OPEN-SOURCE PRESS INTELLIGENCE

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THE UNNAMED COMMITTEE EDITION

Nine Persian front pages and one English front page of 6 Mehr 1405, read alongside six outlet channels and three agency wires; Kayhan is reconstructed from its own channel, and Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation.

Front pages published the morning of 28 September 2026, reflecting events through late 27 September 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: Hamshahri

Executive Summary

The lead judgment of this edition is that the Iranian state published three mutually incompatible answers to the question of where war-and-peace authority sits, in one cycle, and did so on foreign television and on its own front pages rather than in private. Sazandegi leads with «کمیته شش‌نفره», reporting that Pezeshkian told CBS's 60 Minutes of a six-member team drawn from the security institutions, the parliament and the government that advances negotiation decisions alongside him. The paper's accompanying column records what was actually asked: the president was questioned about the role of the Leader of the Islamic Republic in foreign policy and answered by describing a collective rather than the individual. Sazandegi then reconstructed the committee from expert guesswork across six captioned portraits, and could not fill one of the frames, printing the Ministry of Intelligence crest with the caption «سرپرست یا نماینده وزارت اطلاعات» in place of a name. The Etemad channel published a parallel roster the same morning that differs on one seat. Against both, the foreign minister told reporters in New York that «رهبر ایران کاملاً بر امور مسلط هستند» and that security considerations and direct American threats are what prevent the publication of the Leader's image.

This file has spent five weeks recording the Leader's absence from the commemorative and directive surfaces where a sitting Leader would ordinarily appear, and has repeatedly noted that no arbitration has issued from his office on the interdepartmental disputes it has documented. That absence is now being answered for. The foreign minister's explanation is the first on-record official account of it this monitor has found, and its existence is the finding: the state has judged the gap conspicuous enough to require a public explanation. But the explanation and the president's answer do not sit together. One says a single office commands continuously; the other says a committee consults and decides; the reformist press says nobody outside the room knows who is in it. An external analyst reading the Iranian press on 28 September cannot establish from it who would have to agree to a ceasefire.

The second finding concerns the Strait, and it is quantitative. Kayhan's lead article, distributed at channel post 85246 with a kayhan.ir permalink, opens «مذاکره جواب نداد» and prescribes total closure: zeroing energy commerce and severing what it calls the petrodollar artery with missile fire, on the argument that American debt financing runs through Gulf sovereign wealth and that the White House understands only cost. On the same morning Hamshahri, the municipal daily and the largest-circulation title in the country, gives its front page to the opposite proposition: that traffic is flowing under Iranian licence, at an average of 17 ships a day over the past ten days, a 90 percent reduction rather than a closure, with ship owners apologising in writing and recognising the authority of the Persian Gulf waterway management body. These are not factional opponents arguing. They are two establishment titles publishing incompatible objectives for the same waterway, and the difference is not decorative: a permission regime and a total blockade require different force postures, different legal footings and different exit terms.

Neither Iranian number survives contact with external tracking, and they fail in opposite directions. Independent vessel tracking reports one commercial transit on 20 September against a pre-crisis baseline near 85 a day, and nine commodity vessels on 24 September when American officials were reported to have claimed roughly 60, putting throughput near one percent of normal. Hamshahri's 17 a day overstates traffic; Kayhan's zero, borrowed from a quoted American economist, understates it. Each error serves the argument the paper is making. This file reads that convergence of error with interest as evidence that neither figure is a traffic measurement, and treats both as advocacy.

Third, the day's most-carried operational claim is a second American underwater vehicle taken in the Strait, and it is unusually well specified for an Iranian claim. Hamshahri names the platform a REMUS 600; Defa

Press names it a Mk 18 Mod 2 Kingfish, which is the US Navy designation for a variant built on the REMUS 600 hull, so the two renderings agree rather than conflict. Sobh-e No's banner is the most technically careful formulation in the batch, «دومین زیرسطحی بدون سرنشین آمریکایی در تنگه هرمز به غنیمت گرفته شد», an unmanned undersea vehicle rather than a submarine. Iran Daily gives the foreign reader the photograph. The capture was reported externally on 27 September and denied by CENTCOM, whose spokesman said the United States retains positive control of all its operational drone assets. The consistency of the Iranian identification does not make the claim true; it makes it checkable, which is rarer.

Fourth, Javan supplies the batch's clearest measurable distortion. Its lead prints «می‌جنگیم حتی آخرالزمانی!» under the kicker that Araghchi has declared Iran's conditions unchangeable. What the foreign minister is reported on the wires to have said is «حتی اگر کار به جنگ آخرالزمانی کشیده شود، استوار خواهیم ایستاد», delivered alongside a statement that Iran came to New York to establish the conditions for peace and remains ready for genuine diplomacy. The IRGC-affiliated daily converted a conditional about standing firm into a pledge to fight and dropped the diplomacy half, then set the tanker tally immediately beneath it. This is the mechanism to apply whenever Iranian escalation language is read as evidence of decision: today it is demonstrably evidence of presentation, because the underlying statement is on the record and says something else.

Fifth, two items that belong on front pages are not on them. The Majlis National Security Commission completed its review of the Strait of Hormuz security bill on 27 September with the approval of its final article, which makes that statute the governing framework for the Strait and repeals contrary provisions: the codification of the permission regime into law, carried on the Sobh-e No channel and on no cover in the batch. Hamshahri's front-page note is written by Mohammad-Esmail Kowsari, the IRGC general and committee member driving that bill, and it argues about American bravado rather than about the law he is passing. Separately, the arrest of five men near RAF Fairford on suspicion of preparing a terrorist act, with an Iran-linked motive among the lines of inquiry, appears on exactly one cover, in the rail of Vatan-e Emrooz, headlined «وحشت در ولفورد» and framed as enemy panic rather than as an allegation against Iran.

Net assessment: this is a cycle in which the Iranian press documented its own state's indecision more clearly than its adversaries could have. The coercion machinery is working and expanding, with a codified legal framework moving through parliament, a second undersea capture, a nineteen-vessel two-night engagement tally and a front-page demand for total closure. What is not working is the account of who controls it. The gap between the foreign minister's single commanding office, the president's consultative committee and the reformist press's open question is not a factional dispute that arbitration would settle; it is the absence of an authority willing to settle it, now visible in print on both sides of the factional line. For an external reader the practical consequence is that Iranian escalation and Iranian de-escalation signals should be attributed to the institution that issued them rather than to a unified state, and that no signal from any one of them should be read as a national position until a second institution confirms it.

BOTTOM LINE On the morning the foreign minister told New York that the Leader is fully in command, the president told American television that a six-member committee decides, a Tehran daily filled a front page guessing who sits on it, and the newspaper published under the Leader's own office attacked the foreign ministry in print for negotiating at all.

CRITICAL SOURCING NOTE Nine Persian front pages and one English front page of 6 Mehr 1405 were read as scans, alongside six outlet channels and three agency wires. Kayhan did not appear in the kiosk album and is reconstructed from its own channel, principally the front-page listing at post 85235 and the full lead article at post 85246. Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation, so English-language coverage rests on the Iran

> Daily scan alone. Scans are supplied at roughly 800 pixels on the long edge: headlines and captions are legible under magnification, body text and small bylines frequently are not, and illegible bylines are flagged in place rather than guessed. The drone identification, the Whelford arrests, Kowsari's office, the Hormuz bill's committee stage and the death of Grand Ayatollah Shubairi Zanjani were each checked against external reporting. Iranian operational claims, the ship-owners' apology letter, the transit figures and the carrier-withdrawal interpretation remain uncorroborated or contested and are labelled as claims throughout. Full detail, including the three incompatible transit counts, is in Appendix C.

Macro Trend Analysis

1 Three incompatible accounts of where decision authority sits, published in one cycle

Araghchi in New York: «رهبر ایران کاملاً بر امور مسلط هستند و دستورات و دیدگاه‌های ایشان به‌طور مستمر دریافت و اجرا می‌شود». Pezeshkian on CBS's 60 Minutes, asked specifically about the Leader's role in foreign policy: a six-member team from the security institutions, the parliament and the government that advances negotiation decisions alongside him. Sazandegi, unable to reconcile the two, devoted its front page to guessing the membership and left one of six frames filled by a ministry crest because it could not name the occupant. The Etemad channel's parallel roster differs on a seat. On 27 September this file recorded that three titles had published incompatible accounts of whether negotiations exist at all; the incompatibility has now moved up a level, from whether anyone is talking to who would have to agree.

2 The Leader's absence has acquired an official explanation, and a foreign endorsement

For the fifth consecutive cycle no message from the serving Leader reached any front page or channel read for this edition. What is new is that the state has begun answering for it: the foreign minister attributed the absence of the Leader's image to «ملاحظات امنیتی و تهدیدات مستقیم آمریکا». What is also new is where his name appears. Hamshahri's lower front page prints «شیخ نعیم قاسم: با رهبری آیت‌الله سید مجتبی خامنه‌ای، پیشرفت‌ها ادامه خواهد داشت», the only explicit printed endorsement of the serving Leader by name anywhere in the batch, and it comes from Hezbollah's secretary-general rather than from Qom or from Tehran. Kayhan, published under the Leader's own office, billed the same speech with a different passage and did not print that line. External coverage of the same speech leads instead on Qassem's demand that Lebanon suspend direct negotiations with Israel, which the Iranian press did not carry.

3 The establishment published two incompatible objectives for the Strait on the same morning

Kayhan's lead prescribes «صفر کردن تجارت انرژی», total closure, naming American debt financing through Gulf sovereign wealth as the mechanism and the midterm elections as the timing. Hamshahri's front page advertises a functioning licence regime: 17 ships a day over ten days, a 90 percent reduction rather than a stoppage, and ship owners apologising in writing and recognising the waterway authority's competence. A permission regime and a blockade are not the same policy and cannot be pursued with the same posture. Neither figure matches external tracking, which reports roughly one percent of normal throughput, and the two Iranian errors run in opposite directions, each in the direction its paper's argument requires.

4 The permission regime is being written into statute, and no front page carried it

On 27 September the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Commission approved the final article of the Strait of Hormuz security bill, which makes that law the governing framework for the Strait and repeals all contrary provisions. The item appeared on the Sobh-e No channel and on none of the ten covers. Hamshahri's front-page note is written by Mohammad-Esmail Kowsari, the IRGC brigadier general and committee member who has been driving the bill, and it argues about American bravado instead. The most

durable act of the cycle, the conversion of a wartime practice into permanent domestic law, was the one the press chose not to lead on.

5 Araghchi's conditional was printed as a pledge, and the distortion is measurable

The wire text has the foreign minister saying «حتی اگر کار به جنگ آخرالزمانی کشیده شود، استوار خواهیم ایستاد» while stating that Iran came to New York to establish the conditions for peace and remains ready for genuine diplomacy. Javan printed «می‌جنگیم حتی آخرالزمانی!» and dropped the diplomacy. Because the underlying remarks are on the record, this is one of the few cases where the gap between what an Iranian official said and what an Iranian front page reports him saying can be measured rather than inferred, and it should govern how escalation language from this title is weighted.

6 The second undersea capture is the best-specified Iranian claim of the month

Hamshahri names a REMUS 600; Defa Press names a Mk 18 Mod 2 Kingfish, the US Navy designation for a variant built on the same hull; Sobh-e No describes it correctly as an unmanned undersea vehicle rather than a submarine; Vatan-e Emrooz dates the interval, «در کمتر از ۳ هفته دومین زهپاد آمریکایی»; Iran Daily supplies the photograph for the foreign reader. The earlier September capture was of a different platform, an Anduril Dive-LD. The claim was reported externally on 27 September and denied by CENTCOM. Consistency of identification across five Iranian outlets does not establish the capture, but it does make the claim testable in a way that Iranian battle-damage claims usually are not.

7 Kayhan turned its fire on Iran's own diplomats

The lead article's sharpest passage is not aimed at Washington: «آنچه بیش از همه تعجب‌آور است، رفتار و مواضع شتاب‌زده دستگاه دیپلماسی در نیویورک بود. نمایش شور و شوق برای مذاکره ... ارسال سیگنال ضعف به ترامپ بود». The paper published under the Leader's office has accused the delegation the president had just led to the United Nations of signalling weakness. Read with the six-member committee story, this is the same dispute seen from the other end: one institution is being told publicly by another that it does not have the authority it is exercising.

8 Wartime securitisation of the domestic legal order surfaced on two covers of opposite alignment

Etemad's rail reports that certain factions are pressing the counter-infiltration bill («طرح مقابله با نفوذ») over the objections of society, the government and the judiciary alike. Sobh-e No's cover attacks those resisting enforcement of the 15-month sentence handed to the hardline MP Hamid Rasaei for spreading falsehoods, and Sazandegi's top strip files the Zibakalam and Rasaei sentences together. A reformist daily and a principlist daily are reporting the same phenomenon from opposite sides: the internal legal order is being reshaped under wartime pressure, and the disagreement is over who it should be aimed at.

9 The two economic dailies disagreed about whether the cost is cresting or compounding

Ta'adol leads «تورم ایران در نقطه تغییر» and asks whether the economy is moving away from the peak of the crisis, illustrating it with the president's airport homecoming. Charsoogh gives its entire front page to a comparative table: 89 percent overall goods inflation and 137.5 percent food inflation for Mordad 1405 against end-of-term figures of 31.6 and 34.4 percent under Raisi, and a dollar rate moving from 58,960 toman at the start of the Pezeshkian presidency to 335,000 toman, a rise of roughly 5.7 times. Charsoogh's framing is factional, blaming two years of negotiation rather than seven months of war, and it pairs the table with Hamid Rasaei's valedictory speech. The magnitude, printed without qualification on an Iranian front page, is the part that matters to an external reader.

10 Lebanon split three ways across the anniversary covers

Vatan-e Emrooz gave its whole front to a black portrait of Nasrallah under «جمال مقاومت» and printed no news above the fold. Sobh-e No profiled the living secretary-general as «معمار آرام مقاومت» and ran an editorial defending the Islamabad memorandum as good for Lebanon, «روایت‌های وارونه‌ای که تفاهم‌نامه خوب برای لبنان را تلخ کرد». Hamshahri mined the same speech for its succession line. Meanwhile Qassem himself, in external coverage of the same address, demanded that Lebanon suspend direct negotiations with Israel and conditioned any disarmament dialogue on liberation of the south. A principlist Tehran daily defending the memorandum on the morning Hezbollah's leader attacks the diplomacy it enables is the widest daylight between Tehran's press and Beirut's leadership this file has recorded.

Key Judgments

KJ-1 [HIGH] KJ-1: The locus of Iranian war-and-peace decision authority is now publicly contested inside the Iranian press, and the contest is documented rather than inferred. The evidence is three accounts published within one cycle: the foreign minister's «رهبر ایران کاملاً بر امور مسلط هستند», the president's CBS answer describing a six-member team from the security institutions, the parliament and the government when he was asked about the Leader's role in foreign policy, and Sazandegi's front page reconstructing that committee from expert speculation with one of six frames left unnamed. The Etemad channel's roster differs from Sazandegi's on a seat, so even the guesswork does not converge. The significance is operational for any party assessing Iranian commitments: a negotiated undertaking is only as good as the authority that gives it, and on the evidence of 28 September no Iranian institution can be assumed to speak for the others. Calibration runs both ways. Overstating this would treat ordinary consultative government as a crisis of legitimacy; understating it would miss that a head of state, asked on camera about his Leader, answered with a committee, and that his own country's press could not identify its members.

KJ-2 [HIGH] KJ-2: The establishment published two incompatible objectives for the Strait of Hormuz on the same morning, and the incompatibility is not factional. Kayhan, published under the Leader's office, prescribes «صفر کردن تجارت انرژی», total closure, with American debt financing through Gulf sovereign wealth as the named mechanism and the midterm elections as the timing. Hamshahri, the municipal daily and the country's largest-circulation title, gives its whole front page to a functioning permission regime: 17 ships a day, a 90 percent reduction rather than a stoppage, and a reproduced letter in which ship owners apologise and recognise the waterway authority's competence. A hardline organ and a municipal one are not opponents in Iranian factional terms, so this is an unsettled objective rather than an argument. The significance is that a permission regime is a bargaining instrument and a blockade is not, and the two imply different exit terms from any negotiation over the Strait.

KJ-3 [HIGH] KJ-3: Neither Iranian transit figure is a measurement, and both err in the direction their publisher requires. Kayhan, quoting the Johns Hopkins economist Steve Hanke, reports zero tankers on 25 September against 45 a year earlier. Hamshahri reports a ten-day average of 17 ships and a 90 percent fall. Independent vessel tracking for the same window reports one commercial transit on 20 September against a pre-crisis baseline near 85 a day, nine commodity vessels on 24 September when American officials were reported claiming roughly 60, and throughput near one percent of normal. Hamshahri overstates traffic to make the licence regime look real; Kayhan understates it to make the coercion look total. The significance is methodological and should be applied forward: Iranian front-page traffic figures in this conflict are arguments about the Strait, not counts of it, and this file will source transit numbers to independent tracking rather than to any Iranian cover.

KJ-4 [MODERATE-HIGH] KJ-4: The succession's legitimation is now being supplied from outside Iran, and the outlet closest to the Leader's office declined to carry it. Hamshahri prints «شیخ نعیم قاسم: با رهبری آیت‌الله سید مجتبی خامنه‌ای، پیشرفت‌ها ادامه خواهد داشت», the only naming of the serving Leader in an endorsing register anywhere in the batch. Kayhan billed the same Qassem address with a different passage, about Nasrallah as the lamp of the path until Israel's complete expulsion, and did not print the leadership line. External reporting of the same speech leads on neither, foregrounding instead Qassem's demand that Lebanon suspend direct negotiations with Israel. On 27 September this file recorded that Kayhan filled the Leader's commemorative slot from the 2024 archive under the attribution «رهبر شهید انقلاب»; today it declined a live endorsement of the serving Leader that a centrist municipal daily chose to print. The significance is that the legitimation deficit is now visible in editorial selection and not only in silence. Calibration: a single omission on a single day is weak evidence of policy, and this judgment rests on its consistency with the archive-sourced commemoration recorded yesterday rather than on today's page alone.

KJ-5 [MODERATE-HIGH] KJ-5: Iran is converting the Hormuz permission regime from wartime practice into permanent domestic law, and its press did not lead on it. On 27 September the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Commission approved the final article of the Strait of Hormuz security bill, which establishes that statute as the governing framework for the Strait and repeals all contrary provisions. The item reached the Sobh-e No channel and no front page in the batch. Mohammad-Esmail Kowsari, the IRGC brigadier general and committee member driving the bill, occupies the front-page note slot in Hamshahri on the same morning and writes about American bravado rather than about the law. The significance is that a legal framework outlasts an operational posture: a ceasefire can end strikes on shipping without repealing a statute that claims jurisdiction over the waterway, and the bill's passage through the full chamber is the indicator to watch. Absence is part of the finding here: the codification was the cycle's most durable act and the least covered.

KJ-6 [MODERATE-HIGH] KJ-6: Javan's lead is a measurable distortion of an on-record statement, and it establishes a test this file can reuse. The foreign minister is reported on the wires saying «حتی اگر کار به جنگ آخرالزمانی کشیده شود، استوار خواهیم ایستاد», alongside statements that Iran came to New York to establish the conditions for peace and is ready for genuine diplomacy. Javan printed «می‌جنگیم حتی آخرالزمانی!», converting a conditional about endurance into a pledge to fight, and omitted the diplomacy. Because both the source text and the rendering are available, the gap can be measured rather than inferred. The significance is that escalation language from IRGC-affiliated titles should not be treated as evidence of a decision without recovering the underlying statement, and on this occasion the underlying statement points the other way.

KJ-7 [MODERATE] KJ-7: The second undersea capture is the best-specified Iranian operational claim of the month, which raises its testability without establishing it. Five Iranian outlets converge on one platform: Hamshahri names a REMUS 600, Defa Press a Mk 18 Mod 2 Kingfish, which is the US Navy designation for a variant built on the REMUS 600 hull, Sobh-e No describes an unmanned undersea vehicle rather than a submarine, Vatan-e Emrooz dates the interval at less than three weeks from the first, and Iran Daily publishes the photograph. The earlier September claim was of a different platform, an Anduril Dive-LD. External outlets reported the claim on 27 September and CENTCOM's spokesman denied it, saying the United States retains positive control of all its operational drone assets. The significance is that Iranian claims of data exploitation, «حافظه و داده‌های آن حالا در اختیار متخصصان ایرانی است», cannot be assessed from open sources and should be treated as unverified regardless of how well the hull is identified.

Confidence is held at moderate because identification accuracy and possession are separate questions, and only the first is corroborated.

KJ-8 [MODERATE] KJ-8: An alleged Iranian plot on British soil, against the base used to strike Iran, reached exactly one Iranian front page and was inverted there. Five men were arrested near RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire on 27 September on suspicion of preparing a terrorist act and explosives offences, with an Iran-linked motive among the lines of inquiry and the American president saying the suspects sought to do major damage. Vatan-e Emrooz carried it in its rail as «وحشت در ولفورد», the discovery of explosives at what it calls America's strategic base in Britain and the emergency footing there, printing the alarm rather than the allegation. No other cover in the batch carried it at all. The significance is that the Iranian press treated a direct accusation of external operations as an enemy-panic story rather than as something to deny, which is a different handling from the detailed rebuttals this file has seen on maritime and nuclear allegations. Calibration: a one-cycle absence from nine other covers is weak evidence on its own, and on this file's own 27 September finding a second consecutive cycle is required before treating any such silence as policy. The 29 September batch is the test.

KJ-9 [MODERATE] KJ-9: Kayhan's attack on Iran's own diplomats places the dispute over authority inside the establishment's most senior press organ. The lead article states that «نمایش شور و شوق برای مذاکره» in New York «ارسال سیگنال ضعف به ترامپ بود», and addresses «عزیزان دیپلمات در دستگاه خارجه» directly. The paper published under the Leader's office has told the president's delegation in print that its conduct at the United Nations damaged Iran's position. Read alongside the six-member committee story, the two are the same dispute observed from opposite ends: one institution publicly disputing another's exercise of authority it claims not to hold alone. The significance is that Iranian diplomatic signals out of New York should be weighted against the possibility that they lack domestic backing, and the indicator to watch is whether the foreign ministry answers Kayhan or absorbs the attack in silence.

KJ-10 [LOW-MODERATE] KJ-10: Negative evidence, filed as a finding. Three things this file expected to see did not appear. There was no message from the serving Leader on any of the ten front pages or nine channels, a fifth consecutive cycle; khamenei.ir was not reachable at compilation, so this is an absence on the Iranian press surface and not a global one. There was no Kayhan «یادداشت روز» for a second consecutive cycle, though the paper published an unsigned front-page lead in its place. And no cover carried the Hormuz bill's committee passage. Against these, Jomhouri Eslami's front page carried a paid memorial notice for Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mousa Shubairi Zanjani, who died in Qom on 20 September aged 98: this file does not read an advertisement as an editorial statement, and records only the juxtaposition, that on the morning the press openly speculated about who exercises the Leader's authority, the paper closest to the clerical establishment gave prominent space to the passing of a marja' whose religious standing was never in question. Confidence is deliberately low: each absence has innocent explanations, and the judgment is filed to be tested against the next three cycles rather than relied on now.

Named-Figure Tracker

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei	Supreme Leader since 8 March 2026	Named in an endorsing register on exactly one front page, and by a foreign cleric: Hamshahri's	absence noted

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
		rendering of Naim Qassem. Kayhan, published under his own office, billed the same speech without that passage. The foreign minister attributed the absence of his image to security considerations and direct American threats while asserting he remains fully in command.	
Masoud Pezeshkian	President of Iran	Asked on CBS's 60 Minutes about the Leader's role in foreign policy, described a six-member committee instead. Welcomed home from the United Nations on the Etemad and Ta'adol covers. Quoted in Iran Daily saying the American president will dream of wiping Iran off the map.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Seyyed Abbas Araghchi	Foreign Minister	Source of the day's two most-quoted statements: the apocalyptic-war conditional, which Javan printed as a pledge to fight, and the first on-record official explanation of the Leader's absence from public imagery. Named by Sazandegi as a probable committee member. Attacked in Kayhan's lead, by office rather than by name, for signalling weakness in New York.	WATCH
Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf	Speaker of parliament	Captioned by Sazandegi as «رئیس تیم مذاکره‌کننده», head of the negotiating team, a designation no official source in this batch confirms. Separately quoted on the Sobh-e No channel: «یا بازار نفت احمق است یا آمریکا دروغ می‌گوید», citing a 35 to 50 dollar per barrel crude premium against American claims of open passage, and writing to the president that executive extension of statutory emergency deadlines is unlawful.	WATCH
Donald Trump	President of the United States	The object of Kayhan's prescription, cast as «قمارباز کاخ سفید», the gambler of the White House, to be tamed by zeroing Strait commerce before the midterms. Hamshahri mocks him as renaming the Strait with	TARGET FRAMING

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
		artificial intelligence. Sobh-e No leads its left column on polling showing a heavy defeat awaiting his party.	
Sheikh Naim Qassem	Secretary-General of Hezbollah	Profiled by Sobh-e No as «معمار آرام مقاومت», the quiet architect. Quoted by Hamshahri naming the serving Iranian Leader, and by Kayhan on resistance until Israel's complete expulsion. External coverage of the same 27 September address leads on his demand that Lebanon suspend direct negotiations with Israel and his conditioning of disarmament dialogue on liberation of the south, neither of which reached an Iranian cover.	COERCION SPOKESMAN
Mohammad-Esmail Kowsari	IRGC brigadier general, Tehran MP, member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee	Author of Hamshahri's front-page note «تنگه هرمز جای رجزخوانی آمریکا نیست», published on the morning after his committee approved the final article of the Strait of Hormuz security bill. The op-ed argues about American bravado and not about the statute.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Hassan Nasrallah	Assassinated Secretary-General of Hezbollah, killed 27 September 2024	The subject of two full covers on the second anniversary: Vatan-e Emrooz's black portrait under «جمال مقاومت» and Javan's «نماد آزادگی در جهان». Jomhouri Eslami covered the Beirut ceremony; Kayhan noted commemorations in Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.	WATCH
Hamid Rasaei	Hardline member of parliament	Sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment and an apology for spreading falsehoods and disturbing public opinion. Sobh-e No attacks those resisting enforcement; Charsoogh gives its top strip to his valedictory speech; Sazandegi files the sentence alongside Zibakalam's.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Captain Tim Hawkins	CENTCOM spokesman	The counter-authority on the day's most-carried Iranian claim, stating that the United States maintains positive control of all its operational drone assets. His denial appears in external	absence noted

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
		reporting and on no Iranian surface read for this edition.	
Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mousa Shubairi Zanjani	Marja' of Qom, died 20 September 2026 aged 98	A paid memorial notice on Jomhouri Eslami's front page announces a «مجلس تذکر» convened by his son and the Qom seminary councils, describing him as «مرجع عالی‌قدر جهان تشیع».	WATCH

Headline Summary Table

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Sazandegi	The six-member committee	Reformist, Executives of Construction	The president substitutes a committee for the Leader on American television	MODERATE-HIGH - publicly unresolved locus of decision authority
Kayhan (channel)	The way to tame Trump is to zero out commerce in the Strait	Hardline, the Leader's office	Total closure as declared strategy, and an attack on Iran's own diplomats	SEVERE - front-page advocacy of zero traffic and of widening targets
Hamshahri	Taken alive in the Strait	Tehran municipality, centrist	Hormuz coercion package, and the first named endorsement of the serving Leader	HIGH - the permission regime consolidated on a front page
Javan	We will fight, even an apocalyptic war!	Hardline, IRGC-affiliated	Araghchi's conditional printed as a fighting pledge, over a 19-vessel tally	HIGH - apocalyptic framing manufactured from a conditional
Vatan-e Emrooz	The beauty of the resistance	Hardline	Nasrallah commemoration, with the Whelford arrests inverted in the rail	MODERATE-HIGH - an alleged plot on UK soil reframed as enemy alarm
Sobh-e No	The quiet architect of the resistance	Principlist	Qassem as manager, and a principlist defence of the Islamabad memorandum	MODERATE - commemorative cover carrying a de-escalatory Lebanon line
Jomhouri Eslami	Anti-American and anti-Zionist-regime demonstrations in four countries	Traditional establishment	Global protest as the frame, and a grand marja's memorial	LOW-MODERATE - externalised framing, clerical establishment turned inward
Etemad	A cry of approval	Reformist	The president's homecoming, and the counter-infiltration bill	LOW-MODERATE - diplomacy-forward abroad, securitisation flagged at home
Ta'adol	Iran's inflation at a turning point	Economic	A claim that the economic crisis has crested	LOW - economic optimism keyed to the diplomatic cycle

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Charsoogh	The report card of two years of negotiation, on the economy's board	Economic	The negotiation track audited in inflation and currency data	LOW - domestic indictment aimed at the negotiation track
Iran Daily	US president will dream of wiping Iran off the map: Pezeshkian	English-language government daily	The drone capture for the foreign reader, aviation sanctions as a legal breach	LOW - defiance for export, legal argument on aviation

Per-Paper Front-Page Analysis

Iran Daily

English-language daily of the official government news organisation

“US president will dream of wiping Iran off the map: Pezeshkian”

LOW - defiance for export, legal argument on aviation



- Main: The lead is a presidential quotation cast as defiance for a foreign readership, printed with Pezeshkian's name in red italic as the attribution.
- Main: The page's dominant element is the photograph and headline "Iranian military captures second US underwater drone in Strait of Hormuz", showing a cylindrical vehicle with orange sensor ports afloat in open water, captioned as a US-made unmanned underwater vehicle seized by the IRGC in the Strait on 27 September 2026.
- Op-ed: An "Opinion Exclusive" column headed "Sanctions of Iran's civil aviation testing credibility of int'l law" argues that unilateral aviation sanctions breach the Chicago Convention and endanger civil aviation safety, the English-facing legal case for the file this monitor has tracked as the air blockade.
- Sub-item: A bottom strip carries "President opens 246 tourism projects, calls for broader ties with neighbors", the same item Jomhouri Eslami banners in Persian.
- Sub-item: "Iran off to winning start in volleyball, Zarei makes history in athletics" and further Nagoya Asian Games results.
- Sub-item: "St Petersburg University moves to add Persian language studies", a soft-power item aimed at the international reader.

ANALYST NOTE The English government daily made the drone capture its visual centrepiece and gave the foreign reader the photograph rather than the rhetoric, which is the opposite of the Persian hardline handling. Its choice of legal argument matters more than its lead: on the aviation file Iran is addressing the outside world in the language of the Chicago Convention, not of retaliation, while the Persian press addresses Iraqi domestic politics. The two registers are aimed at different audiences and should be scored separately when assessing Iranian intent on aviation.

Hamshahri

Tehran municipality daily, centrist; the largest-circulation title in the country and an institutional voice of the municipal establishment rather than a factional one

“Taken alive in the Strait” «زنده‌گیری در تنگه»

HIGH - front-page consolidation of the permission regime, with the Leader's name supplied from Beirut



- Main: The entire top half of the page is a single infographic cover under the kicker «ایران زیردریایی آمریکا را سالم از آب‌های خلیج فارس بیرون کشید» (Iran pulled an American submarine intact out of Persian Gulf waters), with a standfirst promising «روایت عقب‌راندن ناوهای آمریکایی، شکار زهپادها و عذرخواهی کشتی‌ها از ایران» (the account of pushing back the American warships, hunting the underwater drones, and the ships' apology to Iran). The page is built as a package of three coercion proofs rather than as a news report of one.
- Sub-item: «زیردریایی‌های آمریکا در تور ایران» (America's submarines in Iran's net) states that the IRGC hunted America's second «زهپاد» (underwater drone) in the Strait of Hormuz the previous day, names the platform as a «ریموس ۶۰۰» (REMUS 600) used for reconnaissance, mapping and mine detection, and claims «حافظه و داده‌های آن حالا در اختیار متخصصان ایرانی است» (its memory and data are now in the hands of Iranian specialists).
- Sub-item: «تردد در تنگه هرمز به فرمان ایران» (Transit in the Strait of Hormuz is by Iran's command) carries the day's one hard number: «میانگین ۱۰ روز گذشته ۱۷ کشتی بوده است. تردد نسبت به پیش از جنگ ۹۰ درصد کاهش یافته است» (the average over the past 10 days has been 17 ships; traffic has fallen 90 percent against pre-war levels).
- Sub-item: «عذرخواهی صاحبان کشتی‌ها از ایران» (Ship owners' apology to Iran) reproduces a photographed letter on a tablet screen and states that owners apologised after a warning about illegal transit and that «در نامه رسمی صلاحیت نهاد مدیریت آبراه خلیج فارس را به رسمیت شناختند» (in an official letter they recognised the competence of the Persian Gulf waterway management body).
- Sub-item: «عقب‌نشینی ناوهای آمریکا از ترس ایران» (American warships retreat in fear of Iran) claims the US fleet withdrew from the Sea of Oman beyond the range of Iranian anti-ship missiles after Iranian missile attacks, and that «تصاویر ماهواره‌ای، این فرار را نشان می‌دهد» (satellite imagery shows this flight).
- Op-ed: A «یادداشت» by Mohammad-Esmail Kowsari, IRGC brigadier general, Tehran MP and member of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, headlined «تنگه هرمز جای رجزخوانی آمریکا نیست» (The Strait of Hormuz is no place for America's bravado). Kowsari is the same figure driving the Strait of Hormuz bill through the committee that finished reviewing it the day this page went to press.
- Banner: A grey inset asserts «ترامپ با هوش مصنوعی نام تنگه هرمز را عوض می‌کند؛ فرمان این آبراه اما با اقتدار در دست ایران است» (Trump is changing

the name of the Strait of Hormuz with artificial intelligence, but command of this waterway is firmly in Iran's hands).

- Right rail: Below the fold, «لبنان بدون مقاومت، نابود می‌شود» (Lebanon without the resistance will be destroyed) is subtitled «با: شیخ نعیم قاسم رهبری آیت‌الله سید مجتبی خامنه‌ای، پیشرفت‌ها ادامه خواهد داشت» (Sheikh Naim Qassem: under the leadership of Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, the advances will continue), the only explicit printed endorsement of the serving Leader by name anywhere in this batch.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Hamshahri is not a hardline paper and that is what makes this page significant: the municipal daily has given its whole front to a coercion-proof package rather than to city news, which indicates a distributed message rather than one outlet's enthusiasm. Two of its four claims are independently checkable and cut against it. Its 17-ships-a-day figure is far above what external tracking reports for the same period, and its 90 percent reduction understates a closure that independent trackers put near 99 percent: this file reads that not as an error but as an argument, because a Strait that is working under Iranian licence is more useful to a permission regime than a Strait that is shut. The Qassem kicker is the more consequential item and should be tracked forward as the first front-page naming of the serving Leader by a foreign resistance principal.

Vatan-e Emrooz

Hardline principlist daily

“The beauty of the resistance” «جمال مقاومت»

MODERATE-HIGH - commemorative cover, with an alleged plot on UK soil reframed as enemy alarm



- Main: The whole cover is a black full-bleed portrait of Hassan Nasrallah, hand raised, under the two-word headline «جمال مقاومت». The standfirst reads «شهید سید حسن نصرالله تأثیر شگرفی بر جهان‌بینی جهان عرب نسبت به گذر از ناسیونالیسم عربی به مقاومت اسلامی گذاشت» (Martyr Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah left a profound mark on the Arab world's passage from Arab nationalism to Islamic resistance). No news headline appears above the fold at all.
- Op-ed: The day's flagged piece is a «نکته» by Raha Abdollahi headlined «لحظه اسطوره شدن» (The moment of becoming a legend), trailed as «مروری بر فرازهایی که از سیدحسن نصرالله اسطوره ساخت» (a review of the passages that made a legend of Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah). The byline is read from the printed page at the limit of the available scan resolution.
- Right rail: «گنج دریایی» (Sea treasure) over a photograph of a yellow torpedo-shaped vehicle on a deck, with the line «در کمتر از ۳ هفته دومین زهپاد آمریکایی سالم به دست نیروی دریایی سپاه افتاد» (in less than three weeks a second American underwater drone fell intact into the hands of the IRGC Navy). This supplies the interval between the two claimed captures.
- Right rail: «وحشت در ولفورد» (Terror in Whelford), reporting the discovery of explosives at what the paper calls America's strategic base in Britain and an emergency footing there. British police arrested five men near RAF Fairford on 27 September on suspicion of preparing a terrorist act; the paper prints the alarm and not the allegation that Iran is behind it.
- Right rail: «نشست هیچ» (The summit of nothing), on intensive talks between the Chinese and American presidents ending without result.
- Right rail: «سه‌ضلعی بحران در اقتصاد آمریکا» (The three-sided crisis in the American economy), tying Iranian control of Hormuz to interest rates and fuel prices in the United States.
- Banner: Across the top, «خشم عراقی‌ها از محاصره هوایی ایران» (Iraqis' fury at the air blockade of Iran) alongside «پرواز از میان شکاف تحریم» (Flight through the crack in the sanctions), keeping the Iraqi aviation file on the cover for a second consecutive day.

ANALYST NOTE The hardest-line daily in the batch spent its entire front page on a two-year-old assassination and pushed every live war item into a narrow rail, which is the inverse of its behaviour for most of this month. The rail is where the analytic content sits: the Whelford item is the tell, because Vatan-e Emrooz filed an alleged Iranian plot against the British base used to strike Iran as British panic rather than as an accusation to rebut, and no other front page in the batch carried it at all. Read together with the Nasrallah cover, the paper is choosing commemoration over the two stories that most implicate Iran in escalation abroad.

Javan

Hardline daily, IRGC-affiliated

“We will fight, even an apocalyptic war!” «می‌جنگیم حتی آخرالزمانی!»

HIGH - apocalyptic framing manufactured from a conditional, paired with a strike tally



- Main: The lead is a quotation attributed to the foreign minister under the kicker «عراقچی با اعلام تغییرناپذیر بودن شرایط ایران» (Araghchi, declaring Iran's conditions unchangeable). What Araghchi is reported to have said on the wires is «حتی اگر کار به جنگ آخرالزمانی کشیده شود، استوار خواهیم ایستاد» (even if it comes to an apocalyptic war, we will stand firm), delivered alongside a statement that Iran went to New York to establish the conditions for peace and remains ready for genuine diplomacy. Javan has converted standing firm into fighting and dropped the diplomacy half of the same remarks.
- Main: «نفتکش آبکش شد ۱۹» (19 tankers turned into sieves), printed in red directly beneath the Araghchi lead. Kayhan's own lead article dates the figure precisely: «نیروهای مسلح ایران تنها طی دو شب گذشته، ۱۹ کشتی متخلف شامل ۷ کشتی در شنبه ۴ مهر و ۱۲ کشتی در شب قبل از آن را که قصد عبور غیرمجاز داشتند، متوقف کرده و هدف قرار داده‌اند» (in just the past two nights Iran's armed forces stopped and targeted 19 offending vessels, 7 on Saturday 4 Mehr and 12 the night before, which had intended unauthorised transit). This is a two-night claim, not a cumulative war total.
- Sub-item: «عراق در آستانه طغیان علیه محاصره ایران» (Iraq on the verge of revolt against the blockade of Iran), over a photograph of a mass rally carrying Iraqi and Iranian flags, continuing the Iraqi aviation file this monitor has tracked since the closures were personalised on 27 September.
- Op-ed: The left column carries «نماد آزادگی در جهان» (A symbol of freedom in the world) beside a portrait of Nasrallah, the paper's commemorative contribution.
- Sub-item: Lower-page items on culture policy («کتاب باید در کنار صنایع فرهنگی و هنری قرار بگیرد») and on student marriage as a demographic remedy («پیشگیری از سالخوردگی جمعیت با ازدواج دانشجویی») show the paper is not running a war-only front.
- Kicker: A sports strip, «تاریخ‌سازی با برنز آسیا» (Making history with an Asian bronze), on the Nagoya Asian Games.

ANALYST NOTE Javan's headline is the clearest instance of source distortion in the batch and it is measurable: the wire text has the foreign minister saying Iran will stand firm if an apocalyptic war is forced on it while remaining ready for real diplomacy, and the IRGC-affiliated daily has printed him saying Iran will fight one. Setting the tanker tally immediately beneath it converts an eschatological conditional into an operational record. The tally itself deserves separate weight: nineteen vessels engaged across two nights, if accurate, is an operational tempo far above anything this file has recorded, and it is being published by Iran rather than by the ships' owners or their flag states, which is itself the coercive act.

Sobh-e No

Principlist daily

"The quiet architect of the resistance" «معمار آرام مقاومت»

MODERATE - commemorative cover carrying a de-escalatory editorial line on Lebanon



- Main: A full-height portrait of Sheikh Naim Qassem under the question «شیخ نعیم قاسم چگونه سکان حزب‌الله را در طوفان به دست گرفت؟» (How did Sheikh Naim Qassem take Hezbollah's helm in the storm?). Where Vatan-e Emrooz commemorated the dead secretary-general, Sobh-e No profiles the living one.
- Banner: Across the top, «"شاه ماهی" در تور سپاه» (The king fish in the IRGC's net), with the precise formulation «دومین زیرسطحی بدون سرنشین آمریکایی در تنگه هرمز به غنیمت گرفته شد» (a second American unmanned undersea vehicle was taken as spoils in the Strait of Hormuz). This is the most technically accurate rendering of the claim in the batch: an unmanned undersea vehicle, not a submarine.
- Sub-item: «شکست سنگین در انتظار حزب ترامپ؟» (A heavy defeat awaiting Trump's party?) over «آخرین نظرسنجی‌های انتخاباتی در آمریکا، شکاف جمهوری‌خواهان و برتری دموکرات‌ها را نشان می‌دهد», with the pull-quote «جنگ ایران مهم‌ترین موضوع مورد توجه آمریکایی‌ها در انتخابات پیش رو است» (the Iran war is the issue Americans care most about in the coming election).
- Op-ed: The «سرمقاله» is headlined «روایت‌های وارونه‌ای که تفاهم‌نامه خوب برای لبنان را تلخ کرد» (The inverted accounts that soured a good memorandum for Lebanon), defending the June memorandum of understanding as good for Lebanon and blaming its reception on misrepresentation. The byline is printed but is not legible at the resolution of the available scan.
- Sub-item: «قانون گریزان علیه اجرای حکم رسایی» (Law-evaders against the execution of Rasaei's sentence), reporting that the hardline MP Hamid Rasaei was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment and an apology for spreading falsehoods and disturbing public opinion, and attacking those resisting enforcement.
- Sub-item: «ما مقابل نسل‌کشی ایستاده‌ایم» (We stand against genocide), on protests around the Ireland against Israel football fixture, illustrated with a SHOW ISRAEL THE RED CARD banner.
- Right rail: A sidebar quotes the analyst Sadrolhosseini that Qassem has kept Hezbollah strong, alongside a second rail item on constraints on Israeli freedom of action.

ANALYST NOTE Sobh-e No is the paper that makes today's Lebanon split legible. Its editorial defends the ceasefire memorandum as good for Lebanon on the same morning Qassem publicly demanded Lebanon suspend direct negotiations with Israel, and its cover treats Qassem as a competent institutional manager rather than as a symbol. A principlist daily arguing for the memorandum while Hezbollah's own leader argues against the diplomacy it enables is the most concrete daylight between Tehran's press and Beirut's leadership this file has recorded, and it is worth tracking whether it persists past the anniversary.

Sazandegi

Reformist daily, aligned with the Executives of Construction party

“The six-member committee”

«کمیته شش‌نفره»

MODERATE-HIGH - publicly unresolved locus of decision authority in wartime


کمیته شش‌نفره

- Main: The standfirst reports «رئیس‌جمهور در گفت‌وگو با شبکه سی‌بی‌اس، از تشکیل یک تیم شش‌نفره خبر داد که در کنار او تصمیمات مرتبط با مذاکرات را پیش می‌برند» (the president, in an interview with CBS, disclosed the formation of a six-member team that advances negotiation-related decisions alongside him), adding that Pezeshkian said its members come from different parts of the establishment including the security institutions, the parliament and the government.
- Main: The page's own framing is the important part: «سازندگی در گفت‌وگو با کارشناسان و فعالان سیاسی به گمانه‌زنی در خصوص ترکیب این کمیته پرداخته است» (Sazandegi has canvassed experts and political activists to speculate about the committee's composition). The paper is guessing who governs, in print, and saying so.
- Main: The speculative roster runs as six captioned portraits: «محمدباقر قالیباف، رئیس تیم مذاکره‌کننده» (Ghalibaf, head of the negotiating team), «مسعود پزشکیان، رئیس‌جمهور», «محسن رضایی، دبیر شورای عالی امنیت ملی», «علی عبداللهی، رئیس ستاد کل نیروهای مسلح», «احمد وحیدی، فرمانده سپاه پاسداران» and «سیدعباس عراقچی، وزیر امور خارجه», with a seventh frame filled by the Ministry of Intelligence crest and captioned «سرپرست یا نماینده وزارت اطلاعات» because the paper cannot name the occupant.
- Sub-item: The accompanying column by Shaghayegh Shams records what the president was actually asked. On CBS's 60 Minutes he was questioned about the role of the Leader of the Islamic Republic in foreign policy and answered by describing a collective rather than the individual, leaving the column's closing question: «چه کسانی در این اتاق ۶ نفره می‌نشینند و درباره موضوعاتی مانند مذاکره، جنگ، آتش‌بس و رابطه با آمریکا تصمیم می‌گیرند؟» (who sits in this six-person room and decides on negotiation, war, ceasefire and relations with America?).
- Kicker: Top-strip items on the American gamble («قمار آمریکایی»), Arabic-language lessons and the Zibakalam and Rasaei sentences keep the paper's domestic-liberties file running.
- Op-ed: A «یادداشت روز» on the welcome staged for Pezeshkian on his return.

ANALYST NOTE This is the most consequential page in the batch and it is a reformist paper that produced it. Asked on American television who decides Iranian foreign policy, the president answered with a committee instead of the Leader, and a Tehran daily then had to reconstruct that committee from expert guesswork and could not fill one of its six seats. The Etemad channel's parallel roster names Mohseni-Ejei where Sazandegi names Araghchi, so even the speculation does not converge. Set against the foreign minister's insistence the same day that the Leader is fully in command, the Iranian surface now carries two irreconcilable accounts of where war-and-peace authority sits, and the reformist press has made the uncertainty itself the news.

Charsoogh

Economic daily

LOW - domestic economic indictment aimed at the negotiation track

“The report card of two years of negotiation, on the economy's board” «کارنامه دو سال مذاکره روی تابلوی اقتصاد»



- Main: The entire front page is a single comparative data table under the subhead «چارسوق بررسی کرد: از میز مذاکره تا سفره مردم» (Charsoogh examined: from the negotiating table to the people's table), setting the Pezeshkian administration's indicators against the averages of the Raisi and Rouhani governments.
- Main: The headline series is point-to-point inflation. Charsoogh prints overall goods inflation at 89 percent for Mordad 1405 against 31.6 percent at the end of the Raisi government and 43.7 percent at the end of Rouhani's, and food inflation at 137.5 percent against 34.4 and 59.8 percent respectively, with further rows for health, household goods, transport and clothing.
- Main: A red inset headed «جهشی بی‌سابقه قیمت ارز» (An unprecedented leap in the currency price) sets the dollar at 58,960 toman at the start of the Pezeshkian presidency (7 Mordad 1403) against 335,000 toman on the later date printed in the box: a rise of roughly 5.7 times.
- Sub-item: Further tables cover production growth by sector, capital formation and capital flight, employment resilience between summer 1403 and spring 1405, and the seasonal trend in housing construction permits, most rows showing negative change.
- Banner: The top strip is given to «نطق آخر حمید رسایی، نماینده انقلابی مجلس» (The final speech of Hamid Rasaei, revolutionary member of parliament), tying the paper's economic indictment to the hardline MP sentenced this week.
- Kicker: The table is presented as an audit of negotiation itself rather than of the war, which is the page's argument in its structure.

ANALYST NOTE Charsoogh has done something none of the political titles attempted: it has costed the negotiation track and published the bill. The framing is factional, since blaming two years of talks rather than seven months of war for a 5.7-fold currency collapse requires ignoring the intervening conflict, and pairing the table with Rasaei's valedictory speech makes the intended target plain. But the underlying figures are the most specific economic data on any cover in the batch and they run directly against Ta'adol's claim on the same morning that inflation has turned. For an external reader the useful content is the magnitude, not the attribution: an Iranian economic daily is printing 137.5 percent food inflation on its front page without qualification.

Jomhouri Eslami

Traditional establishment daily, historically close to the clerical old guard

"Anti-American and anti-Zionist-regime demonstrations in four countries" «تظاهرات ضد آمریکایی و رژیم صهیونیستی در ۴ کشور»

LOW-MODERATE - externalised protest framing, clerical establishment turned inward


جمهوری اسلامی

تظاهرات ضد آمریکایی و رژیم صهیونیستی در ۴ کشور

- Main: The lead is a four-country protest round-up illustrated with a Caracas rally for Maduro, framing global opposition to Washington rather than Iranian action as the day's story. Alone among the Persian covers in the batch, this paper leads on neither the Strait nor Nasrallah.
- Banner: «چاه دوازدهم فاز ۱۱ پارس جنوبی وارد مرحله جریان‌دهی شد» (The twelfth well of South Pars Phase 11 entered the flow stage) runs across the top right, and «افتتاح همزمان ۲۴۲ طرح میراث فرهنگی، گردشگری و صنایع دستی به ارزش سرمایه‌گذاری ۳۵ همت» across the top left, both presidential-activity items.
- Right rail: «مراسم بزرگداشت شهید نصرالله در بیروت» (Commemoration ceremony for martyr Nasrallah in Beirut) under the standing head «جاودانه مقاومت», the paper's restrained treatment of the anniversary.
- Right rail: «شکار دومین زهپاد ارتش تروریستی آمریکا در تنگه هرمز», the same formulation Kayhan used, placed in a rail rather than on the lead.
- Right rail: «هشدار تأمین اجتماعی درباره مشکلات سالمندی در ۲۰ سال آینده» (Social Security warns of ageing problems over the next 20 years), a demographic-fiscal warning that has nothing to do with the war.
- Sub-item: A black-bordered paid notice on the lower half announces a «مجلس تذکر» memorial gathering for Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mousa Shubairi Zanjani, «مرجع عالی‌قدر جهان تشیع», who died in Qom on 20 September aged 98. The convenors named include his son Ayatollah Seyyed Jafar Shubairi and the Qom seminary councils.
- Op-ed: The left column carries «از تقدیس تا تخریب» (From sanctification to demolition).
- Sub-item: A front-page quotation from «شهید مظلوم آیت‌الله بهشتی» on moral justice as the foundation of all other justice closes the page.

ANALYST NOTE The traditional establishment daily declined all three of the day's dominant frames and printed instead the seventh-day memorial for one of the last grand maraji of the pre-revolutionary generation. This file does not read a paid notice as an editorial statement, but the juxtaposition is worth recording at moderate confidence: on the morning the press is openly speculating about who exercises the Leader's authority, the paper closest to the clerical establishment gave its front page to the passing of a source of emulation whose religious standing was never in question. The Qom seminary's senior tier is thinning while the new Leader's endorsement arrives from Beirut rather than from Qom.

Ta'adol

Economic daily

LOW - domestic economic optimism keyed to the diplomatic cycle

“Iran's inflation at a turning point” «تورم ایران در نقطه تغییر»


تعادل

تورم ایران در نقطه تغییر

روی خوش بورس به سهامداران

رقیب خارجی پشت مرزهای ایران

- Main: The lead asks «آیا اقتصاد با اوج بحران فاصله می‌گیرد؟» (Is the economy moving away from the peak of the crisis?) and argues that inflation has reached an inflection point, the most optimistic macroeconomic claim on any cover in the batch.
- Main: A night photograph of the airport welcome carries the overlay «پزشکیان: با قدرت از ایران دفاع کردیم» (Pezeshkian: we defended Iran with strength), the same event Etemad leads on, used here as an economic-confidence image.
- Sub-item: «روی خوش بورس به سهامداران» (The bourse turns a kind face to shareholders), with a separate lower item «بورس آماده صعود» (The bourse is ready to climb).
- Sub-item: «رقیب خارجی پشت مرزهای ایران» (The foreign competitor behind Iran's borders), on imported home appliances pressing domestic manufacturers, illustrated with a refrigerator showroom.
- Banner: «چرا سرمایه‌گذاری دیجیتالی دولت به نتیجه مطلوب نمی‌رسد؟», drawing on a Majlis Research Center comparison of Iranian and South Korean e-government performance.
- Banner: «نیاز آموزش و پرورش به ۲۰ تا ۳۰ هزار نیروی جدید» (Education needs 20,000 to 30,000 new staff), from the education minister at the Farhangian University term opening.
- Op-ed: «پیش‌نیاز اصلاح اقتصادی در شرایط بحران» (The precondition for economic reform in crisis conditions) anchors the lower page.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Ta'adol is the only title in the batch making an affirmative case that the economic crisis has peaked, and it is doing so on the morning Charsoogh prints a dollar rate of 335,000 toman and food inflation of 137.5 percent. The two economic dailies are not disagreeing about data; they are disagreeing about whether the war's cost should be presented as cresting or compounding. Ta'adol's choice to illustrate an inflation story with the president's homecoming is the tell: this is a confidence page attached to a diplomatic moment, and its claim should be tested against the next currency print rather than taken as an analytic finding.

Etemad

Reformist daily

LOW-MODERATE - diplomacy-forward externally, securitisation flagged internally

"A cry of approval" «فریاد رضایت»


اعتماد

فریاد رضایت

بازتاب تحریم در آسمان

پایان راه یا آغاز پیشرفت؟

کارشکنی امریکا در مسیر دیپلماسی

- Main: The lead covers the crowd that met Pezeshkian on his return from the United Nations, under the kicker «جمعیتی که برای استقبال از رییس‌جمهور رفته بودند به سخنان او در سازمان ملل واکنش نشان دادند», with the president quoted saying he went to New York «تا صدای مظلومیت، عزت و اقتدار ملتی باشیم که ماه‌ها پای خاک و آرمان‌های خود ایستاده‌اند». The photograph shows a poster reading «خداقوت آقای رئیس جمهور».
- Sub-item: «کارشکنی امریکا در مسیر دیپلماسی» (American obstruction on the path of diplomacy), the paper's account of why talks have not advanced, placing the blame outward while keeping the diplomacy frame alive.
- Sub-item: «بازتاب تحریم در آسمان» (The reflection of sanctions in the sky), continuing this file's aviation-isolation thread from the reformist side.
- Sub-item: «وتوی صدای جامعه، دولت و دستگاه قضا» (The veto of the voice of society, the government and the judiciary), trailed as «گزارش اعتماد از اصرار برخی جریانات درباره طرح مقابله با نفوذ»: a report that certain factions are pressing ahead with the counter-infiltration bill over objections from society, the executive and the judiciary alike.
- Sub-item: «ثبت جهانی، پایان راه یا آغاز پیشرفت؟» on UNESCO-style world listing for Iranian villages, a rare non-war cultural lead item.
- Op-ed: A dense «یادداشت‌ها» rail of bylined commentaries with author portraits runs the full height of the page, the largest op-ed surface in the batch.
- Sub-item: Lower-page columns include «مذاکره برای چیست؟» (What is negotiation for?) and a currency outlook for autumn 1405.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Etemad's page is the counterweight to Sazandegi's. Both are reformist, both lead on the president, but where Sazandegi asked who actually decides, Etemad printed an approving crowd and put the blame for diplomatic failure on Washington. The more durable item is buried in the rail: a counter-infiltration bill being pushed by factions against the stated positions of the government and the judiciary, which is the domestic-legal counterpart to the Rasaei sentencing on the Sobh-e No cover. Wartime securitisation of the internal legal order is now visible on two fronts pages of opposite factional alignment and should be carried as a standing thread.

Kayhan (reconstructed from the outlet's own channel)

Hardline daily published under the Supreme Leader's office, managing editor Hossein Shariatmadari

“The way to **SEVERE - front-page advocacy of reducing Strait traffic to zero, plus an argument for widening targets** *tame Trump is to zero out commerce in the Strait”* «راهِ رام‌کردن ترامپ، صفرکردن تجارت در تنگه است»

- Main: The lead article (channel post 85246, carried to kayhan.ir) opens «مذاکره جواب نداد» (Negotiation did not work) and states the thesis without hedging: «استمرار انسداد تنگه هرمز و قطع شریان پترو دلار با آتش موشک تنها راه مهار زیاده‌خواهی‌های واشنگتن است؛ کلید رام‌کردن قمارباز کاخ سفید نه در مذاکره، بلکه در صفر کردن تجارت انرژی و بالا بردن هزینه اقتصادی آمریکا در آستانه انتخابات قرار دارد» (continuing the closure of the Strait and severing the petrodollar artery with missile fire is the only way to restrain Washington's excesses; the key to taming the gambler of the White House lies not in negotiation but in zeroing energy commerce and raising America's economic cost on the eve of the elections).
- Main: The piece attacks Iran's own diplomats by name of office: «آنچه بیش از همه تعجب‌آور است، رفتار و مواضع شتاب‌زده دستگاه دیپلماسی در نیویورک بود. نمایش شور و شوق برای مذاکره، آن هم درست در آستانه انتخابات حساس میان‌دوره‌ای آمریکا، ارسال سیگنال ضعف به ترامپ بود» (what is most surprising is the hasty conduct and positions of the diplomatic apparatus in New York; the display of eagerness for negotiation, precisely on the eve of America's critical midterms, sent a signal of weakness to Trump).
- Main: It supplies the operational figure the other papers print without provenance: «نیروهای مسلح ایران تنها طی دو شب گذشته، ۱۹ کشتی متخلف شامل ۷ کشتی در شنبه ۴ مهر و ۱۲ کشتی در شب قبل از آن را که قصد عبور غیرمجاز داشتند، متوقف کرده و هدف قرار داده‌اند» (in the past two nights alone Iran's armed forces stopped and targeted 19 offending vessels: 7 on Saturday 4 Mehr and 12 the night before).
- Main: The economic argument is unusually specific: Gulf energy majors are cast as the artery pumping liquidity to Wall Street, with Aramco's annual profit put at 100 to 160 billion dollars and the Saudi Public Investment Fund and Abu Dhabi Investment Authority at 700 billion and 990 billion dollars respectively, described as the principal purchasers of US Treasuries. The target is not Iranian oil revenue but American debt financing.
- Sub-item: The piece revisits the «تفاهم‌نامه اسلام‌آباد» (the Islamabad memorandum of 17 June), arguing Washington treated it as «درگاه تسلیم مطلق ایران» (the gateway to Iran's absolute surrender) and that Trump declared it dead once Iran held to its conditions. The memorandum in fact expired unextended on 17 August, so this is a retrospective claim rather than news.
- Sub-item: «شکار دومین زِهپاد ارتش تروریستی آمریکا در تنگه هرمز» carries the drone capture in the hardline register.
- Sub-item: Kayhan's Nasrallah anniversary billing quotes Qassem as «سیدحسن نصرالله چراغ راه حرکت ماست تا اخراج کامل اسرائیل مقاومت ادامه دارد» (Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah is the lamp of our path; resistance continues until Israel's complete expulsion). It does not print the passage in which Qassem names the serving Leader, which Hamshahri does.
- Sub-item: «ناکام ماندن توطئه بنزینی دشمن با جهاد ۷۲ ساعته متخصصان ایرانی» (The enemy's gasoline plot foiled by a 72-hour jihad of Iranian specialists), an unelaborated claim of a thwarted attack on fuel supply.
- Sub-item: Channel post 85234 quotes the Johns Hopkins economist Steve Hanke verbatim: «سال گذشته در ۲۵ سپتامبر، ۴۵ نفتکش از تنگه هرمز عبور کردند؛ امسال، در ۲۵ سپتامبر حتی یک نفتکش هم از این تنگه عبور نکرد» (last year on 25 September 45 tankers transited; this year on 25 September not one did).

- Sub-item: Post 85232 reports Sentinel-2 imagery showing the George Washington and George H.W. Bush carrier groups and USS Boxer repositioned away from the Strait's entrance after Iranian ballistic missile attacks on 5 September; post 85231 carries NBC reporting eight US Marines wounded by an Iranian missile strike on a vessel in the Strait.
- Op-ed: No «یادداشت روز» was posted for this cycle, a second consecutive absence of the signed editorial slot this file normally translates.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Kayhan published the day's most consequential sentence and it is an instruction rather than a report: zero the Strait, because the White House understands only cost. Two things make it more than rhetoric. First, the target it names is American debt financing through Gulf sovereign wealth rather than Iranian revenue, which is a theory of coercion with a mechanism rather than a slogan. Second, and more important, the paper published under the Leader's office spent its lead attacking Iran's own foreign ministry for showing eagerness in New York. Set beside Hamshahri's front page the same morning, which advertises seventeen ships a day passing by Iranian licence, the establishment is publishing two incompatible objectives for the same waterway: a functioning permission regime and total closure. The omission of Qassem's reference to the serving Leader, which the municipal daily printed, is the second absence worth carrying forward.

Appendix A: The Leader's slot, and the first official explanation of his absence

Sobh-e No channel post 116310, quoting Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi; cross-read against t.me/s/kayhan_online, t.me/s/IranNewspaper, t.me/s/etemadonline, t.me/s/vatanemrooz, t.me/s/jamejamdaily, t.me/s/defapress_ir, t.me/s/Nournews_ir and all ten front pages of 6 Mehr 1405

No message from the serving Leader reached any of the ten front pages or any of the nine channels read for this edition. This is the fifth consecutive cycle in which this monitor has found the Leader's commemorative and directive slot empty, and khamenei.ir was not available at the time of compilation, so the finding is an absence on the Iranian press surface rather than a global one.

What this cycle supplies in its place is the first on-record official explanation of that absence that this file has documented. Speaking in New York, the foreign minister addressed it directly: «ملاحظات امنیتی و تهدیدات مستقیم آمریکا مانع انتشار تصاویر شده است» (security considerations and direct American threats have prevented the publication of images).

He paired it with an assertion of undiminished authority: «رهبر ایران کاملاً بر امور مسلط هستند و دستورات و دیدگاه‌های ایشان به‌طور مستمر دریافت و اجرا می‌شود» (Iran's Leader is fully in command of affairs, and his directives and views are continuously received and implemented), and with a claim of institutional unity: «تمامی ارکان کشور شامل دولت، سپاه پاسداران، شورای عالی امنیت ملی و مجلس، جبهه‌ای واحد» (all the pillars of the country, including the government, the Revolutionary Guards, the Supreme National Security Council and the parliament, form a single front).

Against this, the same cycle carries the president telling CBS's 60 Minutes, when asked about the Leader's role in foreign policy, that a six-member team drawn from the security institutions, the parliament and the government advances negotiation decisions alongside him. Sazandegi then devoted its entire front page to guessing who those six are, and could not fill one of the seats.

The one place the serving Leader is named in print anywhere in the batch is a foreign voice. Hamshahri's lower front page carries «شیخ نعیم قاسم: با رهبری آیت‌الله سید مجتبی خامنه‌ای، پیشرفت‌ها ادامه خواهد داشت» (Sheikh Naim Qassem: under the leadership of Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei, the advances will continue). Kayhan, published under the Leader's own office, billed the same speech with a different passage and did not print that line.

Analyst flag: the foreign minister's explanation is an official position, not a verified account, and it is the kind of claim that cannot be falsified from open sources. It is recorded here because its existence is the finding: the absence has become significant enough that the state has begun answering for it. Verification note: the printed name throughout current coverage is Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei; Ali Khamenei was assassinated on 28 February 2026 and his son assumed the office on 8 March 2026.

Appendix B: Kayhan's lead article, "The way to tame Trump is to zero out commerce in the Strait"

Kayhan, front page, Monday 6 Mehr 1405 (28 September 2026), «تیتر یک», political service; distributed as t.me/kayhan_online post 85246 with the permalink kayhan.ir/001Q9B. No individual byline was printed; Kayhan's managing editor is Hossein Shariatmadari.

Standfirst: «مذاکره جواب نداد. راهِ رام‌کردن ترامپ صفرکردن تجارت در تنگه است» (Negotiation did not work. The way to tame Trump is to zero out commerce in the Strait.)

«استمرار انسداد تنگه هرمز و قطع شریان پترو دلار با آتش موشک تنها راه مهار زیاده‌خواهی‌های واشنگتن است؛ کلید رام‌کردن قمارباز کاخ سفید نه در مذاکره، بلکه در صفر کردن تجارت انرژی و بالا بردن هزینه اقتصادی آمریکا در آستانه انتخابات قرار دارد.» - Continuing the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and severing the petrodollar artery with missile fire is the only way to restrain Washington's excesses; the key to taming the gambler of the White House lies not in negotiation but in zeroing energy commerce and raising America's economic cost on the eve of the elections.

«محاسبات کارگردانان کاخ سفید درباره جمهوری اسلامی ایران بار دیگر اشتباه از کار درآمد. ترامپ قمارباز، گمان می‌برد اگرچه در جنگ ۱۲روزه و ۴۰روزه نتوانست ملت ایران را به زانو درآورد، اما می‌تواند با «خدعه مذاکره»، همان هدف از دست‌رفته نظامی را نقد کند.» - The calculations of the White House's stage managers regarding the Islamic Republic have once again proved mistaken. Trump the gambler supposed that although he could not bring the Iranian nation to its knees in the 12-day and 40-day wars, he could cash in, through "the deception of negotiation", the military objective he had lost.

«از همین رو بود که واشنگتن، «تفاهم‌نامه اسلام‌آباد» را نه یک گام برای حل مناقشه، بلکه درگاه تسلیم مطلق ایران می‌دید؛ تصویری موهوم که در آن ایران تمام مؤلفه‌های قدرت موشکی و هسته‌ای خود را یک‌جا روی میز می‌گذارد و در مقابل، کلید تنگه هرمز را دو دستی تحویل آمریکا می‌دهد.» - This is why Washington saw the Islamabad memorandum not as a step toward resolving the dispute but as the gateway to Iran's absolute surrender: an illusory picture in which Iran places every component of its missile and nuclear power on the table at once and hands America the key to the Strait of Hormuz with both hands.

«اما واقعیت میدانی، سیلی سختی به پندارهای کاخ سفید زد. ترامپ زمانی که دید جمهوری اسلامی ایران در تحقق تمام شروط خود مصمم است، متوجه شد از این تفاهم‌نامه نیز دستاوردی نخواهد داشت و در حرکتی آن را «مرده» اعلام کرد.» - But the reality on the ground dealt a hard slap to the White House's imaginings. When Trump saw that the Islamic Republic was determined on the fulfilment of all its conditions, he realised he would gain nothing from this memorandum either, and in one move declared it "dead".

«عزیزان دیپلمات در دستگاه خارجه حتماً باید این نکته حیاتی را مد نظر داشته باشند که اشتهای این قمارباز به‌شدت بالاست؛ با این تفاوت که او امروز در بحرانی‌ترین شرایط ممکن و در آستانه انتخابات حساس میان‌دوره‌ای کنگره قرار دارد. یکی از محورهای اصلی که افکار عمومی و صندوق‌های رای را علیه ترامپ بسیج کرده، جهش بی‌سابقه قیمت انرژی و بنزین در داخل ایالات متحده است.» - Our dear diplomats in the foreign service must keep this vital point in view: this gambler's appetite is extremely high, with the difference that today he stands in the most critical conditions possible, on the eve of a sensitive midterm congressional election. One of the main axes mobilising public opinion and the ballot boxes against Trump is the unprecedented leap in energy and gasoline prices inside the United States.

«اما در این میان، آنچه بیش از همه تعجب‌آور است، رفتار و مواضع شتاب‌زده دستگاه دیپلماسی در نیویورک بود. نمایش شور و شوق برای مذاکره، آن هم درست در آستانه انتخابات حساس میان‌دوره‌ای آمریکا، ارسال سیگنال ضعف به ترامپ بود.» - But in all this, what is most surprising was the hasty conduct and positions of the diplomatic apparatus

in New York. The display of enthusiasm for negotiation, precisely on the eve of America's sensitive midterm elections, sent a signal of weakness to Trump.

«از سوی دیگر، واقعیت میدانی نشان می‌دهد نیروهای مسلح ایران تنها طی دو شب گذشته، ۱۹ کشتی متخلف شامل ۷ کشتی در شنبه ۴ مهر و ۱۲ کشتی در شب قبل از آن را که قصد عبور غیرمجاز داشتند، متوقف کرده و هدف قرار داده‌اند.» - On the other hand, the reality on the ground shows that in just the past two nights Iran's armed forces have stopped and targeted 19 offending vessels, including 7 on Saturday 4 Mehr and 12 on the night before, which had intended to transit without authorisation.

«در ادبیات مدرن اقتصاد سیاسی، غول‌های انرژی خلیج‌فارس- در رأس آن‌ها آرامکو با سود سالانه ۱۰۰ تا ۱۶۰ میلیارد دلار» و ادنوک و قطرانرژی-صرفاً فروشنده نفت نیستند، بلکه شریان حیاتی پمپاژ نقدینگی به وال‌استریت و سیلیکون‌ولی امارات با ADIA ۹۹۰ عربستان با ۷۰۰ میلیارد دلار و PIF مانند) هستند. درآمد آرامکو از طریق صندوق‌های ثروت ملی بازوی اصلی خرید اوراق خزانه‌داری آمریکا است ،(میلیارد دلار دارایی.» - In modern political-economy literature the Persian Gulf energy giants, headed by Aramco with an annual profit of 100 to 160 billion dollars, along with ADNOC and QatarEnergy, are not merely sellers of oil but the vital artery pumping liquidity into Wall Street and Silicon Valley. Aramco's income, by way of the sovereign wealth funds (such as Saudi Arabia's PIF with 700 billion dollars and the UAE's ADIA with 990 billion dollars in assets), is the principal arm of American Treasury purchases.

«پیام روشن به دستگاه دیپلماسی این است که قمارباز را نباید با کرنش و نشان دادن اشتیاق برای مذاکره رام کرد؛ قمارباز را فقط با بالا بردن هزینه جنگ و زبان موشک در میدان مهار می‌کند. حفظ اهرم تنگه هرمز و فشار بر شریان‌های انرژی غرب، تنها منطقی است که کاخ سفید آن را می‌فهمد.» - The clear message to the diplomatic apparatus is that the gambler must not be tamed by deference and by showing eagerness to negotiate; the gambler is restrained only by raising the cost of war and by the language of missiles in the field. Holding the Hormuz lever and pressing on the West's energy arteries is the only logic the White House understands.

Analyst flag: this is hostile foreign-press content documented for defensive assessment. Three elements carry analytic weight beyond their rhetoric. First, the prescription is total rather than graduated: zero, not reduced. Second, the named coercion target is American debt financing through Gulf sovereign wealth rather than Iranian oil revenue, which is a mechanism rather than a slogan and can be tested against Gulf fund behaviour. Third, the article attacks Iran's own foreign ministry in print, which sets the paper published under the Leader's office against the delegation the president had just led to New York. Verification notes: the Islamabad memorandum was signed on 17 June 2026 and expired unextended on 17 August 2026, so the account of its death is retrospective; the 19-vessel claim is Iranian and uncorroborated; the Aramco, PIF and ADIA figures are broadly consistent with published orders of magnitude but are used here as argument, not as audited finance.

Appendix C: Methodology and Sourcing Notes

Compiled for the edition of 6 Mehr 1405 / 28 September 2026

Scan coverage. Nine Persian front pages were retrieved from the NewspaperTasnim kiosk album for 6 Mehr 1405 (t.me/NewspaperTasnim/44821, posted 02:58 UTC on 28 September) and one English front page from the Newspapers_Iran album (t.me/newspapers_iran/3571). The freshness guard matched the album's own printed Jalali date to the target date and did not trip, so no fallback sourcing was required. The nine Persian titles were identified by masthead: Hamshahri, Vatan-e Emrooz, Javan, Sobh-e No, Sazandegi, Charsoogh, Jomhouri Eslami, Ta'adol and Etemad. The English title is Iran Daily.

Text coverage. Six outlet channels and three agency wires were read: kayhan_online, vatanemrooz, jamejamdaily, etemadonline, IranNewspaper and sobhe_no as dailies, and defapress_ir, farsna and Nournews_ir as agencies. Agency material is treated as claim and corroboration only and is not analysed as front-page content. Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation, so the English-language coverage in this edition rests on the Iran Daily scan alone.

Kayhan is reconstructed. No Kayhan front-page scan reached the kiosk album, so the Kayhan entry is built from the outlet's own channel, principally the front-page listing at post 85235 and the full lead article at post 85246, which carries the kayhan.ir permalink. Readers should treat the Kayhan section as channel-sourced rather than scan-verified.

Scan resolution. The kiosk images are supplied at roughly 800 pixels on the long edge. Headlines, standfirsts and photo captions are legible under magnification; body text and small bylines frequently are not. Where a byline could not be read with confidence it is flagged in place rather than guessed: the Sobh-e No editorial byline is recorded as illegible, and the Vatan-e Emrooz byline is given as printed at the limit of legibility.

Verification performed. The captured vehicle was cross-checked: Hamshahri names it a REMUS 600 and Defa Press a Mk 18 Mod 2 Kingfish, which is the US Navy designation for a variant built on the REMUS 600 hull, so the two Iranian renderings are consistent rather than conflicting. The claim was reported externally on 27 September and CENTCOM's spokesman Captain Tim Hawkins denied it, saying the United States maintains positive control of all its operational drone assets. The earlier capture claimed in September was of a different platform, an Anduril Dive-LD. The Whelford item was checked against external reporting: five men were arrested on 27 September near RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire on suspicion of preparing a terrorist act and explosives offences, with an Iran-linked motive among the lines of inquiry. Mohammad-Esmail Kowsari's office was verified: IRGC brigadier general, Tehran member of parliament and member of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee. The Majlis committee completed its review of the Strait of Hormuz security bill with the approval of its final article on 5 Mehr 1405 (27 September), which makes that law the governing framework for the Strait and repeals contrary provisions. Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mousa Shubairi Zanjani's death was verified as 20 September 2026 in Qom, aged 98.

Single-source and uncorroborated items. The ship-owners' apology letter that Hamshahri reproduces as a front-page graphic remains uncorroborated outside Iranian channels; this file first recorded it on 27 September as an Etemad channel post and now records its promotion to a front page, which changes its prominence and not its evidentiary status. The claim that American carrier groups withdrew in fear of Iranian missiles rests on Kayhan's reading of Sentinel-2 imagery and is an interpretation of repositioning, not a confirmed cause. The 19-vessel two-night tally, the 17-ships-a-day transit average and the claim that ship data has been exploited by Iranian specialists are all Iranian and unverified. The Steve Hanke quotation about zero tankers on 25 September is reproduced as Kayhan printed it; an equivalent Hanke comparison for 7 August (58 tankers the

previous year against 8 this year) is externally verifiable, but the 25 September instance was not independently located.

Quantitative caution on the Strait. Three incompatible transit figures circulated in this cycle. Kayhan, via Hanke, reports zero tankers on 25 September. Hamshahri reports a ten-day average of 17 ships and a 90 percent fall against pre-war levels. American officials were reported to have claimed roughly 60 ships on 24 September. Independent vessel tracking for the same period reports one commercial transit on 20 September against a pre-crisis baseline near 85 a day, and nine commodity vessels on 24 September, putting throughput near one percent of normal. No figure in this edition should be treated as a traffic measurement; each is treated as an argument about the Strait made by the party publishing it.

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