations was important, describing trade expansion and the mutual supply of goods as strategically significant under current conditions. Direct meetings between officials, he added, could bring the sides closer together and help iron



out technical problems that affect traders on both sides. Slepnev said the EAEU was committed to sustained and comprehensive economic and commercial cooperation with Iran. He also reaffirmed the bloc’s support for advancing joint trade agreements and its determination to maintain and strengthen ties with Tehran. The talks come as Iran seeks to build on a free trade agreement with the EAEU that took effect on May 15, 2025. The deal aims to make cross-border trade easier and reduce customs duties, with tariffs eliminated on about 87% of covered product categories. Trade between Iran and EAEU member states rose by 22% in the first year of the agreement, while Iranian imports from the bloc increased

by 33%, according to an Iranian Trade Promotion Organization official in June 2026. The EAEU, which began operating in 2015, comprises Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. It seeks to ease customs barriers and create a common market for goods, services, capital and labor, while coordinating some economic rules and investment among its members. For Iran, the bloc offers a market for agricultural and food products, metals and industrial goods, as well as a route to strengthen commercial links with Russia and other member states. However, the EAEU remains one of Iran’s trading partners, and its importance should be assessed alongside the country’s other major trade relationships.

Iran Air launches first Zahedan-Quetta flight route

Economy Desk

Iran Air will launch its first route between Zahedan in southeastern Iran and Quetta in southwestern Pakistan, bringing its number of active routes to Pakistan to three, the airline said. The new service will operate once a week on Wednesdays according to Mehr News Agency. The inaugural flight, numbered 826, departed Zahedan Airport at 10:10 a.m. on Wednesday, while return flight 827 was



scheduled to leave Quetta for Zahedan at 2:25 p.m. the same day, the airline said. Last week, Iran’s national flag carrier resumed flights

to Karachi from Tehran and Mashhad, with one weekly flight from each city under a new schedule following a suspension. The resumption of flights

to Karachi from Tehran and Mashhad added the route to Iran Air’s international flight schedule, the airline’s deputy for commercial affairs and branch operations, Mahmoud Ansari, said last week. Iran’s aviation industry has been hit by a new wave of US sanctions since mid-September under a campaign dubbed “Operation Economic Outcast,” aimed at severing the country’s remaining financial and commercial links with the global economy.

Tehran weighs transmitting wind power to Afghan cities

Economy Desk

Iran is considering plans to transmit electricity from wind farms in its eastern provinces to major Afghan cities and has signed an agreement with Afghanistan to expand cooperation in power plant construction, modernization and engineering services. Iran’s Ministry of Energy said a proposal to transmit electricity generated by wind farms in southern South Khorasan and northern Sistan-Baluchestan provinces to Kabul, Herat and Kandahar was under review, Mehr news agency reported. The proposal involves developing high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission infrastructure and comes amid plans by the two countries to expand electricity exchanges to as much as 2,000 megawatts. Investment by the Afghan side through barter arrangements is also being considered, according to the ministry. Separately, Iran’s Thermal Power Plants Holding Company and Afghanistan’s



National Development Company signed a memorandum of understanding on Tuesday to expand technical and engineering cooperation and draw on Iran’s power generation capabilities to develop Afghanistan’s electricity infrastructure. The agreement covers the design and construction of thermal power plants, the modernization of existing facilities, capacity expansion, efficiency improvements, equipment and spare parts supply, and engineering services. It also provides for cooperation in plant

operations, maintenance and repairs, workforce training and technology transfer. The agreed areas of cooperation include gas-fired, combined-cycle, diesel, coal-fired, geothermal and steam power plants. Feasibility studies, technical consulting, installation and commissioning, equipment upgrades and measures to reduce environmental pollution are also covered by the agreement. The developments come as Iran pursues a national 765-kilovolt transmission network project aimed at increasing electricity transmission capacity, reducing losses and improving the stability of the national grid. At a meeting to review implementation requirements for the project, the Ministry of Energy outlined plans for about 20,000 megavolt-amperes of substation capacity and 6,200 circuit-kilometers of transmission lines. The ministry has called on domestic contractors and equipment manufacturers to participate in the project.

When **monsters** walk among us



By Henry A. Giroux
Professor and cultural critic

OPINION

We have many monsters to destroy.

— George Seferis

But how can anyone tell the truth about Fascism, unless he is willing to speak out against capitalism, which brings it forth?

— Bertolt Brecht

More than four decades ago, the Greek composer and public intellectual Manos Hadjidakis issued a warning that now reads less like a reflection on fascism than a prophecy of our own time. The greatest danger, he suggested, comes when we grow accustomed to the monster, when its presence no longer shocks the conscience and its violence begins to merge with the routines of everyday life. Tolerance does not diminish the monster; it multiplies the conditions that allow it to flourish, strengthening its presence in public life until monstrosity itself acquires the authority to govern. In this instance, the collapse of conscience is inseparable from the uncoupling of “belief from judgment, conviction from action.” We have reached such a moment. The monsters are no longer hiding in the shadows. They occupy presidential offices and ministries, command armies and police forces, control digital platforms, dominate television screens, administer borders, build detention centers, and transform the suffering of others into political theater. Their language of racial purification, mass deportation, extermination, vengeance, and disposability no longer produces the outrage it once might have summoned. Cruelty is displayed as strength. Humiliation becomes entertainment. The spectacle of suffering becomes a source of political pleasure. What should be unbearable becomes familiar; what should provoke resistance is absorbed into the rhythms of everyday life.

The monster triumphs not simply when it commits atrocities, but when its language becomes ordinary, its violence becomes acceptable, its weaponization of racial and class divisions goes unnoticed, and its presence no longer disturbs the moral imagination. Toni Morrison gave us another language for understanding how monsters become ordinary. She called it “dead language,” a language emptied of ethical responsibility and enlisted in the service of domination. Morrison’s dead language is itself monstrous. As she writes, oppressive language “does more than represent violence; it is violence.” It is a language that “drinks blood, laps vulnerabilities, tucks its fascist boots under crinolines of respectability and patriotism as it moves relentlessly toward the bottom line and the bottomed-out mind.”

Morrison’s insight reaches beyond rhetoric. Monsters require a language that prepares the ground for their violence, strips their victims of humanity, and teaches people to accommodate the unthinkable. Dead language is one of the conditions that allows monstrosity to pass into everyday life disguised as common sense. Primo Levi once observed that “Monsters exist, but they are too



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few in number to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the common men, the functionaries ready to believe and to act without asking questions.” Levi remains right about the role of unthinking functionaries, but today, the monsters themselves have acquired institutional power and public legitimacy. Emboldened by staggering economic inequality, empowered by the machinery of high-tech authoritarianism, and legitimated by an expanding culture of state violence, they have moved from the political margins to the commanding heights of American society. Here, Hannah Arendt’s warning about the failure of thinking takes on a renewed urgency. Monstrosity thrives when judgment is surrendered, when the obligation to think becomes a burden, and when ignorance is transformed from an absence of knowledge into a cultivated refusal to know. We might call this the banality of ignorance: the willful suspension of judgment that allows people to see suffering without confronting it and to hear lies without rejecting them. The monster does not merely demand obedience. It needs subjects who have learned not to think about what their obedience makes possible. Yet Hadjidakis’s warning poses a question more disturbing than



Children rest on the floor beneath foil blankets at a US Customs and Border Protection detention facility in McAllen, Texas, the US, in June 2018.

US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION



whether monsters now govern us. What does it mean for a society to begin to resemble its monsters? And what pedagogical forces are at work in creating and normalizing that resemblance? Resemblance does not mean that everyone becomes a killer or a fascist. It means that the habits of thought, structures of feeling, and forms of indifference on which monstrosity depends begin to penetrate everyday life. The banality of ignorance becomes a social condition, a cultivated form of moral blindness in which not knowing offers a refuge from responsibility and refusing to think becomes a condition of belonging. But such ignorance does not exist outside the realm of desire. It has an emotional register; a psychology of authoritarianism and a pedagogy of terror through which people learn not simply to live with cruelty but to bathe in its emotional charge, finding pleasure and belonging in “patterns of domination and submission [that harden] into a syndrome of attitudes regarding hierarchy, power, sexuality and tradition.”

The monster has a long history, born in the darkest regions of the social imagination where fear, difference, and power converge. As Manvir Singh has observed, monsters have long haunted the boundaries between the human and the inhuman, the familiar and the terrifying, the civilized and what it casts outside its gates. But monsters are never simply creatures of fantasy. They are warnings, projections, embod-



The monsters are no longer hiding in the shadows. Their language of racial purification, mass deportation, extermination, vengeance, and disposability no longer produces the outrage it once might have summoned. Cruelty is displayed as strength. Humiliation becomes entertainment. The spectacle of suffering becomes a source of political pleasure. What should be unbearable becomes familiar; what should provoke resistance is absorbed into the rhythms of everyday life.

iments of collective fears, and often weapons for deciding who belongs within the circle of humanity and who can be expelled from it. What matters politically is what happens when the monster steps out of myth and fantasy, takes possession of the institutions of power, and acquires the authority to decide who may live, who must suffer, and who can be made disposable.

There is, however, another problem with the metaphor of the monster itself. To imagine Donald Trump, Stephen Miller, Pete Hegseth, Itamar Ben-Gvir, Benjamin Netanyahu, or other architects of contemporary authoritarian violence simply as monsters risks placing them outside history, as if their cruelty originated in some private pathology detached from the society that produced them. The monster can then become an alibi for the society that created him. Moral outrage becomes individualized, while the institutions, economic interests, racial hierarchies, cultural apparatuses, and political forces that make organized cruelty possible disappear. This is the crucial insight in Jorge Gonzalez Arocha’s argument that turning perpetrators into monsters can itself become a way of looking away. Arocha argues that “reducing the perpetrator to nothing more than a monster protects us from recognising ourselves as potential perpetrators. It distances us from the event and its reality, while placing us in a position of moral superiority....[it] is a way of denying that the ability to destroy also belongs to us, that it forms part of the human condition.”

The problem is not that monsters do not exist. The problem begins when monstrosity becomes an explanation rather than a question. Monsters do not descend upon society from somewhere outside history. They are produced within history, cultivated through institutions, protected by bureaucracies, legitimized by law, financed by powerful economic interests, amplified by media, and normalized through culture. The political significance of monsters lies not simply in the horrors they commit, but in the social order that makes those horrors possible, useful, legitimate, and eventually ordinary. A singular focus on monsters can obscure the deeper structure of gangster capitalism, a system that “prioritises certain forms of power over the common good and enables the gradual dehumanization of our societies.”

The question must therefore change. We must move from monster to machinery, from the pathology of the individual to the political economy of organized cruelty, and from there to the cultural and educational forces that teach people how to live with the suffering such machinery produces. Monsters do not act alone. Their power becomes visible in the institutions that protect them, the wealth that sustains them, the laws that authorize them, and the violence that follows in their wake. We see their handiwork in streets stained with blood, in migrants brutalized and left to die in detention centers, in the torture documented in Israeli prisons, and in the bodies of children and families torn apart by Israeli and American bombs in Gaza. Behind these abstractions are torn limbs, dismembered bodies, chil-

dren pulled from rubble, families burned and buried beneath the ruins of their homes, and human beings reduced to flesh and bone by systems in which cruelty has been organized, authorized, and repeated until even the most horrific violence threatens to lose its capacity to shock.

The horror lies in a society’s growing accommodation to monsters, in the silence surrounding their crimes and the erosion of moral and political boundaries that once made their actions intolerable. Such silence is never innocent. It is the rigor mortis of ethical and political decay, the point at which a politics organized around death begins to pass as ordinary life. The nightmare no longer lurks in the shadows; it claws its way into daylight and is met with indifference, resignation, or applause. The question is how people learn to live amid mass suffering and eventually look away. What forms of power require such silence? What institutions cultivate it? What culture teaches people to turn away from the bodies left behind? And most important, what pedagogical machinery teaches millions not merely to tolerate cruelty but to identify with those who inflict it, desire the power they embody, and experience the suffering of others as the price of their own imagined liberation?

Political economy, culture, and pedagogy converge here. The monster becomes inseparable from gangster capitalism, pedagogical terrorism, and the culture of cruelty. Gangster capitalism does not accidentally produce monsters. It increasingly requires them, along with publics capable of loving them.

Arendt’s concept of radical evil takes this argument further, moving us from the failure of judgment to the political machinery that renders human beings superfluous. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, radical evil emerges from a political order capable of stripping human beings of rights, history, individuality, and finally their claim to membership in the human community. The concentration camp represented the most extreme realization of this logic, but its political significance extended beyond the camp. Totalitarianism required institutions capable of transforming human beings into disposable matter.

Arendt’s later account of Adolf Eichmann complicated the picture further. Eichmann did not appear before her as a demonic figure possessing some unfathomable depth of evil. He appeared frighteningly ordinary: bureaucratic, careerist, obedient, incapable of thinking seriously about the consequences of his actions. The banality of evil did not mean that his crimes were banal. It meant that extraordinary crimes could be administered through ordinary routines, bureaucratic language, professional ambition, obedience, and the suspension of judgment. Reinhard Heydrich, one of the principal architects of the Nazi machinery of terror and mass murder, represents another configuration of the political monster. Here, ideological fanaticism, administrative intelligence, and extraordinary institutional power converged. Eichmann and Heydrich should not be collapsed into the same psychological type, but both expose the inadequacy

of treating atrocity simply as the work of monsters. Modern systems of terror require administrators, lawyers, technicians, police officers, propagandists, intellectuals, journalists, and functionaries. Evil becomes most politically dangerous when it acquires an office, a budget, a bureaucracy, a vocabulary of necessity, and a public willing to accept its premises. Primo Levi understood this danger in another register. He rejected the consoling temptation to divide the world neatly between innocent humanity and incomprehensible monsters. As he once put it, “It is a stupid mistake to see all the demons on one side and all the saints on the other.... To divide into black and white means not to know human nature.” His concept of the gray zone gave this insight its most disturbing political force. The gray zone did not abolish distinctions between victim and perpetrator; it exposed the ways systems of domination corrupt moral life itself. The political lesson is disturbing precisely because it denies us the comfort of believing that atrocity belongs to another species of human being. Modern barbarism does not emerge outside civilization. It is organized through civilization’s institutions, technologies, forms of expertise, and structures of obedience. Umberto Eco made a related point about fascism. Fascism does not possess a single immutable costume. It changes its language, symbols, technologies, and institutional forms. Eco warned that “Ur-Fascism can come back under the most innocent of disguises.” To search only for Mussolini’s blackshirts or Hitler’s brownshirts is therefore to risk missing fascism when it returns wearing a business suit, carrying a Bible, appearing on podcasts, commanding an algorithm, or invoking the language of freedom, national rebirth, border security, and popular sovereignty. Fascism survives precisely because it learns how to inhabit the historical conditions of its own time. If fascism changes with the historical conditions it inhabits, then those conditions become central to understanding how its monsters are produced and sustained. The problem of the monster must therefore be situated within political economy, culture, pedagogy, and history. The conditions that make monstrosity possible are neither accidental nor timeless. They emerge from societies in which extreme inequality is treated as natural, cruelty becomes entertainment, racial hierarchy is defended as common sense, militarism becomes a national virtue, and entire populations are designated as disposable. The monstrosity of the present did not suddenly appear with Trump. Its genealogy runs through the long history of American empire and, with particular force, through the War on Terror. In the name of fighting terrorism, the United States unleashed wars whose direct death toll exceeded 600,000 people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and Yemen, while estimates of deaths produced indirectly through destroyed infrastructure, disease, displacement, and malnutrition run into the millions. Such devastation cannot be reduced to the language of catastrophic policy failure. It constituted a vast machinery of racialized disposability in which entire populations could be bombed, tortured, displaced, imprisoned, and abandoned while their suffering barely registered within the moral vocabulary of American political life. Aimé Césaire understood long ago

that imperial violence never remains safely confined to the people against whom it is first directed. Colonial brutality, he warned, produces a “terrific boomerang effect”: the habits of dehumanization, racial hierarchy, lawlessness, and organized violence cultivated abroad eventually return home. The War on Terror offers a terrifying contemporary illustration of that warning. The torture chambers of Abu Ghraib, indefinite detention at Guantánamo, extraordinary rendition, drone assassination, mass surveillance, and the normalization of permanent war did more than devastate other societies. They helped educate the American public into accepting torture, surveillance, militarized policing, lawless executive power, and the designation of whole populations as threats. Trumpism did not invent this political culture. It inherited it, intensified it, and turned its imperial habits inward. In this sense, the monster came home because the machinery that produced it had been operating for decades. Under gangster capitalism, the imperial machinery of disposability turns inward, assuming an especially lethal domestic form. Wealth concentrates, public goods are stripped for private profit, democratic institutions are subordinated to billionaire power, and the punishing state expands as the social state contracts. Abandonment and repression become two sides of the same political order. Pedagogy becomes central because fascism is never merely imposed from above. It must be learned. People must be taught whom to fear, whom to hate, whose suffering matters, whose suffering can be ignored, and whose disappearance can be celebrated. They must learn to experience cruelty as strength, domination as freedom, racial hierarchy as natural, and violence as national purification. Pedagogical terrorism names this process. It operates through schools and churches, television and social media, podcasts, political rallies, digital platforms, advertising, and the spectacular theater of state violence. These cultural apparatuses do more than communicate ideas. They organize attention, shape consciousness, mobilize desire, and teach habits of feeling. They create the emotional and ideological conditions under which disposability becomes common sense. Private anxieties are given public enemies. Loneliness is transformed into the counterfeit solidarity of the tribe, powerlessness redirected into aggression, and resentment elevated into a moral virtue. Fear is converted into hatred and humiliation into the desire to humiliate others. Fascism thrives on this emotional economy because it gives private suffering a public target. The wounds inflicted by an increasingly brutal social order are redirected away from the structures that produce them and toward immigrants, Black people, Palestinians, feminists, intellectuals, dissidents, and anyone else designated as an enemy. A culture of barbarism takes hold when cruelty is no longer confined to the state or its most fanatical leaders but enters everyday life, shaping public consciousness, political desire, and the boundaries of who is considered human. Barbarism becomes cultural when large numbers of people support forced removal, collective punishment, starvation, exterminatory violence, and the destruction of civilian life without experiencing such policies as a moral catastrophe.



Israelis dance during a demonstration calling for Jewish resettlement of the Gaza Strip on October 21, 2024. ● TSAFRIR ABAYOV/AP

Israel offers a chilling example. In May 2025, a survey conducted by Pennsylvania State University professor Tamir Sorek found that 82 percent of Israeli Jews surveyed supported the expulsion of Palestinians from Gaza, with 54 percent saying they were “very” supportive. More disturbing still, 47 percent agreed that when the Israeli military conquers an enemy city it should act as the Israelites did in the biblical conquest of Jericho, by “killing all the residents”. These figures register something more terrifying than support for a particular military policy. They reveal how the language of expulsion and extermination can migrate from the margins of political life into the moral vocabulary of everyday society. This is what a culture of barbarism looks like when disposability becomes common sense and the destruction of another people can be imagined as legitimate, necessary, or even righteous. Omer Bartov has gone further, arguing that Israeli society has become complicit through both action and silence, and is increasingly marked by violence, vulgarity, and indifference. What is at stake here exceeds the crimes of Netanyahu, Ben-Gvir, or the Israeli military. It points to the pedagogical production of a social order in which the language of elimination becomes thinkable, mass suffering becomes tolerable, and exterminatory violence can be absorbed into the ordinary rhythms of national life. This is the endpoint of pedagogical terrorism: the manufacture of subjects for whom barbarism no longer appears barbaric. The culture of fascism does not merely tolerate monsters; it turns them into celebrities, strongmen, saviors, and objects of identification, reproducing a cult of leadership. Their violations of moral and political norms become signs of authenticity, their cruelty proof of strength. Their contempt for democratic restraints becomes a source of pleasure for followers who experience each transgression as their own imaginary liberation from the obligations of equality, compassion, and mutual responsibility. Trump offered a chilling display of these mobilizing passions of fascism when he called upon his followers to cheat in the November elections. At the Republican convention in Dallas, he instructed thousands of supporters to

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The torture chambers of Abu Ghraib, indefinite detention at Guantánamo, extraordinary rendition, drone assassination, mass surveillance, and the normalization of permanent war did more than devastate other societies. They helped educate the American public into accepting torture, surveillance, militarized policing, lawless executive power, and the designation of whole populations as threats. Trumpism did not invent this political culture. It inherited it, intensified it, and turned its imperial habits inward.

raise their right hands and repeat an oath of personal loyalty that included the declaration, “I don’t care if I’m registered or not. I’m going to try and cheat like hell like they do.” This was more than another assault on democratic norms. It was a fascist political ritual in which loyalty to the leader, contempt for law, and the thrill of collective transgression were fused into a mass spectacle. Yet the incident was absorbed into the churn of the news cycle as another bizarre Trump performance. This is how fascism becomes ordinary: the outrageous is reported, consumed, and forgotten before its meaning can become a matter of sustained public judgment. What should have registered as a political emergency dissolved into the culture of immediacy, stripped of its historical meaning and reduced to another spectacle without consequence. The political task cannot be reduced to removing individual monsters from power. The language of monstrosity becomes politically disabling when it individualizes what is systemic, directing attention toward pathological leaders while leaving intact the institutions, economic interests, media ecosystems, racial hierarchies, and educational forces that produce authoritarian consciousness. The defining political question of our time is not whether monsters have returned. It is what kind of society produces them, what forms of power need them, and what pedagogical machinery teaches people to follow them. The monster is not the end of the analysis but its beginning. Fascism cannot be defeated by removing its most visible leaders while leaving intact the economic, political, and cultural machinery that produced them. The struggle against fascism must also confront gangster capitalism, white supremacy, militarism, the carceral state, and the institutions that turn human beings into disposable populations. But resistance cannot live on outrage alone. It needs a language of possibility and a politics capable of making hope concrete. Hope is neither optimism nor faith that history bends automatically toward justice. It is a practice born when people refuse the manufactured loneliness of neoliberal life, discover one another in struggle, and recognize that what they experience as private misery is often a public wound produced by structures of power. It takes form in unions, classrooms, demonstrations, mutual-aid networks, abolitionist movements, struggles for Palestinian freedom, immigrant justice campaigns, and organi-

zations capable of turning anger into collective power. There are already signs that such a politics is struggling to be born in the United States. The resurgence of democratic socialism, the extraordinary growth of the Democratic Socialists of America, the electoral victories of socialist candidates, and renewed labor militancy suggest that increasing numbers of people are no longer willing to accept the tyranny of the market as the horizon of political possibility. DSA reported more than 120,000 members by the summer of 2026, alongside a widening field of socialist electoral victories and organizing campaigns. These developments should neither be romanticized nor mistaken for a mass socialist transformation. But they matter because they register something the ruling order desperately wants declared impossible: capitalism is once again being named as a political problem, socialism has returned to public life as a language of possibility, and collective struggle is breaking through the suffocating claim that there is no alternative. Hope is dangerous to fascism because authoritarian power feeds on isolation, historical amnesia, political exhaustion, and the conviction that nothing can be changed. Militant hope shatters that conviction. It turns private suffering into public anger, spectators into political agents, and the loneliness on which fascism feeds into collective power. Against the pedagogy of fear, it creates a pedagogy of resistance and civic courage. Against the culture of cruelty, it makes solidarity a weapon and justice a collective demand. Against a society organized around disposability, it insists that human beings are worth more than markets, borders, property, and profit, and that the institutions producing misery, abandonment, and organized violence must be transformed. The struggle is larger than defeating the monsters who occupy the commanding heights of power. We must destroy the conditions that make them possible by building a mass democratic politics capable of confronting concentrated wealth, dismantling racial and economic hierarchies, defending public goods, breaking the grip of militarism, and returning economic and political power to ordinary people. Democracy cannot survive as the political shell of capitalism, emptied of its substance while concentrated economic power governs from within. It must become a way of organizing social life itself, grounded in equality, collective power, and the struggle for a just future. More than four decades ago, Manos Hadjidakis warned: “When the face of the monster ceases to frighten us, then we must be afraid... because that means we have begun to resemble it.” His warning has never been more urgent. But resemblance is not destiny. The monster depends upon our resignation, our silence, our isolation, and finally our belief that resistance is futile. The most radical form of hope begins with the refusal of that lie. Monsters are made by history, and they can be unmade by collective struggle. That struggle must confront capitalism itself and build a democratic socialist politics capable of wresting power from the ruling elites, returning it to ordinary people, and transforming hope into a force for remaking the world.

The article first appeared on CounterPunch.

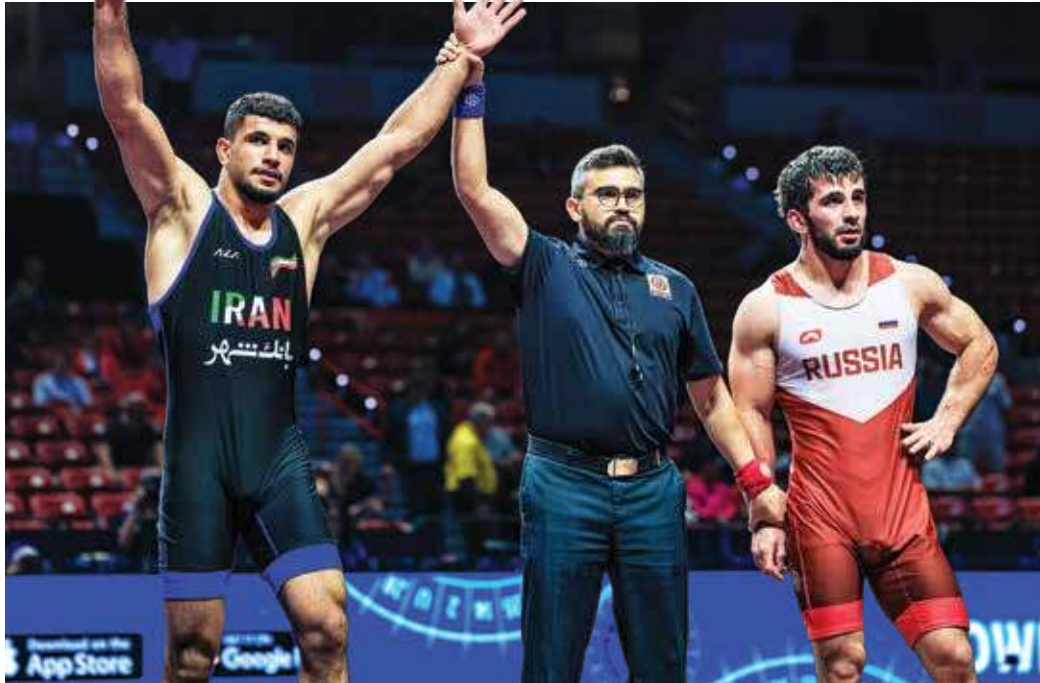
U23 Wrestling World Championships:

Mohmedi wins gold, spearheads Iran's three-medal haul in Greco-Roman

Sports Desk

The second day of the U23 Wrestling World Championships in Las Vegas saw Iran's Greco-Roman squad collect three medals, including one gold, across five weight classes on Tuesday.

Abolfazl Mohmedi headlined the medal hunt by claiming the ultimate prize in the 82kg class, while Mohammad Kamali and Mohammad-Hadi Seydi settled for bronze in their respective divisions. Mohmedi defeated opponents from Georgia, Croatia and Russia – conceding a single point in the process – to set up a final clash with Maritk Petrosyan, before edging out the Armenian 2-1 to take his personal medal tally at the competition to two, having won bronze last year in Novi Sad, Serbia. In the 67kg class, Kamali enjoyed an emphatic



Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Abolfazl Mohmedi (left) has his hand raised in victory after defeating Russia's Ramazan Arapkhanov in the 82kg semifinals at the U23 World Championships in Las Vegas, Nevada, the United States, on October 12, 2026.

● UWW

run to the semifinals, claiming three victories by technical superiority, but was no match for Russia's Erzu Zakriev, suffering a 13-2 defeat. The Iranian still managed to bounce back

with a 6-0 win against Armenia's Yurik Hovseyan to claim a consolation bronze, while Zakriev capped off his dominant run with an 8-0 triumph over Turkey's Azat Sariyar in the

final.

Seydi also finished on a winning note, recovering from a 4-1 loss to Ukrainian defending champion Yehor Yakushenko in the 97kg semifinals to defeat

Kazakhstan's Nurassyl Amanaly 8-0 in the bronze-medal bout. Yakushenko had also beaten the Iranian en route to the U20 world title last year.

Yakushenko was denied

gold by Belarus's Abubakar Khaslakhanau, who won the final 2-1 to avenge his defeat to the Ukrainian in the U23 European Championships in March.

Elsewhere, Iran's Mohammad Ashiri and Ahmadreza Mohsennejad endured disappointing campaigns, suffering early exits from the competition.

Ashiri fell to an 8-6 defeat against Olivier Tomasz Skrzypczak in his opening bout in the 60kg class and missed out on a second chance to reach the podium after the Polish wrestler failed to advance to the final.

A bronze medalist last year, Mohsennejad, who also won bronze at the Senior Asian Championships in April, saw his campaign come to an end after a single bout. His 3-1 defeat to Shakhzod Kuchkorov was followed by the Uzbek wrestler's loss in the next round.

Earlier in the day, Erfan Jarkani and Yasin Yazdi boosted Iran's bid for a third successive Greco-Roman team title by reaching the finals in their respective weight classes.

Building on his U23 world bronze from last year, reigning senior Asian silver medalist Jarkani defeated Turkey's Servet Angi 5-1 in the 63kg semifinals to set up a final showdown with Japan's Manato Nakamura.

Also a silver medalist at the Senior Asian Championships, Yazdi beat Norway's Martin Ljosaak 3-1 to advance to the 87kg

final, where he will take on Kazakhstan's Temirlan Turdakyn.

Meanwhile, reigning world U20 champion Armin Shamsipour suffered a shock 8-1 defeat to Vishvajit Ramchandra More in the 55kg quarterfinals but remained in contention for a medal after the Indian advanced to the final.

Ahoura Bouveiri was also handed a second chance in the 77kg repechage after Egypt's Moustafa Hussein Alameidin, who defeated the Iranian 5-1 in the second round, reached the final.

The 130kg event, dominated by Iran's Fardin Hedayati in the previous two editions, proved a disappointment for the country this time around, as Abolfazl Fat'hi – a world U20 bronze medalist last year – was beaten by Hungary's Laszlo Darabos on criteria (1-1) to crash out in the round of 16.

Golmohammadi set for Iran U23 job: *Report*

Sports Desk

Yahya Golmohammadi has reportedly reached an agreement with the Iranian Football Federation (FFIRI) on a three-year contract to take charge of the country's U23 team, subject to resolving outstanding issues with Iraqi club Duhok, Varzesh3 wrote on Tuesday.

Negotiations between the two sides intensified in recent days, with the former Persepolis head coach apparently agreeing to the federation's terms. The FFIRI is expected to approach Duhok to resolve financial matters and facilitate the termination of Golmohammadi's contract, paving the way for his appointment to be officially announced.

dured a difficult Golmohammadi has enjoyed considerable success during his coaching career, particularly at Persepolis, where he won multiple domestic titles and guided the Tehran giants to the final of the AFC Champions League. He has also managed Zob Ahan and Naft Tehran, establishing himself as one of the most successful Iranian coaches of his generation. Recent discussions between Golmohammadi and the federation reportedly covered several issues, including arrangements for friendly matches, the domestic football calendar, cooperation with the U23 setup and financial terms. The coach is understood to have accepted the federation's proposed conditions.



● PARSAN SANJI/IRNA

Golmohammadi's agent has also appeared to confirm the reports in a social media post, while Duhok officials are reportedly exploring the possibility of appointing Mesut Meral as his replacement.

The anticipated appointment would bring an experienced and highly decorated coach to the Iranian U23 side, which has en-

If confirmed, Golmohammadi will face a major challenge: guiding Iran to the football tournament at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and ending the country's prolonged absence from the Games. Iran has not qualified for the Olympic men's football tournament since 1976, making the assignment a significant test for the incoming coach.

Sports Desk

Iranian international striker Sardar Azmoun scored two early goals to steer the UAE's Shabab Al Ahli to a 2-1 victory over Saudi heavyweight Al Ittihad on matchday two of the AFC Champions League Elite in Jeddah on Tuesday.

Backed by a capacity crowd at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium, the home side started positively, with Ahmed Al Julaydan forcing Matheus Donelli into a save from a tight angle in the sixth minute.

Shabab Al Ahli, however, struck a minute later when Guilherme Bala powered down the left channel and deep into the box before teeing up the unmarked Azmoun to slot home, with the goal confirmed following a VAR review.

Azmoun bagged his second of the night in trademark fashion in the 16th minute.

Reza Ghandipour, who had just replaced the injured Bala, released his fellow Iranian with a through ball before Azmoun outpaced his markers and rounded Serbian goalkeeper Predrag Rajković to convert from a tight angle, taking his tally to three goals and two assists in seven appearances across all competitions for the Emirati outfit this season.

Richard Ríos gave Al Ittihad a lifeline midway through the second half when the Colombian received Marwan Al Sahafi's layoff just outside the area before firing a powerful strike past Shabab goalkeeper Matheus Donelli.

Al Ittihad desperately pushed for an equalizer in the closing stages, with Ríos firing Houssein Aouar's cut-back just over the bar in the 88th minute before Saleh Al Shehri spurned

AFC Champions League Elite: Azmoun double leads Shabab Al Ahli past Al Ittihad



another chance in stoppage time.

Shabab Al Ahli, who had beaten Iranian top-flight side Tractor 1-0 at home in their league-stage opener, moved on to a perfect six points, trailing Al Ain, Esteghlal and Al Hilal on goal difference at the top of the West Zone's 16-team table.

"I dedicate this victory to our fans, and I'm happy that we managed to win and secure all three points. We defeated a strong opponent packed with star players," Azmoun said after the game.

"Al Ittihad are a quality team with a star-studded squad. They have some excellent players. We managed to win this difficult match thanks to our high level of concentration. I believe concentration

was the key to our victory," added the Iranian.

Meanwhile, Shahab Zahedi was the other Iranian striker in action in the continental club competition on Tuesday, making his mark in Johor Darul Ta'zim's impressive 2-0 away victory over FC Pohang Steelers.

With the match seemingly heading into the break goalless, JDT were awarded a penalty after Min-gwang brought down Zahedi two minutes before halftime. The penalty was overturned in favor of a free kick following a VAR review, but Min-gwang's yellow card was upgraded to a red, leaving the Steelers without their captain for the second half.

The Malaysian visitors made full use of their numerical advantage four minutes into



Shabab Al Ahli striker Sardar Azmoun celebrates during a 2-1 victory over Al Ittihad in the AFC Champions League Elite in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on October 13, 2026.

● AFC

the second half when Marcos Guilherme, picking up Zahedi's through ball, shrugged off his marker and drilled the ball between the goalkeeper's legs from the left of the six-yard box.

Guilherme put the match beyond the Steelers' reach in the 89th minute when he pounced on a parry by Hong Seong-min from a Bergson strike, evaded the defense and drove the ball into an empty net past the prone goalkeeper.

JDT are fifth in the East Zone standings with four points.

Restoration projects breathe new life into Isfahan’s Dardasht Neighborhood

Iranica Desk

More than 60 urban development and restoration projects have been carried out over the past three and a half years in Isfahan’s historic Dardasht Neighborhood, covering an area of 70 hectares, as part of a major initiative to revive and regenerate the neighborhood, a former head of the Isfahan Municipality’s Renovation and Rehabilitation Organization said. Mohammad Ali Izadkhasti made the remarks at the inauguration of the historic Dardasht passageway, a landmark area showcasing the city’s rich artistic and architectural heritage, at Shahshahan Square. He said the regeneration model, developed on the basis of the historical DNA of traditional neighbourhoods, had been recognized and commended as a leading national initiative, according to IRNA.

Izadkhasti said Isfahan’s principal neighbourhoods predated the advent of Islam, with several early settlements forming the city’s original core. In 2021, under the direction of the then mayor, an assessment of the historic urban fabric was conducted to identify the most important area for investment. Dardasht was selected as a priority, having served as Isfahan’s main center of development before the Safavid era. The neighborhood retained its significance during the Safavid period, even as the city expanded southwards, and had been a major urban cen-

ter under the Buyid and Ilkhanid dynasties. However, he said, Dardasht had suffered decades of neglect over the past century, falling behind urban development and sustaining considerable damage.



More than 70 historic buildings in the neighborhood were at risk of destruction, while residents were gradually leaving their homes, making a comprehensive program of rehabilitation necessary, he added. Following detailed studies in 2022, the Guidelines for the Revitalisation of Iran’s Historic Neighbourhoods were developed. In April 2024, the initiative was recognised and commended by the minister of culture and Islamic guidance as a leading national project. The framework consists of seven stages designed to protect historic neighbourhoods in Iranian cities according to their historical

identity while integrating them into contemporary urban life and carefully planned social activities. Izadkhasti said more than 60 urban development projects had been implemented in the 70-hectare neighborhood be-

tween 2023 and 2026 by staff of the municipality’s Renovation and Rehabilitation Organization. The work included improvements to the street-facing façades of more than 150 residential and commercial properties to restore architectural cohesion across the neighborhood. Nearly 40 decorative cypress motifs, rendered in tilework and inspired by the Isfahan school of miniature painting, were also installed throughout the neighborhood. Each design is distinct, he said, adding that the features were expected to contribute significantly to tourism. Street lighting was upgraded throughout the route, while near-

ly three kilometers of paving and pedestrian passageways were developed. Dozens of historic buildings, several traditional public water structures known as Saqqakhaneh, and eight urban squares were also redesigned or



reconstructed. The designs were based on a detailed study of the area’s historical characteristics. In cooperation with the provincial cultural heritage department, more than 250,000 historical photographs of Isfahan were collected, digitized and analyzed to inform the regeneration work, Izadkhasti said. Describing the design of the main square in the neighborhood, Izadkhasti said the space opposite the Shahshahan Mausoleum was inspired by the traditional concept of the Iranian courtyard house. The design features an elongated pool alongside landscaped greenery, with the pool

extending towards the entrance of the main building leading to the mausoleum. The Dardasht Bazaar also underwent detailed restoration, down to its smallest architectural features.

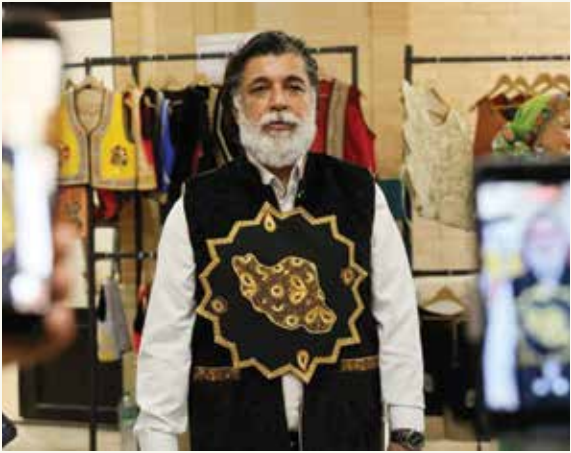
Izadkhasti said restoration efforts had extended beyond Dardasht. More than 30 mausoleums at Takht-e Foulad, Isfahan’s historic cemetery complex, were fully restored. He argued that the work carried out in 2022 and 2023 had helped preserve the site amid attacks in the surrounding area during the 40-day war. At Isfahan’s Grand Bazaar, 16 sections and five markets that had been completely destroyed were also restored. Nearly 75 additional market bays were added to the city’s historic bazaars over the four-year period, equivalent to approximately one-quarter of the area of Naqsh-e Jahan Square, he said.

Izadkhasti said the regeneration program drew inspiration from the Safavid era’s approach to urban planning, in which philosophical principles and intellectual frameworks were established before being translated into architectural and urban designs. He said thousands of hours of discussions and planning sessions had been devoted to examining philosophical foundations, including the school of Mulla Sadra, before developing a design framework for the urban squares and adapting their architecture to the local context. The main objective of the Dardasht regeneration project, he said, was to bring residents back to the historic neighborhood. “The most important target group is the people who live in this neighborhood,” he said, adding that one of the project’s most significant achievements had been the return of long-established local residents. The revitalization program has also attracted private investment. More than 14 historic houses have been restored to a high standard and converted into traditional accommodation for cultural and eco-tourism this year, with funding from local investors and residents. The municipality covered the costs of improving public spaces and restoring public buildings and facilities, while the rehabilitation of privately owned properties was financed by their owners, he said.

Shiraz events highlight Iran’s rich heritage of handicrafts

Iranica Desk

The director-general of Fars Province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization emphasized the role of traditional handicrafts in preserving national identity. Behzad Moridi made the remarks on the sidelines of a visit to the “Third National Iranian Vest Event” and the “Third Ethnic Embroidery Workshop”, according to chn.ir. “When we speak of the Iranian vest and the embroidery traditions of different ethnic groups, we are essentially talking about Iranian identity and our material culture,” Moridi said. “Handicrafts are one of the main pillars of material culture and have historically symbolized the strength and authenticity of societies.” Pointing to the challenges posed by globalization and cultural homogenization, the provincial official said that preserving cultural differences and the diversity of artistic roots was one of the most important ways to safeguard national identity. “In a world where efforts are being made to homogenize cultures, preserving



cultural differences and the diversity of artistic traditions is a major form of resistance in defense of national identity,” he said. “We must not allow cultural management to move toward homogenization and the elimination of the valuable differences rooted in Iran’s diverse cultural traditions.” Explaining his perspective on Iran’s cultural diversity, Moridi said that although each region of the country has its own languages and dialects, all these differences come together under one shared identity: Iran. “Just as our different languages — Persian, Kurdish, Turkish, Balochi and others — belong to a single nation, the colors,

designs and embroidery patterns from different parts of the country ultimately express a shared and unified Iranian visual language,” he said. Moridi also noted that holding the events as part of Shiraz’s Mehr Tourism Festival, running from September 27 to October 17, was an important step toward introducing the cultural potential of Fars Province to domestic and international tourists. He stressed that such workshops and events provide an opportunity for people to appreciate Iran’s ancient heritage and help connect different generations with the country’s authentic artistic traditions.

National rally to show South Khorasan’s tourism potential

Iranica Desk

The National Camper and Caravan Rally has kicked off on Tuesday in Ferdows, South Khorasan Province, with more than 50 travel-equipped vehicles from across Iran taking part. The 12-day event began with a visit to the UNESCO-listed Baladeh Qanat, and will pass through eight counties across the province to showcase its historical, natural and cultural attractions and promote road tourism, chn.ir wrote. The rally aims to introduce lesser-known tourist destinations in South Khorasan, encourage road trips and promote adventure and responsible tourism. Over the course of 12 days, participants will explore the province’s historical, natural and cultural attractions along a continuous route. Mohammad Arab, deputy head of South Khorasan Province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts

Organization, described the participation of the national caravan as a valuable opportunity to highlight the tourism potential of eastern Iran. “With its rich historical heritage, diverse natural attractions and tradition of hospitality, South Khorasan has considerable potential for developing road and adventure tourism,” he said. Arab added that launching the rally in Ferdows, near the UNESCO-listed Baladeh Qanat, provided an opportunity to connect historical heritage with modern travel experiences. Campervans and caravans offer tourists a different way to travel, allowing them to become more closely acquainted with local attractions, culture and ways of life, he said. During the 12-day journey, participants will discover a range of the province’s attractions, from historical and cultural sites to desert landscapes and natural scenery.

Arab further noted that the trip coincides with more than 10 local festivals and cultural events, providing opportunities to showcase regional customs, local products, handicrafts and the economic potential of different parts of the province. Such events can help boost small businesses and distribute the benefits of tourism more evenly by encouraging visitors to stay longer and use local services, he said. Arab stressed that road tourism can become a sustainable model only if the promotion of tourist attractions goes hand in hand with environmental and cultural heritage protection, respect for host communities and responsible travel management. He said the rally offers an opportunity to strengthen this approach and present South Khorasan as a distinctive destination for travelers seeking exploratory and adventure-oriented experiences.





Iranian doctor selected for WHO cancer award

Social Desk

Amir Ali Hamidieh, a professor at Tehran University of Medical Sciences, has been recognized for pioneering work in pediatric hematology, oncology and stem cell transplantation. Hamidieh was chosen for the cancer category of the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, IRNA reported on Wednesday. The prize recognizes

outstanding contributions to the prevention, control or research of these diseases. It consists of a bronze medal and a cash award, with recipients selected by the WHO's Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean. The announcement came during the opening of the committee's 73rd session in Cairo, Egypt, on Tuesday. The meeting, running through October 15, brings together health ministers and senior delegations from member states. Three recipients are recognized in the categories of

cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned at the opening session that attacks on health facilities, health workers and patients had increased across the region. "Hospitals, ambulances and health workers are protected under international humanitarian law. They must never be a target," he said. Tedros also said funding cuts had affected nearly 2,000 health facilities across the region and



Iranian physician Amir Ali Hamidieh (C) poses with his award for achievements in cancer care at the WHO regional meeting in Cairo, Egypt on October 13, 2026.
● IRNA

called for greater domestic investment in health systems.

He stressed the need to end conflicts, saying, "The best

medicine is peace." The award recognizes Hamidieh's work in treating blood disorders and cancers in children and advancing stem cell transplantation, fields that play an important role in improving care for young patients.



Tehran festival invites public to opening with their puppets

Arts & Culture Desk

The 21st Tehran-Mobarak International Puppet Theater Festival has invited people of all ages to bring their puppets to its opening ceremony on October 17 in central Tehran.

The ceremony will begin on Saturday afternoon in the open-air area of the iconic Tehran City Theater, Mehr News Agency reported. Poupak Azimpour Tabrizi, the festival's secretary, has called upon art enthusiasts,

artists, university students and professors, performers and puppetry practitioners to attend with their puppets. The invitation is open to citizens from all walks of life, giving them a chance to take part in the event rather

than attend only as spectators. Families, children and other interested visitors are also welcome to join the gathering. The festival names after Mobarak, a traditional comic puppet character associated

with Kheimeh Shab-Bazi, a form of Iranian puppet theater. Known for his humor and lively exchanges with other characters, he is a familiar figure in the country's traditional performing arts.

Iran's space program can recover from war damage, says space research chief

Indigenous expertise remains industry's main asset

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Iran's space research chief says the country's space program can recover from wartime damage because its greatest asset is the expertise of its specialists. Missiles can destroy buildings and disable equipment, he says, but they cannot erase the knowledge embedded in scientists' minds.

On March 13, 2026, the Iranian Space Research Center (ISRC) was hit during US and Israeli military attacks, damaging parts of its buildings and laboratories. Yet amid the

debris, an asset far more valuable than physical infrastructure and equipment remains intact: indigenous expertise, accumulated experience and the technical capabilities of specialists who have spent years developing the country's space technology. The damage illustrates why the destruction of hardware does not necessarily mean the loss of knowledge. Even the most destructive missiles cannot wipe out years of learning, research and practical experience.

In an interview with Iran Daily, ISRC head Nader Mokari discussed the consequences of the strike as well as the institute's achievements and plans in space technology, including the development of remote-sensing and radar satellites. Continued progress in these fields, he said,

depends above all on domestic expertise and the specialists who underpin the country's space industry. Here is the full text of the interview:

IRAN DAILY: How would you assess Iran's position in the regional space industry?

MOKARI: It depends on which aspects of the industry are being assessed. We are in a strong position in the development of space subsystems, and we have also made significant progress in developing space systems and applications.

Iran currently holds a good position in the region in satellite technology. We have also begun developing satellite constellations, although this area still requires further development and the completion of supporting infrastructure.

Significant steps have been taken in recent years, particularly under the current administration, to expand space services and capabilities. However, it is difficult to assign a precise ranking without first defining the criteria. Any assessment needs to take the different dimensions of the space industry into account.

Buildings and equipment at the ISRC were damaged during the recent war. How much has this affected the country's space activities?

Some of our buildings and equipment were damaged during the war, but our main asset is the expertise that our specialists have built up over many years. Indigenous knowledge is not tied to a particular building or piece of hardware. When knowledge has been developed domestically,

absorbed by specialists and established as a local capability, damaged equipment can be rebuilt and restored.

The organization's building and some of its equipment were hit during the war, but we have managed to restore all the affected equipment. Our experts and specialists remain in place, and the knowledge has not been lost. We have been able to bring the damaged equipment back into operation, and we hope the satellites currently under development will be launched soon.

So, although the physical damage has been substantial, the country's human expertise and indigenous knowledge remain intact.

Have any steps been taken to develop the domestic space industry and export its technical and engineering services?

Within Iran, we are working to sign various memorandums of understanding with industries so that we can make space services and achievements available to different sectors and enable them to put these capabilities to practical use.

We have also begun taking initial steps toward exporting technical and engineering services to other countries. However, these efforts are not yet at a stage where we can report significant results. Progress in this area will require more time and further cooperation.

Is the ISRC planning to develop and launch new satellites?

We are developing the Rad series of radar satellites, which use synthetic aperture radar (SAR) imaging technology. Rad 1 and Rad 2 are being developed with

different levels of resolution and capabilities, and we hope to see them launched soon.

The difference between radar or SAR imagery and optical imagery is that optical imaging is subject to limitations such as darkness at night and cloudy weather. SAR technology, by contrast, enables imaging both day and night, even in cloudy conditions. Radar data can therefore complement optical imagery and expand the country's remote-sensing capabilities. The Raz platform allows SAR and other radar data to be used alongside optical data. Combining these two types of imagery can improve analytical accuracy and enhance services in areas such as agriculture, water resources, forestry and monitoring changes to the Earth's surface. Radar data can also be used in fields beyond agriculture.

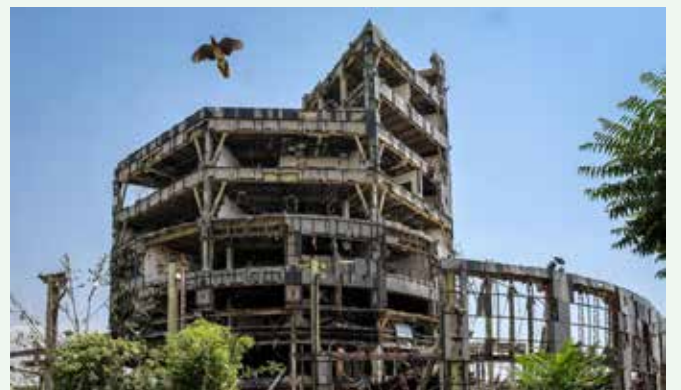
What steps has the ISRC taken to reduce costs and improve the likelihood of success in space missions?

One of the major costs in space programs comes from mission failures. To minimize the risk of failure, we have developed software that simulates space missions and allows a satellite's performance to be assessed before it is deployed in space.

In effect, we simulate on the ground the conditions and events that a satellite might encounter in space, conducting a range of tests to reduce the likelihood of a mission failing.

After launch, the software can also serve as a support tool for operators at the mission control center, helping them manage the mission.

What has the ISRC done to



develop practical remote-sensing systems?

Iran has been active in remote sensing for many years and has developed a range of data-processing tools and applications. To help government agencies make use of these capabilities, we have brought this work together in a unified platform. The Raz platform gives industries integrated access to space-based data.

It includes a range of monitoring systems covering drought, water bodies, land subsidence, forests and wildfires. The aim is to move the space industry beyond a purely technology-driven approach and turn it into an application-oriented industry focused on solving problems and meeting the country's practical needs.

How does the space economy develop, and what plans do you have to expand the use of space-based applications in the future?

The space economy takes shape when space-based products and services are used across different industries. Until these technologies become practical tools that can meet the real needs of



The photo shows the aftermath of a US-Israeli airstrike on the Iranian Space Research Center in Tehran that took place on March 13, 2026.
● IRNA

different sectors, it is difficult to speak of a space economy in the true sense of the term.

To make these services available to users, we needed to establish the necessary platforms through which they could access the services they require and use them for monitoring, oversight, data collection and decision-making. Our plan, therefore, is to ensure that satellite development and space technology are increasingly driven by users' needs. For example, specialized satellites could be developed for seismology, geology and agriculture, each designed to meet specific requirements.

Rather than developing a technology first and then looking for ways to use it, we need to start with existing needs and develop technologies tailored to address them.