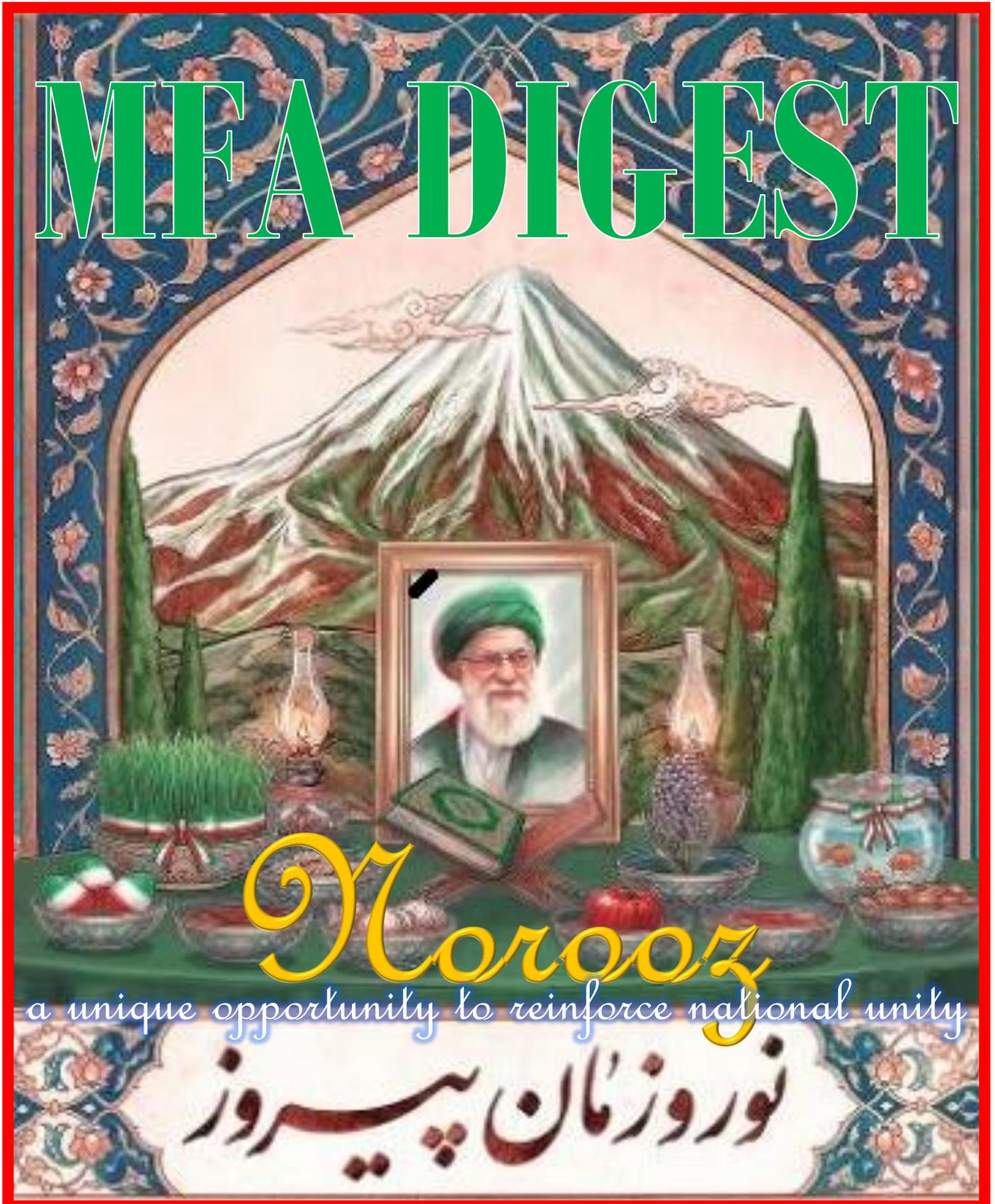




Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Center for Public Diplomacy

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MFA DIGEST



Norooz

a unique opportunity to reinforce national unity

نوروزمان پیروز

MFA NEWS

Iran's FM in Telephone Talks

Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Iran's Foreign Minister held telephone conversations with Nabih Berri, Speaker of the Parliament of Lebanon, Basem Naim, a senior Hamas official in Gaza, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kaja Kallas, Vice-President of the European Commission, and his counterparts from Oman, Malaysia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Brunei, Turkiye, Egypt, Azerbaijan Republic, Russia, China, Brazil, Republic of Korea, Japan, India, Sweden, Greece, and UK.





SOCIETY & CULTURE

At least 56 Museums, Historical Sites Damaged by US-Israeli Aggression

Inside Tehran's 14th century Golestan Palace, the magnificent Hall of Mirrors – an artistic marvel of Persian geometry where light once fractured into a thousand glittering constellations – collapsed into itself.



The mirrors did not simply break; they shattered into a crystalline ruin. Ornate woodwork, carved by generations of master artisans, splintered into jagged fragments.



Images of the devastation spread like wildfire across the country.

What the Iranian nation saw was not merely structural damage, but an unprovoked and unjustified aggression against its very civilizational identity as well as an assault on cultural memory.



The palace in central Tehran, long regarded as a symbol of historical continuity, now stands as a wound in the heart of the capital – courtesy the American-Israeli war machine.



According to Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, more than 56 museums and historical monuments nationwide have sustained serious damage in the ongoing war against the Islamic Republic of Iran since February 28.

Tehran Province, the political and cultural nerve center of the country, tops the list with 19 affected sites, according to the ministry.



In Kordestan province, twelve prominent historical buildings – some many centuries old – were damaged. In Isfahan, called the jewel of world architecture, several UNESCO World Heritage listed sites within the Naqsh e Jahan Square complex were struck, scarring a city that has long been a living museum of Persian art and tourism.



Historic structures in Lorestan and Kermanshah have also been hit. In the ancient port city of Siraf in Bushehr province, centuries old houses and mansions – once home to merchants who traded with the world – suffered serious damage.

In Ilam province, even the provincial Archaeology Museum was not spared by aggressors.

The US Israeli acts of aggression on Iran's historical sites have drawn sharp condemnation from Iranian officials. In a post on X last week, Foreign Minister denounced the attacks in searing terms.



Seyed Abbas Araghchi
@araghchi

X.com

Thank you @UNESCO for responsible reaction to bombing of Golestan Palace, a World Heritage site.

We hope UNESCO will maintain firm and principled stance against further attacks on cultural heritage, incl historic monuments in Isfahan. Site protection is international concern.



“Israel is bombing Iranian historical monuments dating as far back as the 14th century. Multiple UNESCO World Heritage Sites have been struck,” Araghchi wrote.

“It is natural that a regime that will not last a century hates nations with ancient pasts. But where is UNESCO? Its silence is unacceptable.”

Iranians Bid Farewell to Ramadan by Performing Eid Prayers

This year's Eid al-Fitr prayers in Iran were marked by large public participation, as thousands of people gathered in mosques, prayer grounds, and open public spaces across the country from the early hours of the morning.

Despite the difficult atmosphere created by the ongoing military aggression by the United States and Israel, worshippers in many cities attended the prayers in significant numbers, reflecting the continued importance of religious observance and collective presence in public life.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Iran inaugurates 16th cold plasma wound treatment clinic

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have confirmed targeting two Iranian universities, namely, Malek-Ashtar University and Imam Hossein University, alleging their military use by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), as well as a space research centre.

'No university is safe'

The targeting of universities has been questioned by experts in international law and international legal and human rights organisations.



Neve Gordon, professor of international law and human rights at Queen Mary University of London, told University World News: "The claim that the research carried out at the Iranian universities is contributing to the war effort and therefore they are fair game opens the gates of hell to higher education.



"Whether we like it or not, the best universities around the world contribute research to military industries, weapon production, surveillance systems, and the like, and if this research becomes a legitimate justification for bombing them, then no university is safe.



"Yet, again, we see how the US and Israel are eroding the post-World War II legal order and establishing an international order where might makes right."

Unverified social media reports claim the Tehran University of Space Science and Technology was hit on 23 March and that the Supreme National Defense University, used for training military officers, was hit on 9 March.

Enemy's warplanes attack nuclear sites in Yazd, Arak

Zionist Israeli regime's warplanes have bombed two nuclear technology facilities in Iran's Yazd and Arak, according to the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Friday.

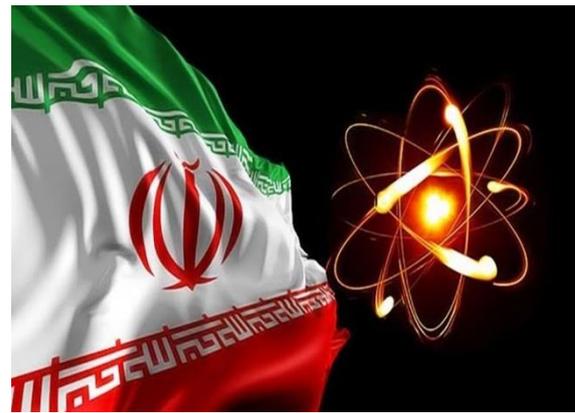


“The Ardakan Yellow Cake Factory in Yazd Province was targeted by the American-Zionist enemy a few minutes ago, AEOI said in a statement on Friday afternoon.



“Preliminary investigations indicate that this incident did not result in any release of radioactive materials outside the complex, and therefore, there is no concern threatening citizens or surrounding areas,” the statement added.

Meanwhile, Markazi Province Governor Office announced in a statement on Friday evening that “The Khondab Heavy Water Complex was targeted by the American and Zionist enemy in two stages.”



“These attacks did not result in any human casualties and, given the safety measures taken in advance, do not pose any danger to the people of the region,” Markazi Province said.



The governor office of Markazi also said that an industrial unit in Khair Abad District in Arak County was also attacked.

IRAN COMMERCE

US lifts sanctions on 140m barrels of Iranian oil



The US secretary of treasury announced on Friday Washington lifted sanctions on 140 million barrels of Iran's oil after US aggression which led to disruptions in maritime transport and an increase in global prices.

In a post on his X account, Bessent wrote, "Today, the Department of the Treasury is issuing a narrowly tailored, short-term authorization permitting the sale of Iranian oil currently stranded at sea."

As the cost of oil continues to soar, US Secretary of Treasury Scott Bessent lifted sanctions on 140 million barrels of Iranian crude already loaded onto vessels, which the Trump administration says will help ease prices, Washington Post reported.

"By temporarily unlocking this existing supply for the world, the

United States will quickly bring approximately 140 million barrels of oil to global markets, expanding the amount of worldwide energy," he added.

Iran earns \$8.7b in profit from oil sales in recent war

Islamic Republic of Iran has earned \$8.7 billion profit from selling oil since the outbreak of recent war waged by US and Israel against the country on Feb. 28

The \$47 increase in oil prices per barrel during the recent war generated a potential profit of \$8.7 billion from Iran's oil sales, according to Kepler Institute.

According to the available data, the current volume of Iranian oil (both on sea and in transit) has reached about 187 million barrels, a figure which is equivalent to about one and a half day of the global consumption.

Concurrent with the recent war developments, the oil price difference has increased to around \$47 compared to the pre-war period.

Estimates indicate that Iran has potentially gained around \$8.7 billion in profits from the increase in price of this amount of oil.



The US security and intelligence agencies always believe that Iran would never close the Strait of Hormuz due to its dependence on oil exports, as this move could reduce Iran's own oil exports to zero level.

However, it seems that Iran, by utilizing smart control and adopting effective measures, has created a situation where oil sales in the region are effectively influenced by its own management, and other players without coordination with Iran face restrictions, and sales through the Strait of Hormuz are subject to Iranian permission.

The signed documents include two MOUs between Iran's National Standard Organization and its Russian counterpart, one MOU concerning research activities with the Oil Industry Research Center, and a fourth MOU in the field of social affairs, signed by Iran's Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare.

Iran to draw ban regime for Strait of Hormuz after war

A member of the Iranian Expediency Council Mohammad Mokhber says that a new regime will be drawn for the Strait of Hormuz to sanction the domination-seeking powers.

Mokhber, who is an advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on economic affairs, made the comments in a meeting with the business people and economic officials on Thursday.



"So far, the domination-seeking powers would sanction and limit us. But, at the end of current imposed war, with drawing a new regime for the Strait of Hormuz, Iran will turn its position from a sanctioned country to an enhanced power in the region and the world," he said in the meeting.

Mokhber further said that "we will sanction those domination-seeking arrogant powers using the Strait of Hormuz to not allow their ships pass through the Strait." "Therefore, one

of the results of this war must be drawing a new regime for the strait of Hormuz," he added.

Global economic fallout from US warmongering policies

The world is now witnessing the economic fallout in the wake of US warmongering policies which is expected to worsen.

A report highlights the significant impact of the US war on Iran on the global economy, noting substantial price increases in oil, natural gas, and gasoline across numerous nations.



Crude oil prices have surged approximately 50% since the United States and Israel commenced joint aggressions against Iran, according to Al Jazeera.

Natural gas prices in Europe experienced a dramatic jump in March, reaching increases of over 60% in some regions.

At least 95 countries have witnessed gasoline price hikes following the US and Israeli attacks on Iran. Some nations delay the announcement of price changes until the end of the month, suggesting further increases are anticipated in subsequent months.

Shipping companies have halted passage through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical waterway for approximately one-quarter of the world's oil shipments, in the wake of the conflict.

The British newspaper the Telegraph also reported that over 100,000 Britons face potential job losses in the coming months. Experts predict that the labor market crisis in the UK will worsen due to the US war with Iran.



Citing the national statistics office, the Telegraph noted that the UK's unemployment rate has reached 5.2%, the highest in five years.

PERSIAN CUISINE



Fesenjan ba Ordak; “Pomegranate Stew with Duck”

“Pomegranate Stew with Duck” is another national culinary treasure of Persian cuisine. There are few dishes that bring as much pleasure and joy as fesenjoon. It is inherently simple, showcasing a perfect balance of straightforward yet deeply flavorful ingredients that are abundant in Iran, making it a true celebration of the country’s natural resources.

Here is the recipe:

Wash and pat dry duck, then place on a roasting rack. With a sharp fork prick duck's skin all over making sure that you don't go all the way down to the actual meat, but simply down to the fat under the skin.

Generously season and inside and outside of the bird with salt and pepper.

Add onion, garlic, and bay leaves to the cavity. Roast at 375° for one hour. In the meantime, toast the walnuts. Make sure they don't burn.

Then place them on a baking sheet and let them cool down. Once they have reached room temperature, grind them all up.

Warm up another pot and place 1 tbsp of flour. Toast the flour slightly.

Add 2 cups of water and mix well until all lumps are gone. I found using a whisk during this stage was very helpful.



Add ground walnuts.

Stir until water and walnuts are thoroughly mixed. Cook on low.

By this time, the duck should be half way done. Remove from the oven and drain the fat which has collected at the bottom of the pan.

You can either discard the oil or use it for another recipe later. Please duck back in the oven and roast for another hour.

While the walnut mixture cooks, make sure you stay on top of it during this process. As the mixture thickens,

it can easily burn. This process might take a little while.

Once you see a layer of oil forming on top of the walnuts the hard work is pretty much done.

You can actually see the oil rise through the bubbles.

The duck is ready when the internal temperature reaches 170°.

Remove aromatics from the belly. Then carve the duck and place in the stew.

Serve over Persian Rice.

SPORTS

Iran Football Team Remembers Victims of Deadly School Attack

The Iran men's national team wore black armbands and held schoolbags as their national anthem played before a match with Nigeria as a protest against the deadly strike on a primary school on the first day of the Iran war.



The attack on Shajareh Tayyebeh school last month killed at least 168 people, including about 110 children. The UN's human rights chief has urged the US to conclude its investigation and publish its findings into the attack.



Before kick-off in their friendly fixture against Nigeria in the Turkish resort town of Belek, the Iran players, including former FC Porto and Inter Milan striker Mehdi Taremi, were seen holding pink and purple bags with ribbons on them.

"The players are holding the school bags close to their heart in remembrance of the 165 girls the Americans killed in an Iranian school," a media officer for the team told Reuters.

Iran are among the countries who have qualified for this summer's World Cup but their participation in the tournament, to be hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada from 11 June, remains in doubt.

They are scheduled to open their World Cup campaign against New Zealand and Belgium in Los Angeles before their final group game against Egypt in Seattle.

Iranian Athletes Call for Banning US, Israeli Teams

In protest to an ongoing war of aggression by a US-Israeli military coalition against Iran, more than 10,000 Iranian athletes have called on the United Nations and sports governing bodies to ban American

and Israeli teams from all international sporting events.

In a letter, more than 10,000 Iranian athletes called on the UN chief, the head of International Olympic Committee, the head of International Paralympics Committee, the head of UNESCO and the head of UNICEF to ban sports teams of the warmonger United States and the criminal Zionist regime of Israel from taking part in all international events and competitions.



“We - thousands of Iranian athletes – are writing this letter to you at a time when the humanity is experiencing one of its darkest times. We are burying innocent children, boys and girls, who were unfairly targeted. Only in the Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school in Minab, 168 schoolchildren were killed. We are mourning the death of sailors who were targeted in a surprise strike while they were thousands of kilometers away from the battlefield. We are mourning our dear ones,

friends, neighbors, fellow citizens, who were smiling to us until yesterday and now we carry their bodies on our shoulders to bury them,” the letter read.

The letter, submitted by a number of prominent Iranian athletes to Iran’s foreign ministry, came more than two weeks after a US-Israeli military coalition commenced an unprovoked war of aggression against the Iran, killing hundreds of people, including women and children.

The aerial onslaught has also claimed the lives of dozens of athletes, damaged or flattened sporting venues across the country since February 28, when it started with airstrikes targeting senior Iranian leadership figures.

The signatories also called for the suspension of the US and Israeli membership in international Olympic and Paralympic committees.

“Up until now, more than 60 athletes, including six child gymnasts and three skating athletes from the Shajareh Tayyebah elementary school in Minab, have been killed and more than 20 sporting venues and complexes have been attacked,” the letter further read.

Mexico Ready to Host Iran's Matches in 2026 FIFA World Cup



Team Melli will start the 2026 World Cup on June 15, facing New Zealand in Los Angeles. The Persians will play Belgium six days later in Los Angeles and meet Egypt on June 26 in Seattle.

The U.S. president Donald Trump had claimed that the U.S. would not be safe for the Iranian team, igniting widespread debate across the sports and political arenas.

Now, Mexico president has announced that the country is ready to host Group G matches if security concerns prevent games in the United States.

Mehdi Taj, head of Iran football federation, had said they would not withdraw from the 2026 FIFA World Cup and are determined to participate in the prestigious competition.

"We have strongly qualified for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and this is our right to compete in the event. We can play our matches in Mexico if they cannot secure our safety," Taj said.

US Sponsor Drops Japanese Football Legend Over Support for Iran

Japanese football icon Keisuke Honda has lost an advertising contract with an American company after publicly expressing his support for Iran's participation in the 2026 World Cup, amid the US-Israeli military aggression against the Islamic Republic.

The controversy began when it was announced that Iran's national football team would not take part in the upcoming World Cup to be co-hosted by the United States.

The decision came in response to the hostile stance of the Trump administration and the ongoing American and Israeli military aggression against the Islamic Republic.

Honda, a former midfielder for Japan's national team and one of Asia's most celebrated football figures, took to social media to share his thoughts on the issue.

"I know this is a very sensitive issue, but personally, I want them to play in the World Cup," he wrote in a social media post.

DISCOVER IRAN



Makran Coast; A Strategic Powerhouse of Iran in Indian Ocean

For centuries, Iran's Makran coast lay parched and sparsely populated, bypassed by Silk Road caravans and maritime merchants alike. Today, however, this long-neglected "lost paradise" stands at the center of an ambitious national effort to transform it into the next great economic hub of the Indian Ocean.

Stretching nearly 500 kilometers along the Gulf of Oman from the Strait of Hormuz to the Pakistani border, the Makran coast has endured millennia as one of Iran's most overlooked frontiers.

Its scorching temperatures, scant rainfall, and treacherous tidal creeks long conspired to keep this rugged shoreline isolated, an anomaly in a

country celebrated for its ancient urban civilizations.

That narrative is now being decisively rewritten. Guided by a maritime-oriented strategy championed at the highest levels of government, and propelled by massive infrastructure investment, new international trade corridors, and intensifying great-power competition in the Indian Ocean, Makran is emerging from the shadows.

Deep-water ports at Chabahar and Jask, newly built dams and desalination plants, expanding fisheries and industrial zones, and the region's strategic position astride some of the world's busiest seaborne energy routes together position Makran as more than a development project. They signal its potential rise as a transformative node in twenty-first-century global commerce.

Shores of discovery: The emerging tourism potential



Makran's natural wealth extends well beyond fisheries and minerals to encompass landscapes of striking beauty, long remote, but now gradually opening to visitors.

The coastline unfolds in wide stretches of untouched sandy beaches framed by dramatic cliffs. Inland, color-banded mountains rise from the desert floor, active mud volcanoes punctuate the terrain, and vast mangrove forests shelter diverse birdlife and marine species. These ecological features give Makran a visual and environmental character unlike any other region in Iran.

This natural patrimony is enriched by distinctive cultural traditions shaped by centuries of exchange across the Indian Ocean. Architectural influences from the Indian subcontinent remain visible in older settlements, subtle reminders of maritime connections that once linked this coast to distant shores.

For domestic travelers accustomed to the crowded resorts along the Caspian Sea or the Persian Gulf,

Makran offers an alternative: an expansive, undeveloped coastline paired with authentic local culture.

For international visitors, particularly those from the Persian Gulf states seeking seasonal respite or European travelers drawn to off-the-beaten-path adventure tourism, the region holds considerable untapped appeal.

Realizing this potential will require not only continued infrastructure investment but also careful stewardship. Sustainable tourism policies will be essential to ensure that development enhances, rather than erodes, the fragile environmental and cultural assets upon which the sector ultimately depends.

Geopolitical crosscurrents: Makran in the arena of great powers

Makran's rise cannot be understood solely through the prism of domestic development. The region has also become a focal point of intensifying great-power competition.

India's substantial investment in Chabahar reflects its strategic imperative to secure access to Central Asian markets while counterbalancing China's Belt and Road Initiative and its flagship China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which terminates at Gwadar Port, just eighty kilometers east of the Iranian border.



Russia likewise views Makran's ports as critical components of the International North-South Transport Corridor, offering members of the Eurasian Economic Union the shortest pathway to warm-water ports and global markets.

China, though deeply invested in Gwadar, maintains cooperative relations with Tehran and has signaled interest in linking Chabahar to broader regional connectivity frameworks.

By deftly balancing its partnerships with New Delhi, Moscow, and Beijing, Iran has transformed Makran from a neglected frontier into an indispensable strategic space, one in which multiple major powers now hold tangible economic and geopolitical stakes.



From lost paradise to future hub

Makran's transformation from historical backwater to emerging economic center ranks among the most ambitious regional development initiatives of the early twenty-first century.

The obstacles remain formidable. Water scarcity, though mitigated by dams, desalination plants, and transfer systems, will demand disciplined, long-term management.

Plans to expand the population to 2.5 million residents require job creation on a scale unprecedented in the region's history.

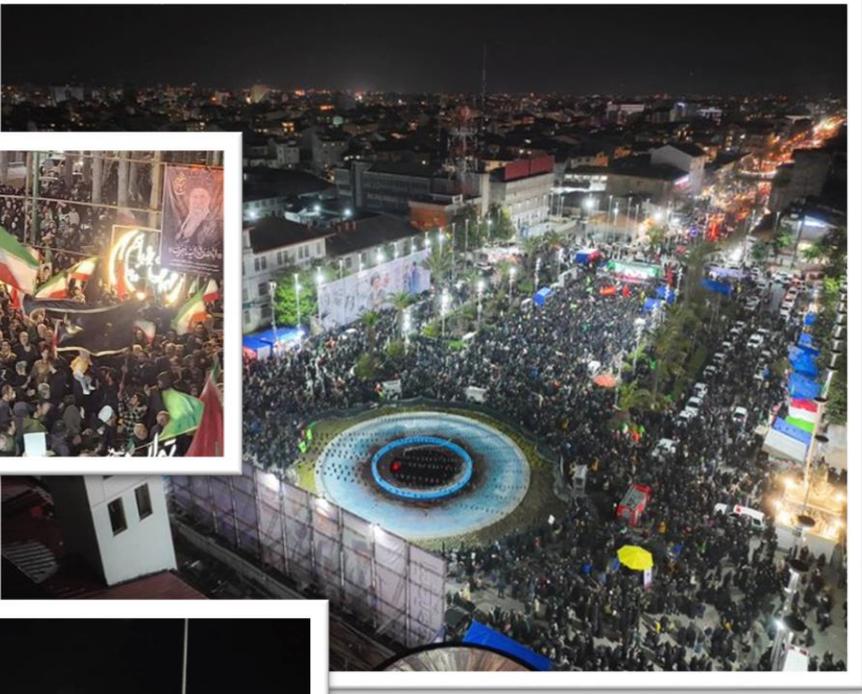
And the geopolitical rivalries that have attracted capital and attention could, if mishandled, entangle Makran in broader strategic competition.

Yet the direction of change is unmistakable.

A coastline that for millennia supported barely half a million people across 100,000 square kilometers is being deliberately reshaped through state policy, large-scale capital investment, and integration into the rapidly expanding trade networks of Eurasia.

The vision articulated by Iranian officials – that Makran must evolve from a “lost paradise” into the economic hub of Iran and its surrounding region – appears as a vivid reality.

PRO-GOV'T NIGHT RALLIES



In Memory of Students of Minab Elementary School in Iran

