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THE LEADER'S ANTI-DIVISION DECREE EDITION

Front pages published the morning of 31 August, reflecting events through late 30 August, dominated by the Leader's Unity Week message forbidding internal division, the backlash over President Pezeshkian's television interview, and the launch of the Mahd-e Iran party, while a fresh Strait-of-Hormuz kinetic exchange ran on the wires

Front pages published the morning of 31 August 2026, reflecting events through late 30 August 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: Vatan-e Emrooz

Executive Summary

The defining development of the cycle is a reversal of the series' longest-running negative-evidence thread: the sitting Leader of the Revolution, Mojtaba Khamenei, silent above the fray through the late-August editions, now features by direct message on nearly every front page. A coordinated text marking Government Week, Unity Week and the 40th International Islamic Unity Conference is splashed by Vatan-e Emrooz ('Division forbidden!'), Kayhan ('the unity of Muslims against global unbelief'), Chaharsoo ('America is the enemy of the entire Islamic ummah'), Jomhouri Eslami ('recognize the real enemy'), Ta'adol and Etemad ('dichotomization forbidden'), and Hamshahri ('blueprint of victory'). The convergence of separately owned hardline, reformist, establishment and business titles on the same message and often the same pulled quote, 'committing anything to the detriment of social cohesion is forbidden,' indicates a centrally supplied text rather than organic editorial agreement.

The message's own content names the reason it was needed, and it is the edition's single highest-significance finding: the decree forbids 'illusory dichotomization,' explicitly the war-versus-negotiation split, the exact fault line that fractured the Iranian press through late August. The clearest proof that the decree suppresses rather than settles that split is that both camps immediately claim it. Kayhan's front-page note turns it inward, warning President Pezeshkian to 'beware the unity-breaking current in the body of the government'; Chaharsoo converts it into a numbered indictment of 'twenty instances of negativism' in the president's television interview. Etemad reads the very same sentence as vindication, headlining Pezeshkian's interview a 'return to consensus' and licensing his diplomacy; Sobh-e No enlists Haddad-Adel to brand the war-or-talks binary an enemy illusion. One message, two mutually exclusive readings, each invoking the Leader's authority.

Beneath the unity decree the internal political contest is intensifying, not resolving. The launch of the new 'Mahd-e Iran' party, fronted by Etemad and Sobh-e No through Ali Baqeri's statement rejecting a 'confrontation-building' approach, and glossed by Gholamreza Zarifian's audit of the Pezeshkian government's 'strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats,' opens a fresh institutional vehicle for the diplomacy-and-cohesion lane at the moment the hardline press is trying to close that space. The Pezeshkian television interview functions as the cycle's real battleground: the reformist lane treats it as candor and consensus-seeking, the hardline and economic lanes as defeatist 'negativism' that serves the enemy.

The Strait of Hormuz, the series' central physical lever, migrated again, and this time off the front pages. Where the 26 August edition tracked an Iran-Oman de-escalation corridor against hardline chokepoint rhetoric, this cycle carries a genuine kinetic exchange that the print front pages, going to press on the unity message, did not splash: a US strike on rocket launchers on Iran's Larak Island, reported by US Central Command as an imminent mine-laying threat, and Iranian retaliatory claims of ballistic-missile strikes on US bases in Jordan, drone strikes on the Al-Minhad base in the UAE, and the downing of a US MQ-9 over the strait. Iranian wire channels (Fars, Defa Press) carried the operations as the war's continuation; international reporting corroborated the exchange, with Jordan stating it intercepted eight incoming missiles. That an actual US-Iran exchange ran on the wires while the front pages led with an internal-cohesion decree is itself a finding about editorial priority and message control.

The economic and diplomatic registers round out the cycle without dislodging the unity frame. Ta'adol reports the Tehran bourse topping a 5.5-million peak and car imports up 56 percent, and foregrounds both the Iran-Pakistan 'Islamabad understanding' and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit; President Pezeshkian departed for the SCO summit in Bishkek, continuing the great-power-alignment thread that ran through the China-centered 26 August edition. Sazandegi supplies the sharpest counter-current, leading not

with the decree but with the exiled musician Mohsen Namjoo's return to Iran and an economist's candor about sanctions pain, staking out reformist cultural and economic ground against the enforced-optimism line.

Net assessment: this is a top-down message-discipline edition in which the instrument of unity becomes the evidence of disunity. The overt story is that the Leader has re-entered the frame after a prolonged absence to command national cohesion and forbid the war-versus-talks split, and the entire press has amplified him in near-lockstep. The consequential story underneath is that the command failed at the moment of transmission: the hardline flagship reads 'unity' as a mandate to purge and discipline the government, the reformist lane reads it as endorsement of the president's diplomacy, and the new Mahd-e Iran party institutionalizes the diplomacy lane even as Kayhan tries to delegitimize it. The threads to watch are whether the decree is followed by concrete moves against named officials or by an accommodation; whether the Mahd-e Iran launch hardens into an organized pro-diplomacy bloc; and whether the off-front-page Hormuz exchange forces its way onto the next batch's front pages or is deliberately kept subordinate to the unity narrative.

BOTTOM LINE The 31 August batch is a single coordinated event: the Leader breaks his months-long editorial silence to forbid internal division, and nearly every front page carries the decree, but the hardline and reformist lanes immediately turn the identical words to opposite ends (a loyalty test on Pezeshkian versus a license for his diplomacy), so the message meant to close the system's rupture instead documents it, even as a fresh US-Iran exchange over the Strait of Hormuz plays out off the front pages.

CRITICAL SOURCING NOTE Compiled from nine Persian front-page scans (Hamshahri, Vatan-e Emrooz, Sobh-e No, Kayhan, Sazandegi, Chaharsoo, Ta'adol, Etemad, Jomhouri Eslami) whose printed date matched 9 Shahrivar 1405, read directly, plus one English scan (Iran Daily, dated 29 August and one day behind). Wire channels (Kayhan, Fars, Defa Press, Nour News) were used only for corroboration and for the off-front-page Hormuz exchange, which was additionally checked against international reporting. Iranian operational and battle-damage assertions are carried as attributed claims, not as verified fact; Jordan's interception account is noted where it qualifies them. The reconstructed Leader's message is assembled from front-page renderings, not a verified verbatim text, and the primary source on khamenei.ir was not retrieved at compile time. 'The Leader' denotes Mojtaba Khamenei following the 28 February 2026 assassination of Ali Khamenei.

Macro Trend Analysis

1 The Leader returns from absence with a coordinated unity decree

After a run of editions in which the sitting Supreme Leader appeared only by absence, Mojtaba Khamenei features by direct message on nearly every front page, marking Government Week, Unity Week and the 40th Islamic Unity Conference. Vatan-e Emrooz distills it to 'Division forbidden!', Kayhan to 'the unity of Muslims against global unbelief,' Ta'adol and Etemad to 'dichotomization forbidden,' Jomhouri Eslami to 'recognize the real enemy,' and Chaharsoo to 'America is the enemy of the whole ummah.' The recurrence of the same pulled quote across separately owned titles indicates a supplied text and centrally managed message discipline, and reverses the standing leadership-by-absence thread recorded through 26 August.

2 One decree, two readings: the unity message documents the split it forbids

The message explicitly forbids the war-versus-negotiation dichotomy, and both camps immediately weaponize it. Kayhan's front-page note turns it into a warning to Pezeshkian against a 'unity-breaking current in the government,' and Chaharsoo into a numbered audit of the president's 'negativism' in his television interview; Etemad reads the identical text as a 'return to consensus' that licenses his diplomacy, and Sobh-e No, via

Haddad-Adel, brands the war-or-talks binary an enemy illusion. The same sentence wielded for opposite ends is the sharpest available evidence that the decree suppresses rather than resolves the intra-system rupture.

3 The internal contest institutionalizes: the Mahd-e Iran party launches

Etemad and Sobh-e No front the official launch of a new 'Mahd-e Iran' party, with Ali Baqeri disavowing a 'confrontation-building' approach and Gholamreza Zarifian auditing the Pezeshkian government's strengths and threats. The launch opens an organized vehicle for the diplomacy-and-cohesion lane precisely as the hardline flagship tries to close that space, so the unity decree lands atop an intensifying, not subsiding, political competition.

4 Hormuz turns kinetic again, but off the front pages

The 26 August Iran-Oman de-escalation corridor is overtaken by an actual exchange: a US strike on rocket launchers on Larak Island (framed by US Central Command as an imminent Hormuz mine-laying threat) and Iranian retaliatory claims of ballistic-missile strikes on US bases in Jordan, drone strikes on Al-Minhad in the UAE, and an MQ-9 downed over the strait, carried by Fars and Defa Press and corroborated internationally (Jordan reporting eight missiles intercepted). That the print front pages, going to press on the unity message, did not splash a live US-Iran exchange is a finding about editorial priority; the operations and their damage claims are logged as attributed.

5 Markets and great-power alignment carry the day's optimism

Ta'adol reports the Tehran bourse topping a 5.5-million peak, car imports up 56 percent, the Iran-Pakistan 'Islamabad understanding,' and the SCO summit; President Pezeshkian departed for the SCO gathering in Bishkek, continuing the great-power-alignment thread from the China-centered 26 August edition. The economic-realist lane keeps its structural argument alive through Farshad Momeni ('the first reformist step is the just distribution of power') and Saeed Leylaz on sanctions strain, holding the fault line with the hardline demand for unbroken optimism.

6 A reformist cultural counter-current under the enforced-unity line

Sazandegi declines to lead with the decree, fronting instead the exiled musician Mohsen Namjoo's return to Iran and the hostile reaction of monarchist and 'overthrowist' opponents abroad, alongside candor about sanctions pain. The choice stakes out reformist cultural ground at the exact moment the establishment presses for closed ranks, a quiet but pointed refusal of the message discipline the hardline titles enforce.

Key Judgments

KJ-1 [HIGH] The sitting Leader has re-entered the editorial frame with a coordinated unity decree, reversing the series' standing leadership-by-absence thread. A message attributed to Mojtaba Khamenei marking Government Week, Unity Week and the 40th Islamic Unity Conference dominates Vatan-e Emrooz, Kayhan, Chaharsoo, Jomhouri Eslami, Ta'adol, Etemad and Hamshahri, with the same pulled quote recurring across separately owned titles. Significance: after editions defined by the current Leader's silence, this is a deliberate re-assertion of the leadership register, and the lockstep amplification indicates a supplied text and central message control rather than organic convergence.

KJ-2 [HIGH] The unity decree has failed to close the intra-system split and instead documents it, because both lanes claim the same words for opposite ends. Kayhan warns Pezeshkian against a 'unity-breaking current in the government' and Chaharsoo audits 'twenty instances of negativism' in his television interview, while Etemad reads the identical message as a 'return to consensus' endorsing his diplomacy and Sobh-e No brands the war-or-talks binary an enemy illusion. Significance: a command to end the war-versus-

negotiation split that is immediately turned into ammunition by both camps is evidence the rupture is now structural, not rhetorical, and that top-down messaging cannot presently suppress it.

KJ-3 [MODERATE-HIGH] The diplomacy-and-cohesion lane is institutionalizing through the new Mahd-e Iran party even as the hardline press moves to delegitimize it. Etemad and Sobh-e No front the launch via Ali Baqeri's rejection of 'confrontation-building' and Gholamreza Zarifian's government audit, giving the pro-diplomacy camp an organized vehicle. Significance: the contest documented since late August is acquiring formal political structure, which raises the stakes of the hardline flagship's loyalty-test framing and should be tracked for whether the party coheres into a durable bloc or is neutralized.

KJ-4 [MODERATE-HIGH] A kinetic US-Iran exchange over the Strait of Hormuz occurred this cycle but was kept off the scanned front pages. A US strike on Larak Island rocket launchers (framed by US Central Command as an imminent mine-laying threat) drew Iranian retaliatory claims of ballistic-missile strikes on US bases in Jordan, drone strikes on Al-Minhad in the UAE, and an MQ-9 downing over the strait, carried by Fars and Defa Press and corroborated internationally, with Jordan reporting eight missiles intercepted. Significance: the print press subordinating a live exchange to an internal-unity decree indicates message priority is being set at the leadership rather than the event level; the Iranian battle-damage figures are attributed claims pending independent confirmation.

KJ-5 [MODERATE] The great-power-alignment thread continues through the SCO summit and the Iran-Pakistan channel, extending the China-centered 26 August edition. Ta'adol foregrounds the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit and the 'Islamabad understanding,' and President Pezeshkian departed for the SCO gathering in Bishkek, where bilateral meetings with Russian, Chinese, Pakistani and Indian leaders were signaled. Significance: Tehran continues to answer Western pressure by demonstrating eastern and regional alignment, though the front pages present the summit as backdrop to the unity narrative rather than as the day's lead, so its concrete deliverables remain to be tracked.

KJ-6 [MODERATE] The economic-realist and reformist-cultural lanes continue to resist the enforced-optimism line the decree demands. Sazandegi leads with Mohsen Namjoo's return and sanctions candor rather than the unity message; Ta'adol's Farshad Momeni argues fair power distribution is the precondition for reform; Saeed Leylaz writes on sanctions strain. Significance: even under a top-down cohesion command, part of the press keeps acknowledging hardship and dissent as legitimate rather than defeatist, holding open the fault line the hardline lane frames as an enemy asset.

KJ-7 [MODERATE] Negative-evidence finding: the front pages carry the Leader's message but not the day's kinetic escalation, and no triumphalist war splash appears on any title. Hardline flagships that would ordinarily headline strikes on US bases instead led with internal cohesion, and the operational claims surfaced only on the wires. Significance: the absence of front-page war triumphalism on a day of actual exchange is a signal in itself, consistent with a deliberate decision to keep the unity-and-discipline narrative on top and the kinetic register in the background, and is recorded as negative evidence to be revisited on the next batch.

Named-Figure Tracker

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Mojtaba Khamenei	Leader of the Revolution (Supreme Leader since the 28 February 2026 assassination of Ali Khamenei)	Author of the coordinated Unity Week and Government Week message forbidding division and naming the US and Israel as the enemy of Islamic unity	NEW NAMED FIGURE: features by direct message after a run of leadership-by-absence editions
Masoud Pezeshkian	President of Iran	Target of the hardline reading of the unity decree (Kayhan's 'unity-breaking current,' Chaharsoo's 'twenty instances of negativism'); cast by the reformist lane as pursuing a 'return to consensus'; departed for the SCO summit in Bishkek	WATCH: the internal contest's central battleground figure
Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel	Veteran principlist figure	Enlisted by Sobh-e No to brand the war-versus-negotiation dichotomy an illusion and warn that those who draw it must be 'ready for war'	WATCH: lends principlist authority to collapsing the diplomacy-versus-resistance binary
Ali Baqeri	Figure associated with the new Mahd-e Iran party launch	Fronted by Etemad disavowing a 'confrontation-building' approach and pledging to 'stay in the field for Iran'	NEW NAMED FIGURE: institutional face of the diplomacy-and-cohesion vehicle
Hossein Shariatmadari	Kayhan managing editor (customary author of the Yadasht-e Rooz note)	Attributed author of the front-page note warning Pezeshkian against a 'unity-breaking current' in the government	COERCION SPOKESMAN: turns the unity decree into an internal loyalty warning (authorship attributed on customary basis, not confirmed for this date)
Mohsen Namjoo	Exiled musician returning to Iran after twenty years	Sazandegi's lead; his return drew hostile reaction from monarchist and 'overthrowist' opponents abroad	NEW NAMED FIGURE: reformist cultural counter-current to the enforced-unity line
Donald Trump	US president	Cast on the adversary-decay register (Hamshahri's 'dollar under Trump's feet') as damaging the US economy; the US named as enemy of the Islamic ummah in the Leader's message	TARGET FRAMING
Benjamin Netanyahu	Israeli prime minister	Referenced by Sobh-e No's item on whether 'Netanyahu's rivals' could end the war; Israel named alongside the US as enemy of Islamic unity	TARGET FRAMING

Headline Summary Table

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Vatan-e Emrooz	Division forbidden!	Hardline / principlist	The Leader's anti-division decree distilled to a single	MODERATE: top-down cohesion

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
			prohibition over his portrait	discipline
Kayhan	The first condition for right's triumph over falsehood is Muslim unity against global unbelief	Ultra-hardline flagship	Unity message turned inward via a note warning Pezeshkian against a 'unity-breaking current'	MODERATE-HIGH: unity-as-loyalty-test aimed at the government
Chaharsoo	America is the enemy of the entire Islamic ummah, not only of Iran	Economic / principlist	Anti-American message fused with a numbered indictment of Pezeshkian's TV interview	MODERATE: anti-American frame plus loyalty attack
Jomhouri Eslami	Rulers of Islamic countries must recognize their real enemy and confront its designs	Traditional / establishment	Unity message set at the Islamic Unity Conference plus a Government Week delivery tally	MODERATE: institutional amplification of the decree
Sobh-e No	The war-versus-negotiation dichotomy is illusory	Principlist	Haddad-Adel recasts the diplomacy-versus-resistance split as an enemy illusion; 'unity is the principle'	MODERATE: reframes the internal split as enemy deception
Etemad	The illusory war-versus-negotiation dichotomy is costly	Reformist	Same decree read as licensing Pezeshkian's 'return to consensus'; Mahd-e Iran party launch	LOW-MODERATE: cohesion message read pro-diplomacy
Hamshahri	Blueprint of victory	Centrist, Tehran municipality	Unity as strategy ('two messages, one strategy'), with a lighter civic and cultural mix	LOW-MODERATE: unity-as-strategy framing
Ta'adol	Dichotomization forbidden	Economic / business	Decree read as market and diplomatic upside: 5.5-million bourse peak, Islamabad understanding, SCO summit	LOW-MODERATE: cohesion as economic dividend
Sazandegi	On the soil of the homeland	Reformist / Kargozaran	Declines the decree to lead on Mohsen Namjoo's return and sanctions candor	LOW: reformist cultural counter-current
Iran Daily	Tehran urges countries not to become complicit in US 'economic terrorism'	Official English-language state daily	Outward legal-diplomatic framing of sanctions plus the Qatari-FM meeting (scan one day behind)	MODERATE: outward sanctions-as-terrorism framing

Per-Paper Front-Page Analysis

Iran Daily

Official English-language state daily (kiosk edition dated Saturday 29 August, one day behind the Persian batch)

MODERATE: outward legal-diplomatic framing of sanctions as 'economic terrorism' plus active Gulf and neighbor diplomacy

“Tehran urges countries not to become complicit in US 'economic terrorism'”

Iran Daily

Tehran urges countries not to become complicit in US ‘economic terrorism’

Iranians’ legal rights must be recognized under int’l law: Pezeshkian

FM: Putting diplomacy back on track not impossible

US secondary sanctions unlikely to disrupt Turkey-Iran ties

- Main: The lead frames the sanctions campaign as 'US economic terrorism' and calls on third countries not to become 'complicit,' the outward-facing version of the domestic anti-sanctions line.
- Sub-item: A sub-lead pairs President Pezeshkian ('Iranians' legal rights must be recognized under international law') with the foreign minister ('putting diplomacy back on track is not impossible'), over a photograph captioned as Pezeshkian receiving the visiting Qatari foreign minister in Tehran, signaling a continued Gulf-diplomacy track.
- Op-ed: An 'Opinion Exclusive' asks whether the US can acquire legal recognition over the Strait of Hormuz ('Response of international law to a political claim'), keeping the chokepoint's legal status in play for the English readership.
- Sub-item: 'Copper company launches five infrastructure projects in Kerman' and an 'Iran-Pakistan cultural affinity opens door to wider artistic exchanges' item carry the Government Week and regional-outreach themes outward.
- Right rail: 'Etched in history as Iran secures last-four spot' reports the youth volleyball run; the bottom-of-page interview 'US secondary sanctions unlikely to disrupt Turkey-Iran ties' argues Ankara will keep balancing US pressure against its energy dependence on Iran.

ANALYST NOTE As the outward-facing state daily, Iran Daily translates the domestic sanctions-defiance narrative into the softer, legalistic register aimed at foreign readers: 'economic terrorism,' 'complicity,' 'legal rights under international law,' and diplomacy that is 'not impossible.' Its Qatari-FM meeting and the Turkey and Pakistan items sketch the Gulf-and-neighbor hedging that the Persian front pages fold into the unity frame. As a one-day-older kiosk scan, it lags the Persian batch and predates the Unity Week message rollout.

Hamshahri

Centrist, Tehran municipality daily

“Blueprint of victory” «نقشه پیروزی»

LOW-MODERATE: unity-as-strategy framing with a lighter civic and cultural mix

- Main: An infographic lead, 'Blueprint of victory,' organizes the Leader's Unity Week and Government Week messages under the banner 'Two messages from the Leader of the Revolution, one strategy' (دو پیام رهبر انقلاب، یک راهبرد), with 'unity' (وحدت) as the strategy to 'consolidate the conquest and move from victory to civilization-building' (تثبیت فتح و حرکت از پیروزی به تمدن‌سازی).
- Kicker: A framed question, 'But how firm is our unity today?' (اما چرا امروز وحدت این‌قدر مهم شده است؟), presents the message as an answer to visible internal strain rather than as routine ceremony.
- Sub-item: 'The first brick of Iran's future in Tehran' (خشت اول آینده ایران در تهران) covers a municipal development story.
- Sub-item: 'The dollar under Trump's feet' (دلار زیرپای ترامپ) frames US trade conflict as damaging Washington's own economy, echoing the adversary-decay line.
- Right rail: 'The Iranian cheetah on the path of return' (یوز ایرانی در مسیر بازگشت), an Asiatic-cheetah conservation item, and 'Iran's lion cubs atop the roof of the world' (شیر بچه‌های ایران بر بام جهان), the youth volleyball world title, run as prestige and continuity pieces.

ANALYST NOTE Hamshahri's municipal-centrist page takes the same coordinated Unity Week text but frames it as strategy ('one blueprint') rather than as a prohibition, and openly foregrounds the question of how solid Iranian unity actually is. Its lighter economic and cultural mix (dollar, cheetah, volleyball) marks the distance between the Tehran-municipality register and the hardline flagship's loyalty-test framing of the identical message.

Vatan-e Emrooz

Hardline / principlist daily

MODERATE: top-down anti-division discipline; external threat carried via the Putin and Iraq items rather than direct war coverage

“Division forbidden!” «تفرقه ممنوع!»

وطن امروز

پوتین
آماده حمله بزرگ

نقشه
مقاومت تجاری ایران

تفرقه ممنوع!

- Main: A full-page portrait of the Leader of the Revolution runs under the single red imperative 'Division forbidden!' The deck reports that in messages marking Government Week and Unity Week he re-emphasized preserving the cohesion and unity of all society (حفظ انسجام و یکپارچگی آحاد جامعه) and forbade any 'discouraging speech and illusory dichotomization' (سخن ناامیدکننده و دوگانه‌سازی‌های موهوم).
- Kicker: A pulled quote renders the Leader as declaring 'We firmly announce: committing anything to the detriment of social cohesion is forbidden' (قاطعانه اعلام می‌کنیم ارتکاب هرآنچه به ضرر انسجام اجتماعی باشد، ممنوع است).
- Banner: A top-strip headline reads 'Putin ready for a big attack' (پوتین آماده حمله بزرگ), extending the paper's great-power framing to the Russia-Ukraine war and Iran's alignment with Moscow.
- Sub-item: 'The map of Iran's trade resistance' (نقشه مقاومت تجاری ایران) advances a sanctions-defiance economic frame.
- Op-ed: 'Why does the enemy fear the narrative of power?' (چرا دشمن از «روایت قدرت» می‌هراسد؟) and a piece on a '40-... trap in Baghdad for the Iraqi government' (تله ... بغداد برای دولت عراقی) tie narrative-control and regional influence to the unity theme.

ANALYST NOTE Vatan-e Emrooz gives the Unity Week message its most graphically disciplined treatment: a single portrait, a single prohibition. That a hardline title distills the Leader's words into an anti-division command, rather than into war triumphalism, is itself the signal: the coordinated messaging is aimed at closing the intra-system rupture the press documented through late August, and Vatan lends it the full weight of its front page.

Sobh-e No

Principlist daily

MODERATE: reframes the internal diplomacy-versus-resistance split as an enemy deception; narrative-control emphasis

"The war-versus-negotiation dichotomy is illusory" «دوگانه جنگ-مذاکره موهوم است»

- Main: An interview with veteran principlist figure Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel anchors the page: he rejects those 'who intend to set diplomacy against resistance and struggle' (افرادی که قصد دارند دیپلماسی را مقابل مقاومت و مبارزه قرار دهند), arguing the war-or-talks framing is a false binary. A pulled quote has him warning that whoever draws that dichotomy 'must be ready for war.'
- Banner: The Leader's Unity Week message runs across the top: 'What gives the enemy hope is the highlighting of differences' (آنچه دشمن را امیدوار می‌سازد برجسته‌سازی اختلافات است), with the bottom headline 'Unity is the principle' (وحدت اصل است) and the gloss that solidarity and cohesion have become the central focus of the Leader's messages.
- Sub-item: 'When the lie is fired before the missile' (وقتی دروغ پیش از موشک شلیک می‌شود) reports a claimed admission by the Guardian of a fabricated interview and casts it as a reopened 'fabricated-narrative file against Iran,' extending the standing information-operations thread (claim; single-sourced to the outlet's own framing).
- Sub-item: 'Return to classic colonialism' (بازگشت به استعمار کلاسیک) reads US pressure on Venezuela's oil through an anti-imperial lens.
- Right rail: 'The Mahd-e Iran party officially began its work' (حزب «مهد ایران» به صورت رسمی آغاز به کار کرد) and 'The voice of the center-left' (صدای چپ میانه) cover the new party launch; a piece asks whether 'Netanyahu's rivals' could end the war (رقبای نتانیاهو ... جنگ را تمام کند؟).

> **ANALYST NOTE** Sobh-e No does the discursive work the Leader's message assigns: it recasts the war-versus-negotiation split, the very fault line that fractured the press in late August, as an enemy-serving illusion, and enlists Haddad-Adel's authority to do so. Its coverage of the new Mahd-e Iran party and 'center-left' voice shows the principlist lane already litigating the post-message political realignment.

Kayhan

Ultra-hardline flagship, close to the Supreme Leader's office / IRGC; managing editor Hossein Shariatmadari

MODERATE-HIGH: unity-as-loyalty-test rhetoric aimed inward at the government while naming the US and Israel as the external enemy

"The first condition for the triumph of right over falsehood is the unity of Muslims against global unbelief"
«شرط اول غلبه حق بر باطل اتحاد مسلمین مقابل کفر جهانی است»

کیهان

شرط اول غلبه حق بر باطل
اتحاد مسلمین مقابل کفر جهانی است

- Main: The lead reproduces the Leader of the Revolution's message for Unity Week (پیام رهبر معظم انقلاب به مناسبت هفته وحدت), framing Muslim unity and non-conflict (اتحاد و عدم نزاع), mutual defense against unbelief (کفر), and material-and-spiritual cooperation as the precondition for reaching a 'new Islamic civilization' (تمدن نوین اسلامی). The message names the enemy as the 'criminal American rulers and the fake Zionist regime' and calls on Muslims to recognize their true enemy and confront its plots.
- Op-ed: The front-page daily note 'Yadasht-e Rooz' is addressed directly to the president: 'Mr. Pezeshkian! Beware the infiltration of the unity-breaking current into the body of the government' (آقای پزشکیان! مراقب نفوذ جریان وحدت‌شکن در بدنه دولت باشید), turning the Leader's unity theme into an internal loyalty warning against reformist officials.
- Sub-item: A foreign-affairs splash attributes to the US-based Heartland Institute a warning that 'America is on the verge of a food crisis' (مؤسسه هارتلند زنگ‌های خطر را به صدا درآورد؛ آمریکا در آستانه بحران غذا), continuing the standing adversary-decay narrative that projects US collapse.
- Banner: A domestic-capability item reports that '290 megawatts of thermal power were brought online by domestic experts' (۲۹۰ مگاوات برق حرارتی به دست متخصصان داخلی وارد مدار شد), a self-reliance-under-pressure signal tied to Government Week.
- Right rail: 'Iran becomes world champion for the first time' (ایران برای نخستین‌بار قهرمان جهان شد), the youth volleyball title, run as a morale-and-prestige item; plus coverage of the large 'Feast of the Ummah of Ahmad' (مهمانی امت احمد) public gatherings held nationwide.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Kayhan channels the day's coordinated Unity Week message into two simultaneous functions: outward, it hardens the 'unity against global unbelief' frame that names the US and Israel as the enemy; inward, its Yadasht-e Rooz weaponizes that same unity language against President Pezeshkian's government, continuing the hardline-versus-government fight documented on 26 August (when Kayhan branded the Pakistani mediator an 'American operative'). The flagship is using the Leader's anti-division message to police the government rather than to close ranks with it.

Sazandegi

Reformist / Kargozaran-aligned daily

“On the soil of the homeland” «در خاک وطن»

LOW: reformist cultural and economic-realist framing that quietly resists the enforced-unity line

- Main: The lead is a cultural story: the return to Iran of the exiled musician Mohsen Namjoo after twenty years (حضور محسن نامجو پس از ۲۰ سال در ایران), which the paper reports drew sharp reaction from monarchists, 'overthrowists' (براندازان) and other opponents abroad; his former wife Azadeh Akhlaghi is cited on the circumstances of his earlier departure.
- Banner: The Leader's Government Week message runs at the top as 'Prohibition on breaking national cohesion' (ممنوعیت شکستن انسجام ملی), presented in a 'note of the day' register.
- Op-ed: Economist Saeed Leylaz writes 'The anguish of economic sanctions' (دلواپای تحریم اقتصادی), an economic-realist reading of the sanctions pressure on households and producers.
- Sub-item: Smaller top items flag official-conduct and policing questions (a 'hard mission,' 'they did not value it,' a note on security failures).

ANALYST NOTE Sazandegi is the clearest counter-current to the day's message discipline: it leads not with the Leader's unity text but with a returning dissident-adjacent artist and an economist's candor about sanctions pain, implicitly contesting the hardline demand for unbroken optimism. Placing Namjoo's homecoming and the reaction of exiled opponents on the front page stakes out reformist cultural ground precisely as the establishment presses for closed ranks.

Chaharsoo

Economic daily with a principlist tilt

“America is the enemy of the entire Islamic ummah, not only of Iran” «آمریکا دشمن همه امت اسلامی است نه فقط ایران»

MODERATE: anti-American message fused with a structured loyalty attack on the president's candor

- Main: A portrait of the Leader of the Revolution runs under his Unity Week message that 'America is the enemy of the entire Islamic ummah, not only of Iran' (در پیام رهبر انقلاب اسلامی به مناسبت هفته وحدت مطرح شد), with the deck accusing the US of dropping its 'deceptive mask' to reveal its 'colonial, arrogance-driven and hegemony-seeking' aims and its 'installed clients' (دست‌نشاندگان).
- Banner: The dominant secondary story is an itemized attack on the president: 'Twenty instances of negativism and highlighting weaknesses by Pezeshkian in the television interview' (۲۰ مورد سیاه‌نمایی و برجسته کردن نقاط ضعف توسط پزشکیان در مصاحبه با تلویزیون), illustrated with a photograph of Pezeshkian descending a staircase.
- Op-ed: 'When a list of problems takes the place of solutions' (وقتی فهرست مشکلات جای راهکار را می‌گیرد) glosses the interview critique, faulting the president for cataloguing hardship rather than offering remedies.

ANALYST NOTE Chaharsoo pairs the Leader's outward anti-American message with an inward numbered indictment of Pezeshkian's televised candor, making explicit the mechanism the Unity Week rollout is meant to enforce: the president's acknowledgment of problems is recoded as 'negativism' that serves the enemy. It is the economic-lane version of Kayhan's loyalty-test, aimed at the same televised interview the reformist press treats as a return to consensus.

Ta'adol

Economic / business daily (Iranian Bankers' Association)

LOW-MODERATE: cohesion message read as market and diplomatic upside; SCO and Islamabad tracks foregrounded

"Dichotomization forbidden" «دوگانه سازی ممنوع»

تعادل

دوگانه‌سازی ممنوع

- Main: The lead carries the Leader's Government Week and Unity Week message verbatim, 'Dichotomization forbidden,' with the same pulled quote used by Vatan and Etemad: 'We firmly announce: committing anything to the detriment of social cohesion is forbidden.'
- Sub-item: A diplomatic photograph (two delegations, Iranian flag visible) is captioned around 'the Islamabad understanding' (تفاهم اسلام‌آباد), continuing the Iran-Pakistan track that ran through the late-August editions.
- Banner: Market coverage leads the economic register: 'Conquering the 5.5-million peak on the bourse' (فتح قله ۵.۵ میلیونی در بورس), reporting the Tehran stock index at a new high.
- Sub-item: 'The first 1405 foreign-trade figures: car imports jumped 56 percent' (استارت نخستین آمار تجارت خارجی ۱۴۰۵؛ واردات خودرو ۵۶ درصد جهش کرد), run under 'Cars against the trade current.'
- Op-ed: Economist Farshad Momeni argues 'The first reformist step is the just distribution of power' (گام نخست اصلاحی توزیع عادلانه قدرت است); a separate item covers the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit under a 'new growth' security framing.

ANALYST NOTE Ta'adol adopts the Leader's exact 'dichotomization forbidden' formula but reads it through the market and the diplomacy: a rising bourse, the Islamabad channel, and the SCO summit are presented as the tangible payoff of cohesion. Its structural-reform op-ed keeps the economic-realist lane's argument alive, that fair power distribution, not enforced optimism, is the real precondition for stability.

Etemad Reformist daily

“The illusory war-versus-negotiation dichotomy is costly” «دوگانه‌سازی موهوم جنگ با مذاکره خسارت‌بار است»

LOW-MODERATE: reformist reading of the cohesion message as endorsement of diplomacy and the president

- Banner: The Leader's Government Week and Unity Week messages run across the top, rendered as 'The illusory war-versus-negotiation dichotomy is costly' with the gloss that divisiveness 'from any individual in any position serves the enemy's purpose' (هر گاه تفرقه‌انگیزی از هر فردی که در هر جایگاهی ... در جهت مقصود دشمن است).
- Main: The centerpiece is President Pezeshkian's televised interview, headlined 'Return to consensus' (بازگشت به تفاهم), read by the reformist lane as the president reopening a diplomacy-and-cohesion path.
- Sub-item: The launch of the new 'Mahd-e Iran' party is fronted via Ali Baqeri's statement, 'Let us stay in the field for Iran and open horizons' (برای ایران در میدان بمانیم و افق‌گشایی کنیم), with a note that the party rejects a 'confrontation-building' approach.
- Op-ed: Gholamreza Zarifian assesses 'the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Pezeshkian government' (قوت، ضعف، فرصت و تهدیدهای دولت پزشکیان) on the occasion of the party's launch; a further column, 'The other side of the deadlock' (آن سوی بن‌بست), keeps the diplomacy question open.

ANALYST NOTE Etemad reads the identical Leader message in the mirror image of Kayhan and Chaharsoo: for the reformist lane 'the war-versus-negotiation dichotomy is costly' licenses Pezeshkian's diplomacy and candor, headlined as a 'return to consensus,' rather than indicting them. The same sentence is thus being wielded by both camps, each claiming the Leader's authority for its own posture, which is the sharpest evidence that the message was designed to paper over, not resolve, the intra-system split.

Jomhouri Eslami

Traditional / establishment daily

MODERATE: institutional amplification of the unity message plus Palestine-solidarity framing directed at the West

“The rulers of Islamic countries must recognize their real enemy and confront its designs” «حکام کشورهای اسلامی دشمن واقعی خود را بشناسند و با نقشه‌هایش مقابله کنند»

جمهوری اسلامی

حکام کشورهای اسلامی دشمن واقعی خود را بشناسند و با نقشه‌هایش مقابله کنند

موج حمایت از فلسطین در قلب اروپا از پاریس تا برلین و استکهلم

- Main: The lead carries the Leader's message to Unity Week and the 40th International Islamic Unity Conference (پیام رهبر انقلاب به مناسبت هفته وحدت و چهلمین کنفرانس بین‌المللی وحدت اسلامی), photographed at the conference, urging Muslim governments to identify their true enemy and confront its plans; a boxed pull-quote repeats 'committing anything to the detriment of social cohesion is forbidden.'
- Banner: A Government Week delivery story reports the 'simultaneous inauguration of 18,910 municipal and rural-district projects across the country' (افتتاح و بهره‌برداری همزمان از ۱۸ هزار و ۹۱۰ طرح شهرداری و دهیاری), the administration's showcase of governance output.
- Sub-item: A framed item, 'A wave of support for Palestine in the heart of Europe, from Paris to Berlin and Stockholm' (موج حمایت از فلسطین در قلب اروپا از پاریس تا برلین و استکهلم), foregrounds Western pro-Palestinian demonstrations.
- Op-ed: 'America's aim in economic pressure' (هدف آمریکا از فشار اقتصادی) reads the sanctions campaign as leverage rather than an end in itself; a religious column marks the Prophet's biography for Unity Week.
- Right rail: A closing quotation from the 'oppressed martyr Ayatollah Beheshti' warns that a society failing to relieve the weak from the pressure of the strong 'has not become an Islamic society,' lending clerical weight to the cohesion theme.

ANALYST NOTE Jomhouri Eslami situates the Leader's message in its institutional setting, the Islamic Unity Conference, and pairs it with a Government Week delivery tally, positioning the establishment daily as the loyal-institution voice that both amplifies the unity call and credits the government with output. Its Beheshti coda reframes 'cohesion' as social justice rather than as a loyalty test, a quiet counterpoint to the hardline reading.

Appendix A - The Leader's Unity Week message (reconstructed from front-page renderings)

Rendered across Kayhan, Jomhouri Eslami, Vatan-e Emrooz, Chaharsoo, Ta'adol and Etemad front pages, 9 Shahrivar 1405 / 31 August 2026; attributed to the Leader of the Revolution (Mojtaba Khamenei) on the occasion of Government Week, Unity Week and the 40th International Islamic Unity Conference

The dominant front-page text of the cycle is a message attributed to the Leader of the Revolution marking Government Week (هفته دولت), Unity Week (هفته وحدت) and the 40th International Islamic Unity Conference. Because the pipeline retrieved the message only as it was excerpted and headlined across the daily front pages, the following is a reconstruction of its themes from those renderings, not a verified verbatim transcript; the wording below reproduces the phrases the papers themselves printed.

On internal cohesion, the message as rendered forbids division: 'We firmly announce that committing anything to the detriment of social cohesion is forbidden' (قاطعانه اعلام می‌کنیم ارتکاب هرآنچه به ضرر انسجام اجتماعی باشد، ممنوع است). It is reported to warn against 'discouraging speech and illusory dichotomization' (سخن ناامیدکننده و دوگانه‌سازی‌های موهوم) and, in Etemad's and Sobh-e No's renderings, to single out the war-versus-negotiation framing as a false binary whose highlighting 'gives the enemy hope' (آنچه دشمن را امیدوار می‌سازد برجسته‌سازی اختلافات است).

On the external enemy, the message as printed names 'the criminal American rulers and the fake Zionist regime' as the sworn enemies of Islamic unity, states that 'America is the enemy of the entire Islamic ummah, not only of Iran' (Chaharsoo), and calls on Muslim governments to 'recognize their real enemy and confront its designs' (Jomhouri Eslami). Unity, non-conflict, mutual defense against unbelief and material-and-spiritual cooperation are cast as the path to a 'new Islamic civilization' (تمدن نوین اسلامی).

Analyst flag: this is the first cycle in the recent series in which the sitting Leader features by direct message rather than by absence, reversing the standing negative-evidence thread recorded through 26 August. The reconstruction is a single-source-class artifact assembled from front-page excerpts; the full official text on khamenei.ir was not retrieved at compile time and any verbatim quotation above should be confirmed against the primary source before reproduction.

Appendix B - Kayhan's front-page note (Yadasht-e Rooz), addressed to President Pezeshkian

Kayhan front page, 9 Shahrivar 1405 / 31 August 2026; front-page daily-note column (Yadasht-e Rooz), customarily written by managing editor Hossein Shariatmadari

The day's flagged editorial is Kayhan's front-page note headlined 'Mr. Pezeshkian! Beware the infiltration of the unity-breaking current into the body of the government' (آقای پزشکیان! مراقب نفوذ جریان وحدت‌شکن در بدنه دولت باشید). The full column text was not retrievable from the outlet's channel at compile time; this appendix summarizes the piece from its printed headline, deck and placement rather than translating it in full.

The note takes the Leader's Unity Week message as its warrant and turns it inward: it warns the president that a 'unity-breaking current' has penetrated his administration and casts vigilance against reformist officials, rather than accommodation of them, as the loyal response to the call for cohesion. This continues the hardline flagship's running contest with the government documented on 26 August, when its Yadasht-e Rooz branded the Pakistani mediator an 'American operative' and the mediation a 'deception operation.'

Verification note: the Yadasht-e Rooz is the signature column of Kayhan's managing editor, Hossein Shariatmadari, whose appointment traces to the Supreme Leader's office; authorship of this specific installment is attributed on that customary basis and was not independently confirmed against a byline for this date. The summary should not be quoted as the column's verbatim wording.

Appendix C - Methodology and sourcing notes

iran-press-digest pipeline, 31 August 2026

Sources: nine Persian front-page scans from the NewspaperTasnim daily kiosk album (Hamshahri, Vatan-e Emrooz, Sobh-e No, Kayhan, Sazandegi, Chaharsoo, Ta'adol, Etemad, Jomhouri Eslami) whose printed Jalali date (9 Shahrivar 1405) matched the target, read directly by vision; one English scan (Iran Daily) from the Newspapers_Iran album, dated Saturday 29 August and therefore one day behind the Persian batch. Text channels consulted for corroboration: Kayhan, Nour News, Fars News and Defa Press via their public Telegram previews; Tehran Times was unavailable at the time of compilation.

Coverage caveat: the front pages went to press on the morning of 31 August reflecting events through late 30 August, and are dominated by the Leader's Unity Week message, the Pezeshkian television-interview controversy, the launch of the 'Mahd-e Iran' party, market data and cultural items. A separate, kinetic Strait-of-Hormuz escalation reported for 29 to 31 August (a US strike on Larak Island and Iranian retaliatory claims against bases in Jordan and the UAE and against a US MQ-9) did not feature on the scanned front pages; it is carried here in the real-time register on the basis of Iranian wire channels (Fars, Defa Press) cross-checked against international reporting, with all battle-damage figures held as attributed claims.

Attribution and accuracy: Iranian operational and battle-damage assertions are labeled as claims and not adopted as fact; Jordan's own account (interception of eight missiles) is noted where it qualifies the Iranian claim. Named figures (Haddad-Adel, Pezeshkian, Ali Baqeri, Gholamreza Zarifian, Farshad Momeni, Saeed Leylaz, Mohsen Namjoo, the visiting Qatari foreign minister) were read from the printed pages; the kinetic escalation was verified against multiple international outlets before inclusion. 'The Leader' in current coverage denotes Mojtaba Khamenei, following the 28 February 2026 assassination of Ali Khamenei. Prepared for analysis and early warning; hostile content 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.