

OPEN-SOURCE PRESS INTELLIGENCE

Iranian Press Monitor

Daily Front-Page Intelligence

Day 137 - Saturday, 18 July 2026 · 27 Tir 1405 · 3 Safar 1448

THE INFRASTRUCTURE-WAR EDITION

Nine Persian front-page scans, one English print (Iran Daily), six outlet Telegram channels and three agency wires; Tehran Times was unavailable at the time

Front pages published the morning of 18 July 2026, reflecting events through late 17 July local.

Defensive open-source press-intelligence. Hostile rhetoric is quoted and translated for attribution and analysis only; nothing herein endorses or amplifies it.



Front page: Qods

Executive Summary

Day 137 is the day the retaliation logic acquired a doctrine. After a fresh round of US strikes on southern Iran (the coast, Lorestan, the Makran shore, and the Bambour Garrison at Iranshahr), the front pages move in near-unison from 'we were attacked' to 'we answer infrastructure with infrastructure,' and the hardline flagship pushes that logic to its endpoint. Kayhan's banner, 'Infrastructure against infrastructure: add Israel to the target bank as well,' sits under the kicker 'It is time to fire on the global energy market,' and a sub-headline urges closing Bab al-Mandeb as a second chokepoint: 'Close Bab al-Mandeb and Trump will kneel.' Nobonyad tells readers it is 'time to change the equation' and put 'offensive actions on Iran's agenda'; Qods sacralizes the exchange as 'regional qisas' that has 'extended the equation to the entire Middle East.' The single most consequential read of the day is this shift from tit-for-tat to an advocated doctrine of energy-market and dual-chokepoint coercion, carried in language consistent enough across titles to indicate centrally-guided message discipline rather than organic editorial convergence.

Beneath the doctrine sits a still-contested kinetic picture. Iranian channels and wires (the IRGC's 'Operation Nasr-2' waves and the Army's 'Operation Saeqeh' phases) claim strikes on US bases in Bahrain (Sheikh Isa, Juffair), Kuwait (Ali al-Salem, HIMARS launchers, the Al-Ahmadi fuel dock), Jordan (Al-Azraq), and further afield at the Salameh rocks in Oman and Tanf in Syria; the English Iran Daily packages this for foreign readers as 'IRGC batters US bases in Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, Syria.' Outside reporting corroborates the Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan strikes but not the Qatar, Oman and Syria claims, and describes many incoming rounds as intercepted, so the five-country tally is best read as attacker-sourced amplification. On damage taken, Iran Daily prints 38 killed and 400 injured in the south while Iran's own Health Ministry gives about 35 killed and 300-plus injured, and the Iranshahr strike on the 388th Brigade is an Iranian military account.

The war-versus-peace fight sharpened, and the reformist camp found a US-official weapon. Sazandegi leads on 'Israel's cash-splashing to sink the deal,' citing Vice President JD Vance's disclosure (his 15 July podcast remarks, echoing a Time investigation naming Brad Parscale) that an Israeli-funded operation is spending millions to derail Iran-US talks; Etemad defends Ali Rabiei against the hardline campaign under 'Distortion of the Truth,' and both treat the second-chokepoint idea skeptically ('Playing the Bab al-Mandeb card') rather than as advocacy. The economic press pushes back hardest on the coercion doctrine itself: Ta'adol argues 'external opening matters as much as defence' and warns a 'knot in Hormuz' sends a 'tremor through the oil market,' while Jam-e Jam and Jomhuri-ye Eslami keep the home-front bill on the front page, oil toward \$85, fuel rationing pleas, roughly 4,200 megawatts of grid loss (a cumulative repeat), and a sharp Gulf LNG decline. Kayhan and Jomhuri-ye Eslami both foreground the mass Sanaa solidarity rally, folding Yemen into an anti-US encirclement narrative.

Net assessment: this is an escalation edition, but a calibrated one. The dominant, coordinated hardline message is a maximalist coercion doctrine (energy market, Israel's target bank, a second chokepoint) that outruns what has actually been executed; the economic and reformist titles are simultaneously arguing, in public, that this doctrine would wreck the economy it claims to defend and that the war is being prolonged by an Israeli operation inside Washington rather than by Tehran. The absence of any direct message from the current Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, on a day of peak escalation rhetoric is a conspicuous silence. Read the day as advocacy and signalling hardening faster than demonstrated capability, with a live internal argument over cost that the hardline fronts are working to shut down.

BOTTOM LINE The Iranian press has converged, with visible central coordination, on an 'infrastructure-for-infrastructure' war doctrine that the hardline flagship now pushes toward striking the global energy market and

opening a second chokepoint, even as a reformist counter-current uses the US Vice President's own words to argue the war is being prolonged by an Israeli influence operation in Washington.

CRITICAL SOURCING NOTE Every Iranian battle-damage and base-strike figure here is an outlet or wire claim, not a verified fact. Independent reporting corroborates US strikes on southern Iran and Iranian retaliation referencing Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan; the additional Qatar, Oman and Syria strike claims, the multi-country tallies, the 'closed strait,' and any US-casualty figures are attacker-sourced and uncorroborated. Casualty numbers differ between Iran Daily (38 killed, 400 injured) and Iran's Health Ministry (about 35 killed, 300-plus injured). Vance's remarks on an Israeli influence campaign are verified against international reporting of his 15 July interview; the Kayhan editorial is reconstructed from the front page and channel, not transcribed verbatim, and its byline was not confirmed. Tehran Times was unavailable at compile time. Vatan-e Emrooz, Jam-e Jam and Sobh-e No were read from their channels because their front-page scans were absent from the batch. 'The Leader' means Mojtaba Khamenei; the martyred Ali Khamenei and the founder Ruhollah Khomeini are distinguished where invoked.

Macro Trend Analysis

1 Retaliation hardens into an energy-market coercion doctrine

The mid-week 'infrastructure-for-infrastructure' response frame became, on Day 137, an advocated doctrine. Kayhan urges firing 'on the global energy market,' adding Israel to the 'target bank,' and opening Bab al-Mandeb as a second chokepoint beyond Hormuz; Nobonyad calls to 'change the equation' with 'offensive actions'; Qods labels it 'regional qisas.' The consistency of the framing across the hardline titles indicates centrally-guided message discipline, and the doctrine now explicitly targets world energy trade rather than only US bases.

2 A branded multi-front strike campaign, still attacker-sourced

IRGC 'Operation Nasr-2' waves and Army 'Operation Saeqeh' phases claim strikes on US assets in Bahrain (Sheikh Isa), Kuwait (Ali al-Salem, HIMARS, Al-Ahmadi dock), Jordan (Al-Azraq), Oman (Salameh rocks) and Syria (Tanf), with Kuwaiti sirens and Gulf explosions logged repeatedly. Outside reporting confirms the Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan strikes but not the wider list, and notes many rounds intercepted; the five-country 'batters US bases' tally is amplification, and the specific damage counts are messaging.

3 The reformist camp turns Vance's words into a diplomacy weapon

The surviving diplomatic pulse now has a named US-official source. Sazandegi and Etemad lead on Vance's disclosure that an Israeli-funded, well-financed operation (linked in a Time investigation to Brad Parscale) is working to derail the Iran-US understanding, reframing the war's persistence as an external-spoiler problem rather than Iranian intransigence. This is the sharpest reformist counter to the hardline 'the deal is dead' liturgy and keeps a negotiating track rhetorically alive.

4 Hormuz codified, and a second chokepoint floated

Sobh-e No fronts 'The Red Line of Hormuz' and ties continued strikes to a condition (calm on the southern coast); the Aerospace Force says strikes continue until the south and the strait are quiet. Kayhan escalates past Hormuz to advocate closing Bab al-Mandeb. Ta'adol and Jam-e Jam counter that the 'knot in Hormuz' is already a tremor on the oil market and cite the IEA on a sharp Gulf LNG decline, keeping Hormuz-as-liability visibly tethered to Hormuz-as-leverage.

5 The home-front bill stays on the front page

Even escalation fronts carry the cost. Jomhuri-ye Eslami runs oil toward \$85 and a Ministry of Energy plea to save a litre of fuel per household daily; Jam-e Jam repeats the roughly 4,200-megawatt cumulative grid loss

and 60-trillion-toman damage tally and reports Jask repaired and a Bushehr-perimeter attack denied; Ta'adol headlines a bourse 'in the shadow of war.' The economic press keeps arguing, against the hawks, that the coercion doctrine imperils the economy it claims to defend.

6 Yemen solidarity folded into an encirclement narrative

Kayhan and Jomhuri-ye Eslami both front the mass Sanaa rally ('Millions of Yemenis thank Iran for breaking the siege,' an Arabic caption naming a 'Friday of Warning and Repulsion'), casting the Yemeni front as part of an anti-US encirclement that complements the Bab al-Mandeb advocacy. It continues the widening-Yemen-front thread from the prior edition, now framed as popular endorsement rather than only kinetic spillover.

Key Judgments

KJ-1 [HIGH] The dominant, centrally-coordinated message of the day is a maximalist coercion doctrine, not merely tit-for-tat retaliation. Across Kayhan ('fire on the global energy market,' add Israel to the 'target bank,' close Bab al-Mandeb), Nobonyad ('change the equation,' 'offensive actions'), and Qods ('regional qisas'), the hardline fronts advocate escalating from base strikes to attacks on regional and global energy infrastructure and a second chokepoint. The cross-title consistency indicates guided message discipline. Significance: the public advocacy has moved ahead of demonstrated action, which raises both the risk of a deliberate energy-market escalation and the risk of over-reading rhetoric as executed policy.

KJ-2 [MODERATE-HIGH] A real US-Iran strike exchange occurred overnight, but its scale and geography are contested and Iranian-amplified. US strikes on southern Iran (the coast, Lorestan, Makran, the Iranshahr garrison) and Iranian retaliation referencing Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan are corroborated by outside reporting; the added claims of strikes in Qatar, Oman and Syria, the 'five-country' tally, and specific damage counts are attacker-sourced, and many incoming rounds were reported intercepted. Significance: treat the fact of a widening exchange as probable and the specific base-by-base and casualty tallies as messaging to be verified.

KJ-3 [MODERATE-HIGH] The reformist and economic press are mounting a coordinated, in-public argument against the coercion doctrine, evidence of a genuine and continuing elite split over cost. Sazandegi and Etemad weaponize Vance's Israeli-influence disclosure to argue the war is externally prolonged; Ta'adol argues 'external opening matters as much as defence'; Jam-e Jam and Jomhuri-ye Eslami keep grid loss, fuel rationing, oil at \$85 and Gulf LNG collapse on the front page. Significance: the hardline push to strike the energy market is being contested domestically as economically self-defeating, and that debate is a better predictor of Tehran's restraint than the banner headlines.

KJ-4 [MODERATE] Hormuz is being codified as doctrine while a second chokepoint (Bab al-Mandeb) is floated, a durable escalation of intent even where capability is unproven. Sobh-e No's 'Red Line of Hormuz' and the Aerospace Force's conditional-strike posture move closure from posture toward stated condition; Kayhan advocates opening Bab al-Mandeb. The hedge stands: external shipping data still show transit reduced rather than sealed, and the US is enforcing its own port-blockade. Significance: watch whether Bab al-Mandeb advocacy converts into Houthi-enabled action and whether Hormuz transit approaches zero rather than merely thinning.

KJ-5 [MODERATE] The Vance disclosure is genuine and consequential, but the Iranian press is using it instrumentally. Vance did state, on 15 July, that a well-funded Israeli-linked campaign sought to derail the Iran-US deal (consistent with a Time investigation naming Brad Parscale); the reformist papers accurately

relay this while folding it into a 'pool-pashi' (cash-splashing) frame that serves their own case for salvaging the memorandum. Significance: a rare instance where Iranian framing and verifiable US-official statements align, which strengthens the reformist argument that a diplomatic track still exists beneath the war rhetoric.

KJ-6 [MODERATE-HIGH] Negative evidence: the current Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, is absent from the front pages on a day of peak escalation rhetoric. No direct Mojtaba message appears; the day's leadership-discipline messaging is carried instead by a marja quote (Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, via Nobonyad) and a historical Khomeini panel (Jomhuri-ye Eslami). Significance: the succession-imagery vacuum first noted in earlier editions persists; either the Leader's office is deliberately keeping him above the escalation rhetoric or his authorship of it is being managed indirectly through clerical and IRGC channels. This absence is itself a tracking indicator.

Named-Figure Tracker

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Mojtaba Khamenei	Supreme Leader (since the assassination of Ali Khamenei, 28 Feb 2026)	No direct front-page message on a maximal-escalation day; leadership discipline voiced by proxy (Javadi Amoli) and by historical Khomeini citation.	absence noted
Donald Trump	US President	Cast as aggressor and as coercible: Etemad's 'Trump like Hitler'; Kayhan's 'Close Bab al-Mandeb and Trump will kneel.'	TARGET FRAMING
JD Vance	US Vice President	Relayed as a credible US-official source exposing an Israeli-funded campaign to derail the deal (Sazandegi lead, Etemad, Nobonyad's rebuttal).	WATCH
Brad Parscale	Former Trump campaign manager named in a Time investigation	Cited (via the Vance disclosure) as the operator of an alleged Israeli-funded influence campaign against the Iran-US understanding.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Hossein Shariatmadari	Kayhan managing editor (Leader's-office appointee)	Editorial voice behind the 'fire on the global energy market / add Israel to the target bank' doctrine (byline not confirmed on scan).	COERCION SPOKESMAN
Ali Rabiei	Presidential deputy for social affairs (Pezeshkian administration)	Defended by Etemad ('Distortion of the Truth') against the continuing hardline campaign over his leaked social-mood report.	WATCH
Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi Amoli	Senior Qom cleric (marja)	Front-paged by Nobonyad calling unity and obedience to the Leadership a universal duty; used to discipline wartime dissent.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Majid Majidi	Iranian filmmaker	Noted by Nobonyad rebuking Vance's remarks, a cultural-figure amplification of the anti-US line.	NEW NAMED FIGURE

Headline Summary Table

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Kayhan	Infrastructure Against Infrastructure: Add Israel to the Target Bank as Well	Hardline (Leader's office / IRGC)	Energy-market coercion; second chokepoint (Bab al-Mandeb)	SEVERE: doctrinal call to strike global energy infrastructure
Nobonyad	Time to Change the Equation	Conservative / principlist	Offensive-escalation advocacy; bury the memorandum	HIGH: pre-emption advocacy plus criminalization of restraint
Qods	Regional Retribution (Qisas)	Conservative (Astan Quds Razavi)	Sacralized region-wide retaliation; 'war of infrastructures'	HIGH: theological framing of region-wide strikes
Jomhuri-ye Eslami	America Strikes Iran's Infrastructure Again; the Largest Blow to Washington's Regional Interests	Traditional / establishment	Mutual escalation; oil at \$85; fuel rationing; Yemen rally	MODERATE-HIGH: mutual-escalation framing with home-front cost
Iran	Attack on Infrastructure: Retaliation for a Strategic Defeat	Official government daily	Retaliation framing; Central Asia corridor diplomacy	MODERATE-HIGH: state tit-for-tat framing hedged by outreach
Iran Daily (English)	IRGC Batters US Bases in Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, Syria	State English daily	Five-country strike claim; 38 killed, 400 injured in the south	MODERATE-HIGH: outward-facing amplification of strike claims
Chaharsoo	America's Bases Under Iran's Missile and Drone Strikes	Economic / business	Base-strike amplification; Arbaeen FX grievance co-lead	MODERATE-HIGH: amplifies multi-country base-strike claims
Vatan-e Emrooz	Fire Triangles	Hardline / principlist	IRGC communique conveyor; Nasr-2 multi-front strikes	HIGH: front-page amplification of the branded strike campaign
Sobh-e No	The Red Line of Hormuz	Principlist	Hormuz codified; conditional continued-strike posture	MODERATE-HIGH: Hormuz as red line; strikes tied to a condition
Etemad	Trump Like Hitler	Reformist	Strike documentation (south, Lorestan, Makran); Rabiei defense; Bab al-Mandeb skepticism	MODERATE: anti-US framing with domestic-cost realism
Sazandegi	Israel's Cash-Splashing to Sink the Deal	Reformist (Kargozaran)	Vance disclosure; Israel-as-spoiler; salvage the memorandum	LOW-MODERATE: pro-diplomacy; escalation blamed on external spoiler
Jam-e Jam	Getting Through the Blackouts; the Second War Over Hormuz	State broadcaster (IRIB)	Grid loss and blackouts; Hormuz sovereignty; Gulf LNG decline	MODERATE: home-front damage accounting

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Ta'adol	The Economy at the Intersection of Resistance and Diplomacy	Economic	Diplomacy over escalation; Hormuz tremor on the oil market	LOW: technocratic case against escalation

Per-Paper Front-Page Analysis

Iran Daily (English)

State English-language daily (IRNA group)

"IRGC Batters

MODERATE-HIGH: outward-facing amplification of multi-country strike claims and casualty framing

US Bases in Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, Syria"



- Main: The English state daily's banner claims IRGC strikes on US bases across five countries (Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, Syria) with a sub-deck, 'American aggression kills 38, injures 400 in southern Iran,' the outlet's casualty figure for the latest US strikes.
- Op-ed: An 'Opinion Exclusive,' 'Learning from history of Hyderabad' by Ahmad Naraghi, is the English mirror of the Persian Iran daily editorial, drawing a historical analogy of resistance to subjugation.
- Interview: An 'Interview Exclusive,' 'Unilateral US measures violate Strait of Hormuz legal order,' builds a legal-sovereignty argument around the strait for a foreign audience.
- Sub-item: 'Strategic corridor initiative launched to link Iran to Central Asia, China' pushes the connectivity-and-outreach message aimed at non-Western partners.
- Feature: A sports splash, 'Iran claims record-extending ninth men's title' at the Sitting Volleyball World Championships, supplies a morale note; a soft item on the Tabriz Bazaar's heritage rounds out the front.

ANALYST NOTE The English edition is the regime's outward-facing packaging of the same day: a five-country base-strike claim and a hard casualty figure (38 killed, 400 injured) aimed at foreign readers, wrapped in legal-order and connectivity arguments to court non-Western opinion. The five-country list exceeds what outside reporting corroborates (Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan are independently referenced; Qatar, Oman and Syria are Iranian claims), and the 38/400 figure runs slightly above Iran's own Health Ministry tally of about 35 killed and 300-plus injured.

“Attack on

MODERATE-HIGH: state-level tit-for-tat infrastructure-war framing, hedged by outreach signalling

Infrastructure: Retaliation for a Strategic Defeat” «حمله به زیرساخت، تلافی شکست راهبردی»



- Main: The state daily frames the wave of US strikes on Iranian infrastructure as an act of retaliation for a battlefield failure, not strength: a strapline reports political figures writing to the paper to condemn the aggression against civilian centres (تلافی شکست راهبردی).
- Sub-item: A right-hand box, 'Iran's Big Surprise for America' (غافلگیری بزرگ), pairs a missile-launch photo with a claim of an Iranian strike on a US logistics or staging node; presented as an outlet claim, not confirmed.
- Banner: The top strip leads on soft power, 'Iran's Cultural Diplomacy at the Heart of Central Asia' (دیپلماسی فرهنگی ایران در قلب آسیای مرکزی), mirroring the Iran Daily English story on a corridor initiative linking Iran to Central Asia and China.
- Op-ed: A signed column, 'Let Us Learn from the History of Hyderabad' (از تاریخ حیدرآباد بیاموزیم) by Ahmad Naraghi, reaches for a historical analogy of a state resisting external subjugation; the same op-ed runs in English on the Iran Daily front.
- Right rail: Domestic-mood items, 'When Urgent Hope Turns into an Urgent Trap' (وقتی امید فوری به دام فوری تبدیل می‌شود) and a football-finance piece, keep an economic-anxiety register beneath the war lead.

ANALYST NOTE The government daily holds the 'infrastructure-for-infrastructure' retaliation frame while deliberately keeping a Central Asia economic-diplomacy story on the masthead, projecting the executive's dual message of resilience plus outreach even as the IRGC escalates; continues the state track's effort to keep an economic-sovereignty and corridor narrative alive alongside the war.

"Time to Change the Equation" «نوبت تغییر معادله»

HIGH: explicit advocacy of offensive escalation plus criminalization of the restraint camp



- Main: Over a photograph of a towering black smoke plume rising from a struck coastal facility, the paper argues that repeated attacks on national infrastructure in recent days mean 'offensive actions must move onto Iran's agenda' (اقدامات تهاجمی باید در دستور کار قرار گیرد), an explicit call to escalate from response to initiative.
- Banner: A top quote panel with a cleric's portrait, 'Preserving Unity and Supporting the Leadership is a Duty for All' (حفظ وحدت و حمایت از رهبری), attributed to Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, frames wartime dissent as disloyalty.
- Op-ed: A boxed editorial, 'Settle the Fate of the Islamabad Understanding' (تفاهم اسلام آباد را تعیین تکلیف کنید), presses the government to formally declare the 17 June memorandum finished rather than leave it ambiguous.
- Sub-item: 'The Danger of Magnifying a Miscalculation' (خطر بزرگ کردن) and 'From Concord to Sedition' (از وفاق تا فتنه) recast advocates of restraint as a domestic threat.
- Right rail: 'The Illusion of Consensus for Negotiation' (توهم اجماع برای مذاکره) attacks the premise that talks command national backing; a separate item notes filmmaker Majid Majidi's public rebuke of US Vice President Vance's remarks.

ANALYST NOTE Nobonyad is the day's clearest hardline escalation voice, pushing from retaliation toward pre-emption ('change the equation') and simultaneously working to criminalize the peace argument as sedition; it carries forward the standing war-versus-peace factional fight, now fused with a demand to bury the Islamabad memorandum by decree.

"Infrastructure Against

SEVERE: doctrinal call to strike global energy infrastructure and open a second chokepoint

«زیرساخت در برابر زیرساخت؛ اسرائیل هم به بانک «زیرساخت: Add Israel to the Target Bank as Well» اهداف اضافه شود»



- Main: The flagship hardline daily moves the escalation logic to its endpoint, with a kicker 'It Is Time to Fire on the Global Energy Market' (وقت شلیک به بازار جهانی انرژی است) and a demand that Israeli infrastructure be formally added to Iran's 'target bank' alongside US assets.
- Sub-item: A sub-headline, 'Close Bab al-Mandeb and Trump Will Kneel' (بَابِ الْمَنْدَبِ را ببندید، ترامپ زانو می‌زند), advocates a second chokepoint beyond Hormuz, dual-strait coercion aimed at the world energy trade.
- Banner: A photo of a vast crowd in Sanaa runs under 'Millions of Yemenis Thank Iran for Breaking the Siege' (میلیون‌ها یمنی از ایران), an Arabic caption naming a 'Friday of Warning and Repulsion' rally, folding Yemen into an anti-US encirclement narrative.
- Op-ed: A left-column analysis, 'Iran Can Paralyze America; a Naval Blockade Will Not Succeed' (ایران می‌تواند آمریکا را فلج کند، محاصره دریایی به نتیجه نخواهد رسید), argues the US port-blockade of Iran will fail and cites reduced Hormuz flow and falling US public support.
- Right rail: A Tehran Friday-prayer item calls for punishment of 'those who ordered, carried out and abetted' the assassination of the martyred Leader; a business box cites the International Energy Agency warning on energy security; a sports box notes Iran's ninth world sitting-volleyball title and Paralympic berth.

ANALYST NOTE Kayhan sets the day's most aggressive coercion doctrine: escalate from infrastructure-for-infrastructure to striking the global energy market, add Israel to the target set, and close a second chokepoint (Bab al-Mandeb). Read as centrally-guided message discipline from the Leader's-office daily rather than organic commentary; it extends the standing dual-chokepoint advocacy first seen in the mid-July editorials.

"Israel's Cash-Splashing to

LOW-MODERATE: pro-diplomacy framing; escalation attributed to an external spoiler

Sink the Deal" «پول پاشی اسرائیل برای شکست توافق»



- Main: The reformist daily leads on a US-sourced revelation: 'the US Vice President disclosed' (معاون رئیس جمهور آمریکا افشا کرد) that Israel, spending millions of dollars in an organized effort, is working to deadlock Iran-US talks and destroy the understanding between the two states (JD Vance's remarks on the Rogan podcast, 15 July).
- Main: The body says Sazandegi examined this while reviewing America's recent strikes on Iran, positioning the outlet as documenting an external spoiler of diplomacy rather than cheering the war.
- Op-ed: A signed column by Seyed Hossein Marashi, 'Courage in Decision-Making' (شجاعت در تصمیم گیری), argues for political nerve to keep a negotiating path open against the escalation tide.
- Sub-item: The strapline items flag 'the final Islamabad choice' and defense of the diplomatic line, keeping the reformist emphasis on salvaging the memorandum.
- Banner: A large image of a collapsing struck tower carries the war visually even as the text argues the war is being prolonged by Israeli interference in Washington, not by Iranian intransigence.

ANALYST NOTE Sazandegi weaponizes Vance's own words to make the reformist case that the deal's enemy sits in Israel and its US influence operation, not in Tehran; this is the day's sharpest counter to the hardline 'deal is dead' liturgy and continues the surviving-diplomatic-pulse thread by giving it a named US-official source.

"America's

MODERATE-HIGH: amplifies multi-country base-strike claims; domestic economic grievance co-lead

«پایگاه‌های آمریکا زیر ضرب حملات موشکی و پهپادی ایران»
 Bases Under Iran's Missile and Drone Strikes



- Main (lower half): Over a missile-launch photo, the paper reports IRGC missile and drone strikes on US bases across the region and lists targets in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan and Iraq; presented as Iranian operational claims.
- Main (upper half): The visual lead is economic, a highway-sign montage pointing to 'Arbaeen Pilgrimage' and 'Central Bank Policies,' under 'Currency Profiteering off Arbaeen, Courtesy of the Central Bank' (گران‌فروشی ارز اربعین), attacking FX allocation for the coming pilgrimage.
- Sub-item: The two leads sit deliberately side by side, war on the bottom, the Arbaeen currency-rate grievance on top, keeping a domestic cost-of-living complaint above the battlefield.
- Right rail: Body copy details the claimed base-by-base target set, echoing the wire-service (Fars, Defa Press) enumeration of Ali al-Salem, Sheikh Isa and al-Azraq without independent confirmation.

ANALYST NOTE Chaharsoo mixes hawkish amplification of the base-strike claims with a pocketbook attack on Central Bank FX policy for Arbaeen, illustrating how even a business title now runs the regional-strike claim as settled fact while its real editorial energy targets domestic economic management; the base list should be read as attacker-sourced messaging, corroborated only in part (Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan) by outside reporting.

"Trump

MODERATE: fierce anti-US framing paired with domestic-cost realism and restraint on chokepoint escalation

Like Hitler" «ترامپ مثل هیتلر»



- Main: The reformist daily runs its harshest anti-US front to date, 'Etemad narrates America's attacks on the southern regions, Lorestan and the Makran coast' (اعتماد از حملات آمریکا به مناطق جنوبی، لرستان و سواحل مکران روایت می‌کند), over a photo of a collapsed bridge with a salvage crane.
- Sub-item: A detail line, 'Details of the strikes: Iran's response to 7 American bases' (جزئیات ضربات: پاسخ ایران به ۷ پایگاه آمریکایی), tallies the Iranian counter-strikes at seven US facilities.
- Op-ed: A left column, 'Playing the Bab al-Mandeb Card' (بازی با کارت باب‌المندب), examines the second-chokepoint gambit skeptically rather than as advocacy.
- Sub-item: 'End of the Strategic Reserves' Life' and an oil-supply piece keep the economic-cost frame; a business note flags markets under strain.
- Right rail: A boxed item defends Ali Rabiei against the hardline campaign, headed 'Distortion of the Truth' (تحریف حقیقت), pushing back on the weaponizing of his leaked social-mood report; a rail of named-figure portraits runs alongside.

ANALYST NOTE Etemad escalates its rhetoric on the US ('Trump like Hitler') while remaining inside the reformist camp on the home front, defending Rabiei and treating the Bab al-Mandeb idea as a card to be examined, not endorsed; the paper documents the strike geography (Lorestan, Makran, the south) more granularly than the hardline titles, and carries forward the Rabiei-report factional thread from the prior editions.

«اقتصاد در تلاقی مقاومت و دیپلماسی» *"The Economy at the Intersection of Resistance and Diplomacy"*



- Main: The business daily asks in its deck 'Why external opening matters as much as defence' (چرا گشایش خارجی به اندازه دفاع اهمیت دارد؟), arguing that economic survival requires diplomacy, not only resistance, a pointed counter to the chokepoint hawks.
- Main: A centre feature over a satellite map of the Strait of Hormuz, 'A Knot in Hormuz, a Tremor on the Oil Market' (گره در هرمز، لرزه بر بازار نفت), reports the International Energy Agency's warning about instability from the Hormuz crisis.
- Sub-item: 'The Lost Currencies!' (ارزهای گمشده) and 'The Stock Market on a Correction Path' (بازار سهام در مسیر اصلاح) track wartime financial stress.
- Op-ed: A column, 'Moderation Is the Condition of Economic Stability' (میانروی شرط پایداری اقتصاد), makes the technocratic case against escalation.
- Right rail: 'The Bourse in the Shadow of War' (بورس در سایه جنگ) keeps the market-under-war frame that the economic press has run all week.

ANALYST NOTE Ta'adol is the clearest technocratic dissent from the coercion doctrine, arguing that closing Hormuz and shelling the energy market imperils the very economy the war is meant to defend; it keeps Hormuz-as-liability tethered to Hormuz-as-leverage and continues the business-press counterweight to Kayhan's dual-chokepoint advocacy.

"America Strikes Iran's

MODERATE-HIGH: mutual-escalation framing with foregrounded home-front rationing

«حملات مجدد "Infrastructure Again, and the Largest Military Blow to Washington's Interests in the Region" آمریکا به زیرساخت‌های ایران و بزرگ‌ترین حمله نظامی به منافع واشنگتن در منطقه»



- Main: The establishment daily runs a two-sided lead: renewed US strikes on Iranian infrastructure, answered by what it calls the largest military blow yet to US regional interests, presenting the exchange as a mutual escalation.
- Banner: A top box, 'Imam Khomeini's Counsel to the People and Political Activists on War-Related Affairs' (توصیه‌های امام خمینی به مردم و فعالان), invokes the Republic's founder to discipline wartime conduct, a historical rather than current-Leader citation.
- Sub-item: A large Sanaa rally photo captioned 'Wide demonstrations by the Yemeni people to declare readiness to break the siege and end the aggression' (تظاهرات گسترده مردم یمن) mirrors Kayhan's Yemen-solidarity framing.
- Sub-item: Economic strip, 'Oil Climbs Toward the \$85 Mark' (نفت به مرز ۸۵) (دلار صعود کرد) and a Ministry of Energy plea to save at least one litre of fuel per household daily, ties the war to visible home-front rationing.
- Right rail: 'CNN: the US Military Is Deliberately Not Completing the Investigation into the School Strike' (سی‌ان‌ان: ارتش آمریکا به عمد تحقیقات) (در باره حمله به مدرسه را تکمیل نمی‌کند) is flagged as a second-hand foreign-media attribution, not independently verified; a box honours 'the oppressed martyr Ayatollah Beheshti.'

ANALYST NOTE Jomhuri-ye Eslami keeps its establishment register, escalation reported as mutual, the founder invoked for discipline, and the home-front cost (fuel rationing, oil at \$85) placed on the front page; its CNN citation on the school strike is a rendering to be flagged, not adopted, per the attribution firewall, and it sustains the Yemen-solidarity and economic-strain threads.

«Regional Retribution (Qisas)» قصاص

HIGH: sacralized, region-wide retribution framing of the base strikes

منطقه‌ای»



- Main: A full-width yellow banner declares 'Regional Qisas' (retribution), with a second line 'The War of Infrastructures Begins' (شروع جنگ زیرساخت‌ها): following US aggression against parts of Iranian soil, the IRGC's all-out responses against US bases 'extended the equation to the entire Middle East.'
- Sub-item: The body specifies claimed target categories, bridges, rail, power stations and energy installations, and pairs the text with a truck-mounted missile launcher and an Iranian flag.
- Sub-item: 'Currency After Preference' (ارز بعد از ترجیح) covers the removal of preferential FX, and a column argues reduced US weapons reserves and the cost of confronting Iran are bringing Washington 'to its senses.'
- Op-ed: Foreign-affairs items note von der Leyen's Kyiv trip framed as 'the West's readiness to divide the spoils in Ukraine' and mock an England-France World Cup fixture as 'the most meaningless match.'
- Banner: A masthead greeting marks the birth anniversary of Imam Hassan Mojtaba, keeping the religious calendar visible above the war coverage.

ANALYST NOTE Qods gives the retaliation its theological label, 'qisas,' sacralizing the infrastructure-for-infrastructure exchange and universalizing it to the whole region ('extended the equation to the entire Middle East'); the shrine-city daily's framing shows the escalation being cast as lawful retribution rather than choice, reinforcing the day's dominant retaliation narrative.

Jam-e Jam

State broadcaster daily (IRIB)

"Getting Through the Blackouts, and the Second War Over Hormuz"

MODERATE: home-front damage accounting; regional LNG disruption noted

- Main: Read via the paper's Telegram channel, the state-broadcaster daily foregrounds the home-front cost: the Tavanir chief reports more than 2,000 points of the national electricity network damaged and roughly 4,200 megawatts of generation lost, with damage exceeding 60 trillion tomans, a running cumulative tally repeated from prior days.
- Sub-item: A military analyst frames the confrontation as 'the second war, over sovereignty of the Strait of Hormuz,' assessing which targets the US and Iran have struck.
- Sub-item: Officials deny circulating reports of an attack on the Bushehr nuclear plant's perimeter; the Jask distribution network, hit the previous night, is reported repaired and back in service.
- Right rail: The channel cites the International Energy Agency reporting Qatar and UAE LNG output down sharply (about 80 percent below 2025, affecting Ras Laffan), and logs six explosions near Taherouyeh village in Sirik.

ANALYST NOTE Jam-e Jam keeps the state's damage-and-resilience ledger visible, blackouts, grid loss, repairs completed, denials issued, which both admits real strain and manages it; the roughly 4,200 MW figure is a cumulative repeat, not fresh daily loss, and the LNG-collapse line signals the energy-market damage the hardline press wants to weaponize is already registering across the Gulf.

Sobh-e No

Principlist

MODERATE-HIGH: Hormuz codified as a red line; conditional continued-strike posture

"The Red Line of Hormuz" «خط قرمز هرمز»

- Main: Read via the paper's Telegram channel (Issue 2389), the principlist daily's front headline 'The Red Line of Hormuz' (خط قرمز هرمز) codifies the strait as a non-negotiable, aligning with the day's chokepoint messaging.
- Sub-item: The channel relays an Aerospace Force commander's statement that effective strikes 'from across Iran against the enemy' will continue until calm returns to the southern coasts and the Strait of Hormuz.
- Sub-item: It reports IRGC claims of HIMARS platforms destroyed in Kuwait and 'Operation Nasr-2, 15th phase' strikes, plus satellite imagery said to show hits on King Faisal base in Jordan; infrastructure damage in Iranshahr after US strikes on civilian airport facilities is noted.
- Right rail: Softer threads include 14,000 Arbaeen pilgrims crossing at Mehran into Iraq, an ISIS operative captured in Anbar, and Iran's UN envoy condemning US targeting of civilian infrastructure; oil is cited at about \$88 a barrel.

ANALYST NOTE Sobh-e No hardens Hormuz from slogan to declared 'red line' and ties continued strikes explicitly to a condition (calm on the southern coast), a conditional-closure posture that continues the Hormuz-as-coercion thread while keeping the Arbaeen and civilian-infrastructure grievances in view.

“Fire Triangles” «مثلثات آتش»

HIGH: front-page amplification of the branded multi-front strike campaign

- Main: Read via the paper's Telegram channel (no Persian front-page scan in today's batch), the front headline 'Fire Triangles' (مثلثات آتش) presents an analysis of layered responses to US aggression and the US naval blockade of Iran.
- Banner: The channel relays a run of IRGC public-relations communiques (statements numbered in the high teens and low twenties) claiming strikes on Al-Azraq in Jordan (aircraft ramp and command centre, Khaybar-Shekan missiles), Ali al-Salem in Kuwait, and a US special-operations node at Tanf in Syria 'in response to the Iranshahr incident.'
- Sub-item: Further communiques claim destruction of HIMARS launchers in Kuwait and of maritime and air-control radars at the Salameh rocks and Ghanaim area in Oman; all are Iranian operational claims.
- Kicker: The umbrella label for the sequence is 'Operation Nasr-2,' presented in multiple waves, continuing the branded strike series from earlier in the week.

ANALYST NOTE Vatan-e Emrooz functions today as a conveyor belt for IRGC communiques, giving the strike claims a hardline front-page frame ('Fire Triangles') that treats the multi-country operation as a coherent doctrine; the specific base-by-base tallies are attacker-sourced and should be carried as claims, with only the Jordan and Kuwait strikes partially corroborated externally.

Appendix A - The Day's Flagged Leadership Message: The Unity-and-Obedience Panel

Nobonyad, front-page quote panel attributed to Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi Amoli, 27 Tir 1405 / 18 July 2026; cross-referenced against the historical counsel panel in Jomhuri-ye Eslami.

No direct message from the current Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, appears on the front pages in today's batch. The most prominent leadership-discipline message is a front-page quote panel in Nobonyad attributed to the senior cleric Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi Amoli, reproduced here in translation with that attribution held strictly.

The panel's argument, as printed: preserving unity and supporting the Leadership is a duty incumbent on all; in present conditions this obligation is emphasized and reinforced; safeguarding unity and cohesion of the society is not optional but a religious and national necessity, and precise attention to this duty is what protects the country's standing. Advocates of internal division are cast, by implication, as serving the adversary.

Separately, Jomhuri-ye Eslami fronts a historical panel of 'Imam Khomeini's counsel to the people and political activists on war-related affairs.' This is a citation of the Republic's founder (the late Ruhollah Khomeini), invoked to discipline present wartime conduct, and must not be read as a statement by the current Leader.

Analyst flag: The absence of a direct Mojtaba Khamenei lead message, on a day of maximal escalation rhetoric, is itself a finding and is filed as such in the key judgments. Verification note: the Javadi Amoli text is translated from the printed panel; the loaded register ('duty,' 'unity,' 'sedition' in adjacent items) is the outlet's, documented for analysis, not endorsed.

Appendix B - The Day's Flagged Editorial: Kayhan, 'It Is Time to Fire on the Global Energy Market'

Kayhan, front-page lead argument, 27 Tir 1405 / 18 July 2026; also relayed via t.me/s/kayhan_online. Reconstruction of the argument, not a verbatim transcription.

Kayhan's front-page lead advances the war's most aggressive coercion doctrine of the day, under the kicker 'It is time to fire on the global energy market' and the banner 'Infrastructure against infrastructure: Israel should be added to the target bank as well.'

The argument, in translation of its thrust: since the United States and its partners have struck Iranian civilian and energy infrastructure, Iran should answer symmetrically against regional and global energy infrastructure, and Israel's infrastructure should be entered formally into Iran's 'target bank' rather than left aside. A companion line urges closing a second maritime chokepoint, Bab al-Mandeb, in addition to Hormuz: 'Close Bab al-Mandeb and Trump will kneel.'

A paired analysis, 'Iran can paralyze America; a naval blockade will not succeed,' contends that the US port-blockade of Iran will fail, citing reduced throughput through the Strait of Hormuz and what it describes as declining US public support for the war.

Analyst flag: This is documented as hostile rhetoric for defensive assessment only. Verification note: the full verbatim text of Kayhan's signature front-page note (conventionally written by managing editor Hossein Shariatmadari) was not retrieved in clean form at compile time; the byline was not independently confirmed on the scan, so authorship is attributed to Kayhan's editorial line rather than to a named signature. The call to strike the 'global energy market' and to open a second chokepoint is an advocacy position, not a statement of executed policy.

Appendix C - Methodology and Sourcing Notes

iran-press-digest v2 pipeline, 18 July 2026.

Sources: nine Persian front-page scans (via the NewspaperTasnim batch for 27 Tir 1405) covering Iran, Nobonyad, Kayhan, Sazandegi, Chaharsoo, Etemad, Ta'adol, Jomhuri-ye Eslami and Qods; one English print (Iran Daily, 18 July); six outlet Telegram channels (Kayhan, Vatan-e Emrooz, Jam-e Jam, Etemad, Iran, Sobh-e No); and three agency wires used for corroboration only under the attribution firewall (Defa Press, Fars News, Nour News). Vatan-e Emrooz, Jam-e Jam and Sobh-e No are analyzed from their channels because their front-page scans were absent from today's batch.

Coverage and gaps: Tehran Times was unavailable at the time of compilation and is not cited. Agency-wire content (IRGC operational communiques for 'Operation Nasr-2' and the Army's 'Operation Saeqeh' phases) is folded into the trends and threat register as claims, not treated as front-page reporting.

Attribution firewall: All Iranian battle-damage and base-strike claims are labelled as claims. Independent reporting (Al Jazeera, CNN, Reuters via wire) corroborates US strikes on southern Iran and Iranian retaliatory strikes referencing Bahrain (Sheikh Isa, Juffair), Kuwait (Ali al-Salem) and Jordan (Al-Azraq); additional Iranian claims of strikes in Qatar, Oman (Salameh rocks) and Syria (Tanf) are not independently corroborated and are carried as claims only. Second-hand renderings (for example Jomhuri-ye Eslami's citation of CNN on a school-strike investigation) are flagged and not adopted as fact.

Casualty figures: Iran Daily prints 38 killed and 400 injured in southern Iran; Iran's Health Ministry, cited by international outlets, gives about 35 killed and more than 300 injured since fighting resumed the prior week. The Iranshahr / Bambour Garrison strike (seven soldiers of the 388th Brigade reported killed) is drawn from Iranian military statements. Iranian claims of US casualties (a figure of 427 circulated on the Iran channel) are attacker-sourced and uncorroborated.

Named-figure verification: JD Vance's remarks on an Israeli-funded influence campaign to derail the Iran-US deal are verified against international reporting of his 15 July podcast interview and a Time magazine investigation naming Brad Parscale; the Persian papers render this as 'poul-pashi' (cash-splashing). 'The Leader' in current coverage refers to Mojtaba Khamenei; the late Ali Khamenei ('the martyred Leader,' assassinated 28 February 2026) and the founder Ruhollah Khomeini are distinguished where each is invoked. Hijri dates on the mastheads vary by a day (2 vs 3 Safar 1448); 3 Safar is used on the cover, following Qods and Chaharsoo.

Translation caveat: all English renderings are editorial. Loaded regime vocabulary (qisas / retribution, poul-pashi / cash-splashing, eqtedar / potency) is glossed in place and quoted, not endorsed. Prepared for analysis and early warning; hostile content is documented for defensive assessment only.

Open-source material only. All translations from Persian/Arabic originals. Iranian claims are labelled as claims. Prepared for analysis and early warning; hostile content is documented for defensive assessment only, not endorsed.