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THREE ACCOUNTS, ONE HULL EDITION

Thirteen Iranian newspapers of 23 Mehr 1405: nine front-page scans, eight Persian and one English, read together with four further papers from their own channels and three agency wires. Kayhan, Sobh-e No, Etemad and Iran are read from their channels because no scan of them reached the day's kiosk batch. Tehran Times and the Leader's official sites were unavailable at the time of compilation.

Front pages published the morning of 15 October 2026, reflecting events through late 14 October local

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Executive Summary

The lead judgment of this edition is that the Iranian state published three incompatible accounts of the same hull inside one morning, and that the version carrying no Iranian agency was the one printed in English. Iran Daily, the state news agency's English daily, led its front page with "Container ship sinks in Strait of Hormuz after hitting mine in unauthorized route" and repeated the cause in its photograph caption, placing the responsibility on the ship's own routing. Hours earlier the IRGC spokesman, carried on the state broadcaster's own channel at item 31077, had said «حمله به کشتی‌های متخلف پاسخی به سومین نقض عهد آمریکا بود», that the attack on the violating ships was a response to America's third breach of its undertaking. The verb there is «حمله», attack, and the object is plural. A third formulation ran on the clerical-conservative and government front pages: «سپاه: کشتی کانتینربر متخلف با ۲۵۰۰ کانتینر در جنوب تنگه هرمز غرق شد», the Guard says a violating container ship sank, a construction that reports the outcome and withholds the cause entirely. The external record identifies the vessel as the GFS Pride, struck by an unidentified projectile on 14 October, with all twenty-one crew evacuated and a maritime security firm stating there is no independent evidence that a mine caused the sinking. What is new is not that Tehran claims a maritime success; it is that the mine template this monitor recorded against a supertanker in an earlier cycle has been reused for a different kind of incident, and that it now survives only in the foreign-language edition.

The second finding is that the hardline press has stopped arguing for closure of the strait and started certifying it, each title in its own register. Kayhan, closest to the Leader's office, ran «نفت ۱۵۰ دلاری یعنی تنگه هرمز بسته است», oil at a hundred and fifty dollars means the Strait of Hormuz is closed, which hands the verification to the commodity market and no longer asks the reader to take the navy's word. Sobh-e No dropped the enforcement vocabulary altogether with «تنگه سه قفله شد», the strait has been triple-locked, and reported that attacks on rule-breaking vessels had reached a weekly high. Vatan-e Emrooz kept the juridical frame and sharpened it to a single noun, «قبض هرمز», the Hormuz bill, over a full-page photograph of the burning ship, with a strap describing «افزایش بی‌سابقه مجازات شناورهایی که قصد عبور غیرقانونی از تنگه هرمز را داشتند», an unprecedented increase in the punishment of vessels intending illegal passage. Three hardline titles, three vocabularies, one conclusion.

The third finding converts a timing inference this monitor has carried for several cycles into a published fact. Javan, the Guard's daily, gave its front page to a cartoon of the Statue of Liberty in a gas mask beneath a Trump cap, standing over the burning ship under the banner «کانتینر پَر!», containers gone, and set beneath it the line «صفر نفتی هرمز» / «۳ هفته به انتخابات تاکتیک‌های جدید برای امریکا», new tactics for the oil-zeroing of Hormuz, three weeks to the American elections. One cycle ago this monitor assessed the electoral timing from a pull quote and a Western wire and rated it a finding rather than a framing. Today the Guard's own paper prints the objective and the clock on the same line. «صفر نفتی» is not a pressure campaign described in the language of leverage; it is a stated end state, zero oil through the strait, and it is dated.

Against that, the government's own daily published the opposite policy on the same morning, and did so in detail. Iran carried the analyst Hadi Afghahi at items 509886 and 509891 arguing for «سازوکار منطقه‌ای برای مدیریت تنگه هرمز», a regional mechanism for managing the strait without outside powers, and reporting that Iran has put seven axes for diplomacy to Washington through a Qatari mediator, with the release of frozen Iranian assets and a declared end to the war among its demands. The external record supports an active track: Oman's foreign minister said on 14 October that the bilateral Oman-Iran talks on the strait had concluded and that implementing their understandings and resuming

maritime traffic now depend on the Iran-United States negotiations, and Reuters reported two days earlier that Tehran was reviewing the American response to its own reopening proposal. Sazandegi put a headline over that statement, «پایان مذاکرات بی‌نتیجه», the end of inconclusive negotiations, that is more pessimistic than the statement beneath it; its own sub-line renders Albusaidi accurately. The two Iranian positions are not rhetorical variants of each other. One requires the strait to be usable and the other requires it closed, and Ghalibaf supplied the formula that tries to hold both, «هم می‌جنگیم و هم مذاکره می‌کنیم», we will both fight and negotiate.

The leverage thread moved again, and this time it moved onto neighbours. One cycle ago Javan claimed a digital veto over the submarine cables carrying the American technology economy. This morning Sobh-e No published «وابستگی ۹۵ درصدی بحرین و قطر به کابل‌های اینترنت تنگه هرمز», a ninety-five percent dependence of Bahrain and Qatar on the internet cables running through the strait. That is a different target set with different consequences: Silicon Valley cannot be coerced by Tehran in any near term, whereas Bahrain and Qatar are states whose banking and transit cooperation Iran actively needs, and one of which the government daily names on the same morning as the mediator carrying its seven axes to Washington. The cable claim and the Qatari channel appear in the same cycle, in different papers, pointing in opposite directions.

The domestic campaign against the negotiating camp crossed a threshold. Kayhan's «یادداشت روز», signed by Hossein Shariatmadari and titled «آمریکا در ایران سفارتخانه ندارد ولی ده‌ها سفیر دارد!», America has no embassy in Iran but it has dozens of ambassadors, named Mohammad Javad Zarif, Hossein Marashi and Hassan Rouhani, and closed by invoking the assassinated Leader's warning that judicial and security bodies should act against those who cooperate with the enemy. One cycle ago the same campaign was argued against a sitting minister and a school of thought; today it names a former president and ends on a prosecutorial citation. It also drew the first direct answer this monitor has recorded: Etemad's channel carried «تفرقه‌افکنی می‌کنید، تهمت می‌زنید، خلاف نظر رهبری عمل می‌کنید و اسمش را انقلابی‌گری می‌گذارید», you sow division, you slander, you act against the Leader's view, and you call it revolutionism, which answers the hardliners on their own ground and names nobody.

Dissent on the maritime campaign itself surfaced where it is least expected. Nour News, the wire closest to the Supreme National Security Council, carried Gholamhossein Karbaschi at item 402020 saying «زدن ۳ کشتی در تنگه هرمز باعث نقض تفاهمنامه اسلام‌آباد شد», that striking three ships in the Strait of Hormuz violated the Islamabad memorandum, and at items 402016 to 402019 calling for the war to be ended by agreement, invoking Khomeini's acceptance of Resolution 598 as the precedent. A security-linked wire publishing a reformist arguing that Iran's own strikes broke the ceasefire understanding is a more consequential item than any front page in this edition, and it carries a count, three ships, that neither Kayhan's two nor the external record's one sinking plus one damaged hull matches.

The second front hardened and is the better-corroborated half of the edition. Hamshahri ran «یمن، سپر آمریکایی را سوراخ کرد», Yemen punctured the American shield, crediting drone and missile attacks with exposing billion-dollar American systems defending Saudi Arabia. Vatan-e Emrooz ran «پاشنه آشیل سعودی», the Saudi Achilles heel, over a photograph of a Saudia airliner being hosed down. Six separate Iranian surfaces carried the Australian advisory telling nationals to stay clear of Saudi oil facilities and the New Zealand advice against travel, and Jam-e Jam added that the United States has restricted its own employees' use of Saudi airports with the Riyadh suspension extended to 17 October. The external record confirms Houthi strikes on Riyadh's King Khalid airport and on an Aramco administrative building in Dhahran, airframe damage to a Saudia aircraft, Lufthansa suspending Riyadh service and Cathay Pacific extending its suspension into 2027. Where Hormuz produces three Iranian

accounts of one hull, the Saudi front produces convergent Iranian reporting that the external record largely sustains.

The counterweights all held, and as in previous cycles they ran below the fold, in the economic press, or in another language. Ta'adol led its top-right column with «جزیره‌ای شدن نفت در روزگار جنون نفتکش‌ها», the islanding of oil in the era of tanker madness, conceding that the logistics cage holds Iranian crude as well, and carried Ali Shams Ardakani's «روزانه ۵۰ میلیون مترمکعب گاز را می‌سوزانیم و از ناترازی حرف می‌زنیم!», we burn fifty million cubic metres of gas a day and then talk about imbalance, which charges the winter shortage to Iranian waste rather than to the enemy. The same page used Abdolnaser Hemmati's attendance at the Fund's annual meetings in Bangkok as proof that the adversary's two-week collapse prediction failed, and Iran Daily carried the governor's rejection of collapse claims as an illusion on its own banner, beside an interview arguing that domestic measures "cannot fully replace diplomatic progress". Sazandegi meanwhile opened a different argument entirely, giving its whole front to Mohammad Khatami detaching the reform project from liberalism and naming China as the model of pursuing national interest inside an unjust order.

Net assessment: this is an edition in which the Iranian state's two policies became impossible to reconcile on the page. The Guard's daily printed an end state and a date; the government's daily printed a mediated architecture and a list of demands; the speaker of parliament endorsed both at once; and the security council's own wire published a reformist saying the strikes broke the ceasefire. The press discipline that this monitor has recorded for weeks on the chokepoint question did not hold this morning, and the break ran along the line between the institutions that conduct the campaign and the institutions that would have to end it. The incumbent Leader, who would be the authority to settle it, is absent from the front-page record for the tenth consecutive cycle, and the only Leader-level text in the hardline press this morning belongs to his assassinated predecessor.

BOTTOM LINE A Singapore-registered container ship went to the bottom of the Strait of Hormuz, and by the next morning the Iranian press had published three mutually exclusive explanations for it: a mine for the foreign reader, an attack for the domestic one, and no cause at all for the clerical and government dailies, while the Guard's own paper printed the objective the sinking serves and the government's own paper printed the deal that would end it.

CRITICAL SOURCING NOTE Nine front-page scans of 23 Mehr 1405 were gathered from two kiosk albums, eight Persian and one English, and the stale-batch guard matched the album's printed Jalali date to the target date on the first attempt. Four further papers, Kayhan, Sobh-e No, Etemad and Iran, were read from their own channels because no scan of them reached the batch, and three agency wires, Defa Press, Fars News and Nour News, were read for corroboration only and are labelled as claims throughout. Tehran Times and the Leader's official sites were unavailable at the time of compilation and nothing is reported from them. The scans are low resolution: banner headlines and standfirsts are quoted in the original script, while body text and some bylines are not resolvable, and this edition says so in place rather than guessing, specifically for the author of Javan's vocative Palestine piece, the author of Shargh's editorial, and one noun in Shargh's Trump strap. Rear Admiral Ali Azmaei, Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi, Abdolnaser Hemmati, Mohammad Khatami and Badr Albusaidi were each verified against the external record, and Albusaidi's statement was found narrower than the headline Sazandegi placed over it. The central incident is recorded with its three Iranian accounts set against an external record identifying the GFS Pride and finding no independent evidence of a mine. Counts differ and are left open: Kayhan says two ships, Karbaschi says three, the external record supports one sinking plus one damaged hull this cycle. Four items are flagged as unverified at compile time: the telephone seizure in Vatan-e Emrooz's Ilhan Omar item, beyond the confirmed warrant-based search of her home on 12 October; the Riyadh aircraft figures relayed from the

> Wall Street Journal; the Chris Murphy remarks and figures relayed by the government daily; and the Yemeni claim to have downed a Saudi Typhoon, which Nour News itself marked as requiring confirmation. Renderings of foreign speakers in Kayhan and of a CNN report in Shargh are not authenticated by republication and are not to be reproduced as authentic without primary-source confirmation.

Macro Trend Analysis

1 Enforcement language and attack language now contradict each other inside one state

Vatan-e Emrooz calls the sinking a bill, «قبض هرمز», and describes «مجازات», punishment, of vessels. Iran Daily calls it a mine struck on an unauthorised route. The IRGC spokesman calls it «حمله», an attack, and a response to an American breach. Sobh-e No reports attacks at a weekly high. Jomhouri-ye Eslami and the government daily report that the ship sank and name no cause. The juridical frame that let Tehran present maritime coercion as rule-following has not been abandoned, but it is now one register among four, and the one that contradicts it comes from the Guard's own spokesman.

2 The objective has been published, and it is dated

«صفر نفتی هرمز», the oil-zeroing of Hormuz, printed on the Guard's daily beneath a countdown to the American election, is the first time in this run that an end state and a political deadline have appeared together on an Iranian front page. Kayhan supplies the verification standard for it, oil at a hundred and fifty dollars, and Sobh-e No supplies the status report, triple-locked. The campaign is no longer being argued; it is being scored against a target.

3 Leverage keeps migrating, and this cycle it migrated onto Gulf neighbours

The chokepoint thread began in hydrocarbons, extended one cycle ago into submarine cables aimed at American technology firms, and this morning named Bahrain and Qatar as ninety-five percent dependent on the cables running through the strait. The same cycle has the government daily naming Qatar as the mediator carrying Iran's seven diplomatic axes to Washington. The leverage argument and the diplomatic channel now run through the same two capitals.

4 The second front is the better-evidenced one

Iranian reporting on Saudi Arabia converged this cycle rather than fragmenting, and the external record largely sustains it: strikes on Riyadh's airport and on an Aramco building in Dhahran, airframe damage to a Saudia aircraft, foreign carriers suspending service, Western advisories to stay clear of oil facilities, and the United States restricting its own employees' use of Saudi airports. A Yemeni military figure addressing Aramco shareholders, carried by Sobh-e No, states the economic theory plainly. Where Hormuz produces contradiction, Yemen produces corroboration.

5 The loyalty campaign turned prosecutorial, and drew its first answer

Kayhan's editorial named a former foreign minister, a former vice-president and a former president as the functional ambassadors of a closed embassy, and closed on the assassinated Leader's warning that judicial and security bodies should act. Etemad answered on the same morning by invoking the leadership's own counsel on unity against the accusers. The argument has moved from policy to loyalty, and from loyalty to venue.

6 The economic press keeps the inward ledger nobody else prints

Ta'adol conceded that Iranian oil is islanded by the same maritime disorder the security press celebrates, charged the winter gas deficit to fifty million cubic metres burned daily at home, and used the central bank governor's presence at the Fund's meetings in Bangkok as the proof that the

adversary's collapse prediction failed. Iran Daily published an analyst saying domestic measures cannot fully replace diplomatic progress. The counterweight is consistent across cycles and it is consistently placed where the general reader will not meet it.

Key Judgments

KJ-1 [HIGH] KJ-1. The Iranian state published three mutually exclusive explanations of one sunken hull within a single news cycle, and the explanation assigning Iran no agency was the one printed in English. The evidence is three surfaces. Iran Daily's front page states "Container ship sinks in Strait of Hormuz after hitting mine in unauthorized route" and repeats the cause in the photograph caption. The state broadcaster's own channel carries the IRGC spokesman at item 31077 saying «حمله به کشتی‌های متخلف پاسخی به سومین نقض عهد آمریکا بود», the attack on the violating ships was a response to America's third breach. Jomhouri-ye Eslami and the government daily print «سپاه: کشتی کانتینربر متخلف با ۲۵۰۰ کانتینر در جنوب تنگه هرمز غرق شد», reporting the outcome and withholding the cause. Externally the vessel is the GFS Pride, struck by an unidentified projectile on 14 October, crew of twenty-one evacuated, with a maritime security firm stating no independent evidence supports a mine. The significance is the audience segmentation rather than the discrepancy itself: the deniable account is reserved for the foreign reader and the claimed one for the domestic, which indicates a message architecture designed for two publics rather than editorial confusion. The calibration runs both ways and this monitor states it: treating the English mine account as the state's position would miss the spokesman's admission, while treating the spokesman as decisive would overstate how settled the attribution is inside the system. The tracking cue is whether any Iranian authority reconciles the two in a single statement, or whether the split persists by language into the next cycle.

KJ-2 [HIGH] KJ-2. The hardline press has moved from certifying the chokepoint campaign to declaring its objective met, and it has adopted an external verification standard to do so. The evidence is three titles in one morning. Kayhan's digest at item 86812 carries «نفت ۱۵۰ دلاری یعنی تنگه هرمز بسته است», oil at a hundred and fifty dollars means the Strait of Hormuz is closed, which transfers proof of closure from Iranian claim to commodity price. Sobh-e No at item 116741 runs «تنگه سه قفله شد», the strait has been triple-locked, and reports attacks on violating vessels at a weekly high. Vatan-e Emrooz's «قبض هرمز» presents the sinking as an invoice rendered under an unprecedented increase in punishment of vessels. The significance is that a press which spent earlier cycles insisting the strait remained open to compliant traffic has stopped making that claim: the argument has shifted from legitimacy to results. The tracking cue is the price itself, because a title that stakes its proof on a hundred and fifty dollar oil has committed to a falsifiable test.

KJ-3 [HIGH] KJ-3. The alignment of the Hormuz campaign with the American election is no longer an inference drawn by this monitor; it is printed on the Guard's own front page as an objective with a deadline. The evidence is one line. Javan sets beneath its cartoon of the burning ship the text «تاکتیک‌های جدید برای «صفر نفتی هرمز» / ۳ هفته به انتخابات امریکا», new tactics for the oil-zeroing of Hormuz, three weeks to the American elections. «صفر نفتی» states an end state rather than a pressure, and the three-week figure places the horizon at the first week of November. The significance is twofold: an end state can be declared achieved or failed, which creates a decision point the campaign did not previously have, and the explicit electoral reference converts a maritime enforcement posture into declared election interference by Iran's own press. The calibration is that a

newspaper is not a ministry, and nothing here establishes that the stated objective is operational policy; what it establishes is that the Guard's publishing arm sees no cost in printing it.

KJ-4 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** KJ-4. A negotiated architecture for the Strait of Hormuz exists, was published this cycle by the government's own daily, and is irreconcilable with the objective printed by the Guard's daily on the same morning. The evidence has an Iranian and an external half. Iran carries the analyst Hadi Afghahi at item 509886 on «سازوکار منطقه‌ای برای مدیریت تنگه هرمز», a regional mechanism excluding outside powers, and at item 509891 reporting seven Iranian axes for diplomacy conveyed to Washington through a Qatari mediator, with release of frozen assets and a declared end to the war among the demands. Externally, Oman's foreign minister said on 14 October that the bilateral Oman-Iran track on the strait had concluded and that implementation and the resumption of maritime traffic depend on the Iran-United States negotiations, and Reuters reported on 12 October that Tehran was reviewing the American response to its own reopening proposal. The significance is that the two published Iranian positions require opposite physical conditions in the same waterway, and that the speaker of parliament reconciled them only rhetorically, at Sobh-e No item 116751: «هم می‌جنگیم و هم مذاکره می‌کنیم». The tracking cue is whether the seven axes surface from any ministry rather than an analyst, and whether Sazandegi's «بی‌نتیجه», fruitless, finds support that Albusaidi's own words do not provide.

KJ-5 **[HIGH]** KJ-5. The submarine-cable leverage claim has been redirected within one cycle from American technology firms onto two Gulf Arab states, one of which Iran is simultaneously using as a mediator. The evidence is a pair of items one day apart. One cycle ago Javan's banner claimed a digital veto over cables carrying the American technology economy and argued for a transit due. This morning Sobh-e No publishes «وابستگی ۹۵ درصدی بحرین و قطر به کابل‌های اینترنت تنگه هرمز», a ninety-five percent dependence of Bahrain and Qatar on the cables through the strait, on the same day the government daily names Qatar as the channel carrying Iran's diplomatic package to Washington. The significance is that the new target set is reachable in a way the first was not: Tehran cannot coerce Silicon Valley in any near term, but it can credibly threaten the connectivity of two neighbours, and doing so puts at risk the mediation and the financial channels it depends on. The tracking cue is specific: whether any Iranian official body, as distinct from a newspaper, references Gulf cable dependency, and whether Doha's mediating role continues to be reported alongside it.

KJ-6 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** KJ-6. The campaign against the negotiating camp has escalated from criticising policy to naming former office-holders and inviting judicial action against them, and for the first time in this run it drew a direct published rebuke. The evidence is two texts on one morning. Kayhan's «یادداشت روز», signed by Hossein Shariatmadari at items 86814 and 86824, is titled «آمریکا در ایران سفارتخانه ندارد ولی ده‌ها سفیر دارد!» and names Mohammad Javad Zarif over the Turkmenchay treaty, Hossein Marashi over a call for tactical retreat and Hassan Rouhani over a wartime referendum proposal, closing on the assassinated Leader's warning that judicial and security bodies should act against those who cooperate with the enemy. Etemad's channel at item 539250 answers that those who sow division and slander are acting against the leadership's own counsel on unity while calling it revolutionism. The significance is the change of venue the editorial proposes: an argument that has been conducted in print for weeks now ends on a recommendation of prosecution, aimed at a former president. The calibration is that Kayhan has made comparable

demands before without consequence, and the correct tracking cue is institutional rather than rhetorical, namely any judicial or security action, or any response in print from the three named men.

KJ-7 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** KJ-7. Dissent against the maritime campaign has reached the wire closest to the Supreme National Security Council, and it is framed as a breach of Iran's own ceasefire undertaking. The evidence is a cluster on one channel. Nour News carries Gholamhossein Karbaschi at item 402020 saying «زدن ۳ کشتی در تنگه هرمز باعث نقض تفاهمنامه اسلام‌آباد شد», that striking three ships in the Strait of Hormuz violated the Islamabad memorandum, and at items 402016 to 402019 calling for the war to be ended by agreement, invoking Khomeini's acceptance of Resolution 598 as precedent and saying Iran needed to persuade the international inspectorate it was not pursuing a weapon. At item 402021 he attributes much of the country's difficulty to the foreign ministry's underperformance. The significance is the venue rather than the speaker: Karbaschi's views are not new, but their publication on a security-linked wire on the morning of a sinking indicates that the argument about whether the campaign is lawful under Iran's own undertaking is live inside the security establishment, not only in the reformist press. The tracking cue is whether the memorandum is named again by officials, and whether the three-ship count he uses is adopted or corrected.

KJ-8 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** KJ-8. The Yemen and Saudi theatre is now the better-corroborated half of the Iranian coercion narrative, and its confirmed damage is concentrated in aviation rather than in oil output. The evidence runs from the Iranian pages outward. Hamshahri leads a section with «یمن، سپر آمریکایی را سوراخ کرد» and Vatan-e Emrooz runs «پاشنه آشیل سعودی» over a Saudia airliner being hosed down, asking how Ansarullah exploited Saudi missile-defence weakness. Six Iranian surfaces carry the Australian advisory to avoid Saudi oil facilities and the New Zealand travel advice; Jam-e Jam at item 31076 adds American restrictions on its own employees' use of Saudi airports with the Riyadh suspension extended to 17 October; Sobh-e No at item 116745 carries a Yemeni military figure telling Aramco shareholders to sell. Externally confirmed are Houthi strikes on King Khalid airport and on an Aramco administrative building in Dhahran, damage to a Saudia airframe, Lufthansa's suspension of Riyadh service to 16 October and Cathay Pacific's extension into 2027. The significance is that Riyadh's measurable loss is in air connectivity and insurance exposure, not yet in crude output, and the Iranian press is at present describing that accurately. The unverified components are named: the Wall Street Journal aircraft figures relayed at Etemad item 539247 and the Typhoon shoot-down claim, which Nour News itself marked as needing confirmation.

KJ-9 **[MODERATE]** KJ-9. The claim that Israel authored Azerbaijan's school dress enforcement collapsed within one cycle, and it collapsed without retraction. The evidence is the replacement of the citing party. One cycle ago four Iranian surfaces assigned Israeli authorship to the Azerbaijani measure, against an external record supplying no Israeli element. This morning Jomhouri-ye Eslami's rail carries «انتقاد روزنامه‌های ترکیه از ممنوعیت حجاب در آذربایجان», Turkish newspapers criticising the ban, Sobh-e No at item 116742 attributes the Israel accusation to critics inside Azerbaijan rather than to Iran, and both Vatan-e Emrooz at item 28642 and Sobh-e No at item 116756 carry the Iranian embassy in Baku rejecting an Azerbaijani agency report that linked the dress rules and unrest to Iran. The significance is the mechanism this exposes: a claim can enter four Iranian surfaces in one cycle and be quietly reassigned in the next, which means convergence across titles is weaker evidence of central direction than it appears when observed on a single morning. The

tracking cue is whether the Israeli-authorship formulation reappears once the embassy denial has aged.

KJ-10 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** KJ-10. Negative evidence, filed as a finding: the incumbent Leader is absent from the front-page record for a tenth consecutive cycle, and the only Leader-level authority invoked in the hardline press this morning belongs to his assassinated predecessor. The evidence is a complete sweep of the cycle's retrievable surfaces. Mojtaba Khamenei appears on none of the nine Persian and English front pages, none of the four channel-read newspapers, and none of the three agency wires. The external record places his most recent reported remarks on 8 October, to the domestic security forces, with no independently confirmed video or audio and no confirmed public appearance since his first statement in March 2026 was read by a television anchor over a still photograph. Kayhan's editorial closes by citing the assassinated Leader's warning on cooperation with the enemy, and Javan's front page addresses «آقای خامنه‌ای!» in the vocative without honorific, with a byline the scan does not resolve. The significance is that the authority that would be needed to settle the contradiction between the Guard's published objective and the government's published architecture is, on the public record, not settling anything. The calibration is that absence from front pages is not absence from government, and this monitor asserts only what the record shows.

KJ-11 **[MODERATE]** KJ-11. Lebanon returned to the retrievable record after a single cycle of absence, and it returned through the foreign ministry rather than through the resistance file. The evidence is one item. Sobh-e No at item 116746 reports Iran's foreign minister and Lebanon's president discussing Israeli attacks on Lebanon and the occupation of southern areas. One cycle ago this monitor filed Lebanon's disappearance as a finding after a single cycle of return, and the pattern now visible across three cycles is intermittency rather than suppression. The significance is in the channel: a head-of-state call reported on a principlist paper's channel frames Lebanon as a diplomatic file, which is a different register from the resistance framing that carried it earlier in this run. The tracking cue is whether Lebanon reaches a front page rather than a channel, and whether it is carried by the foreign ministry or by the Guard.

KJ-12 **[MODERATE]** KJ-12. The economic press continued to price the campaign inward, and this cycle it did so in the same issue in which it claimed the adversary's economic war had failed. The evidence is one front page and one banner. Ta'adol's top-right report is «جزیره‌ای شدن نفت در روزگار جنون نفتکش‌ها», the islanding of oil in the era of tanker madness, conceding that Iranian crude is held in a logistics cage; its centre page carries Ali Shams Ardakani saying «روزانه ۵۰ میلیون مترمکعب گاز را می‌سوزانیم و از ناترازی حرف می‌زنیم!»; and its top-left asks why the economic war has reached a strategic deadlock, offering Abdolnaser Hemmati's attendance at the Fund's annual meetings as the answer. Externally, Hemmati has been Central Bank governor since December 2025 and the meetings are running in Bangkok from 12 to 18 October, where he rejected collapse claims and asked the Fund to study the effects of war and payment restrictions. Iran Daily carried the same rejection in English, beside an analyst arguing domestic measures cannot fully replace diplomatic progress. The significance is that the system's own economic titles are simultaneously claiming survival and itemising the cost, and that the cost they itemise is largely self-inflicted.

KJ-13 **[MODERATE]** KJ-13. The defence ministry vacancy may close this week, and the nominee reached parliament in the cycle after he reached the Guard. The evidence is two pages. Javan's

banner reports «مهرداد اخلاقی کتابچی، وزیر پیشنهادی دفاع از برنامه‌های تحولی خود به مجلس گزارش داد», the proposed defence minister reporting his transformation programmes to parliament, under the headline «وزیر جدید با سلاح جدید می‌آید». Jomhouri-ye Eslami gives front-page space to the meeting that one cycle ago existed only on two agency wires, under «در دیدار وزیر پیشنهادی دفاع با فرمانده کل سپاه مطرح شد: تأکید بر نقش راهبردی توانمندی‌های بومی در تأمین نیازهای دفاعی و پشتیبانی از رزمندگان». The post has been vacant since February and the confidence vote was reported as likely on 18 October. The significance is sequence: the nominee was presented to the Guard before he was presented to the chamber, and both presentations were framed around domestic production rather than around policy or command. The tracking cue is the vote itself and whether any portfolio question beyond procurement is put to him.

KJ-14 **[MODERATE]** KJ-14. Negative evidence, filed as a finding: the most significant reformist intervention of the cycle went unanswered by the rest of the reform press in the retrievable record. The evidence is one front page and four silences. Sazandegi gave its entire front to Mohammad Khatami detaching the reform project from liberalism and naming China as the model of pursuing national interest inside an unjust order, and framed it as an open question, «آیا گفتمان اصلاحات نیاز به بازنگری در الگوی توسعه دارد؟». The external record confirms the remarks. Shargh, the largest reformist daily in the batch, led instead on Trump's contradictions and a brittle Turkey-Azerbaijan axis and carried nothing on Khatami; Etemad's channel carried nothing on him; neither did the government daily or the economic titles. The significance is that a former president repositioning the camp's development model during a war drew no visible response from the camp, which suggests either that the remark is being left to settle before anyone answers it, or that no reformist title wishes to be seen arguing about liberalism in the week its leading figures were named as America's ambassadors. The tracking cue is the next reformist front page that either takes up the China question or conspicuously avoids it.

Named-Figure Tracker

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Donald Trump	President of the United States	Vatan-e Emrooz says the sinking exposed his claimed narrative of heavy Hormuz traffic; Shargh devotes its lead to his contradictions under «بازی ندامت»; Javan caricatures him as the Statue of Liberty in a gas mask	TARGET FRAMING
Rear Admiral Ali Azmaei	Commander, IRGC Navy, in post since July 2026	Jam-e Jam's front page carries his televised «لحظه‌شماری برای غرق کردن ناوهای آمریکایی»; Hamshahri turns his taunt into its headline «هرمز باز است؟ نزدیک شوید»; Vatan-e Emrooz credits him with Iranian dominance of the southern waterways	COERCION SPOKESMAN
Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf	Speaker of parliament	Mocks the American Treasury Secretary's collapse deadlines on two channels and states «هم می‌جنگیم و هم مذاکره می‌کنیم», we will both fight and negotiate	WATCH
Scott Bessent	United States Treasury Secretary	Named across three surfaces as the author of a failed two-week collapse prediction, with	TARGET FRAMING

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
		Sobh-e No proposing he be given the Nobel Prize in physics	
Hossein Shariatmadari	Managing editor, Kayhan	Signs the editorial naming three former office-holders as America's domestic ambassadors and closing on a citation recommending judicial action	WATCH
Mohammad Javad Zarif	Former foreign minister	Named in Kayhan's editorial over a defence of the Turkmenchay treaty	TARGET FRAMING
Hassan Rouhani	Former president	Named in Kayhan's editorial over a wartime referendum proposal characterised as serving American and Israeli goals	TARGET FRAMING
Hossein Marashi	Senior Kargozaran figure	Named in Kayhan's editorial over a call for tactical retreat	TARGET FRAMING
Gholamhossein Karbaschi	Reformist politician, former mayor of Tehran	Carried on the security council's own wire saying the strikes on three ships violated the Islamabad memorandum and that the war should be ended by agreement	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Mohammad Khatami	Former president	Sazandegi's whole front page: detaching the reform project from liberalism and naming China as the model of national interest inside an unjust order	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Abdolnaser Hemmati	Governor of the Central Bank of Iran since December 2025	Rejects collapse claims as an illusion on Iran Daily's banner; his attendance at the Fund's meetings in Bangkok is used by Ta'adol as proof the economic war stalled	WATCH
Masoud Pezeshkian	President	The government daily carries him on turning the economic war into an opportunity and on low-income discontent as the thing that must not happen; Rakei says his team's whole effort is that no war should occur	WATCH
Badr Albusaidi	Foreign minister of Oman	Sazandegi headlines him as announcing the end of fruitless negotiations; his actual statement says the bilateral Oman-Iran Hormuz track concluded and implementation depends on the Iran-United States talks	WATCH
Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi	Nominee for minister of defence	Javan's banner has him reporting transformation programmes to parliament; Jomhouri-ye Eslami fronts his meeting with the IRGC commander-in-chief on indigenous production	WATCH
Ilham Aliyev	President of Azerbaijan	Shargh's lead photograph with Erdogan under «اتحاد شکننده»; Vatan-e Emrooz's banner «آذربایجان علیه علی‌اف»; Sobh-e No carries Azerbaijani critics accusing him of acting for Israel over school hijab rules	TARGET FRAMING

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Esmail Qaani	Commander, Quds Force	Carried on the Vatan-e Emrooz channel saying Al-Aqsa remains a constant priority in Iran's calculations, and on Defa Press with a condolence message	WATCH
Ilhan Omar	United States Representative	Vatan-e Emrooz reports federal agents seizing her telephone; the confirmed record is a warrant-based search of her home on 12 October	WATCH
Chris Murphy	United States Senator	The government daily renders him warning of a wider war and a possible full Yemen-Saudi war, citing twenty American deaths and a hundred billion dollars; no contemporaneous source retrievable	WATCH
Mojtaba Khamenei	Supreme Leader	Absent from every front page, every channel-read newspaper and every wire in the cycle; the only Leader-level text in the hardline press belongs to his assassinated predecessor	absence noted
The Lebanese file	Lebanon as a named theatre in the Iranian press	Returns through one item only, the foreign minister's call with Lebanon's president on Israeli attacks and the occupation of southern areas, carried on a channel rather than a front page	absence noted

Headline Summary Table

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Vatan-e Emrooz	The Hormuz Bill	Hardline principlist	Maritime enforcement framed as an invoice rendered, over a full-page photograph of the burning ship	SEVERE: punishment of merchant vessels presented as routine
Javan	Containers: gone!	IRGC-affiliated	The oil-zeroing of Hormuz printed as an objective, three weeks to the American election	SEVERE: stated end state keyed to an electoral deadline
Kayhan	Oil at 150 dollars means the Strait of Hormuz is closed	Hardline, Leader's office	Closure certified by commodity price; editorial naming three former office-holders as America's ambassadors	SEVERE: closure declared achieved, domestic figures framed as foreign agents
Jam-e Jam	Counting the moments to sinking the American warships	State broadcaster IRIB	The IRGC Navy commander's televised threat, with the spokesman on the same channel calling the merchant sinkings an attack	SEVERE: explicit intent against American naval vessels

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Sobh-e No	The strait has been triple-locked	Principlist	Escalation acknowledged in plain terms; cable leverage redirected onto Bahrain and Qatar	HIGH: attacks at a weekly high, new target set named
Hamshahri	The world's expensive drugs have become Iranian	Tehran Municipality, centrist	Pharmaceutical self-sufficiency above the fold, the commander's taunt and the Yemen shield story below it	HIGH: a commander's challenge carried as civic-press voice
Iran Daily	Container ship sinks in Strait of Hormuz after hitting mine in unauthorized route	State news agency, English	The deniable account of the sinking, beside the central bank governor rejecting collapse claims	MODERATE: escalation rendered abroad as the victim's own fault
Jomhouri-ye Eslami	Six Royan Institute researchers on the world's top two percent list	Traditional clerical-conservative	Science and nursing lead; the Guard's maritime claim carried without a cause; the Azerbaijan claim reassigned to the Turkish press	MODERATE: the day's claim carried without amplification
Iran	We must turn the conditions of the economic war into an opportunity	Official government daily	A regional Hormuz mechanism with Oman and seven diplomatic axes to Washington through Qatar	LOW: negotiated chokepoint architecture published alongside the coercion line
Etemad	You sow division, you slander, you act against the Leader's view, and you call it revolutionism	Reformist	The first direct rebuke of the loyalty campaign, argued on the hardliners' own ground	LOW-MODERATE: pushback confined to the channel
Sazandegi	Khatami draws a line against liberalism	Reformist, Kargozaran	A former president repositions the reform camp toward the China model; Omani track headlined as fruitless	LOW: ideological repositioning, negotiation headline overstated
Ta'adol	Decoding the dollar's effect on the equity market	Economic	Iranian oil islanded by tanker madness; fifty million cubic metres of gas burned daily; the governor at the Fund's meetings as proof the economic war stalled	LOW: the campaign priced inward
Shargh	The game of regret	Reformist	Trump's contradictions and a brittle Erdogan-Aliyev alliance; the sinking absent from the front page	LOW-MODERATE: maritime escalation not fronted

Per-Paper Front-Page Analysis

Iran Daily

English-language daily of the state news agency IRNA

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

MODERATE: escalation rendered abroad as an accident caused by the victim's own routing



- Main: "Container ship sinks in Strait of Hormuz after hitting mine in unauthorized route", reversed over the photograph of the burning vessel, captioned as the ship sinking in the Strait of Hormuz after hitting a mine on October 14, 2026. The cause is stated as fact in the headline and in the caption, and the responsibility is placed on the ship's own routing.
- Banner: Above it, "CBI governor rejects claims of Iran's economic collapse as 'illusion'", the English rendering of Hemmati's «توهمی بیش نیست» carried on the Iranian wires the same morning.
- Op-ed: The right column runs an exclusive interview, "Economic resilience requires both domestic measures, diplomatic progress", in which an economic analyst Iran Daily names as Alireza Kotoni argues that targeted domestic measures, closer trade with neighbours and progress in foreign policy can manage external pressure but that practical steps "cannot fully replace diplomatic progress". The spelling of the analyst's name is taken from the scan and could not be confirmed against another source at compile time.
- Sub-item: The same interview sets out a rationing option, limiting imports of luxury and non-essential goods so that available currency can be directed to basic commodities and urgent needs, which is a managed-scarcity programme printed for a foreign readership.
- Sub-item: Top left, "Iranian doctor selected for WHO cancer award", the English version of the item the Persian conservative press ran the same morning.
- Sub-item: The lower strip carries "When monsters walk among us" on the opinion page, Iran's three-medal Greco-Roman haul at the under-23 world championship held in the United States, and a restoration feature on Isfahan's Dardasht neighbourhood.

ANALYST NOTE Iran Daily is the only surface in the edition that states a cause for the sinking, and it states the one that carries no Iranian agency: a mine, struck by a ship that had taken an unauthorised route. Set against the IRGC spokesman's «حمله», attack, on the state broadcaster's channel hours earlier, this is not a difference of emphasis but of authorship, and the language-of-publication pattern is now established across cycles: the deniable account goes to the foreign reader, the claimed one to the domestic. The interview column is the second half of the same design, offering diplomacy and rationing to an English audience on the morning the Persian front pages print an oil-zeroing objective.

Shargh

Reformist daily

"The game of regret" «بازی ندامت»

LOW-MODERATE: regional alliance framing, maritime escalation absent from the front page



- Main: «بازی ندامت», the game of regret, over a photograph of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Ilham Aliyev in conversation, captioned «اتحاد شکننده اردوغان و علی‌اف», the fragile alliance of Erdogan and Aliyev.
- Kicker: The strap above the banner reads that Shargh is reading between the lines of Trump's recent contradictions, running from a regret over having gone too far to «تهدید تازه علیه ایران», a fresh threat against Iran. One noun in the middle of the line is below the resolution of the retrievable scan and is therefore not quoted here.
- Op-ed: The right-hand editorial column «سرمقاله» runs under the title «از خودمندانه؟» with a portrait byline that the scan does not resolve; the piece is not carried on the retrievable channel and the author is left unnamed rather than guessed.
- Right rail: Stacked single-column items, «زیر بار رنج‌های نادیده», under the weight of unseen suffering, «وتوی مجارستان علیه کی‌یف لغو شد», Hungary's veto against Kyiv lifted, «فوتبال در جاده سیاست», football on the road of politics, and «آزمون پاسخ‌گویی دولت», the government's accountability test.
- Sub-item: Lower on the page, «تورم به کجا می‌رود؟», where is inflation going, and «بازخوانی واقعه کاخی در دو ساتور», each under a columnist's portrait.
- Sub-item: Shargh's channel carries «سی‌ان‌ان مدعی شد: آمریکا استفاده از «مادر همه بمب‌ها» علیه ایران را بررسی می‌کند»», a Shafaqna relay of a CNN report that American planners have drafted options using the GBU-43/B against Iranian energy and nuclear sites should Trump order a resumption of the war, before or after the midterms. This is a rendering of a rendering and is recorded here as such.

ANALYST NOTE The reformist flagship spends its lead on the Turkey-Azerbaijan axis rather than on Hormuz, which is itself the finding: on the morning after a merchant ship went down, the paper with the widest reformist readership puts the sea story nowhere on the front and frames the region's risk as a brittle alliance between two neighbours. «بازی ندامت» is aimed at Trump's reversals, and the editorial logic is that the adversary's incoherence, not Iran's leverage, is what will decide the next phase. The MOAB relay on its channel is the counterpoint the front page omits, and because it reaches Shargh third-hand it should not be read as the paper vouching for the plan.

Jam-e Jam

Daily of the state broadcaster IRIB

“Counting the moments to sinking the American warships” «لحظه‌شماری برای غرق کردن ناوهای آمریکایی»

SEVERE: explicit intent to sink American naval vessels, carried by the state broadcaster's daily



- Main: A red-bordered box holding four fifths of the upper page, «لحظه‌شماری برای غرق کردن ناوهای آمریکایی», counting the moments to sinking the American warships, over a portrait of the speaker in IRGC uniform.
- Main: The standfirst reads «دریادار عظمایی در گفت‌وگوی تلویزیونی بر آمادگی نیروی دریایی سپاه و ارتش برای مقابله با متجاوزان تأکید کرد», Rear Admiral Azmaei in a televised interview emphasised the readiness of the Guard's and the Army's naval forces to confront aggressors. The speaker is Rear Admiral Ali Azmaei, IRGC Navy commander since July 2026 in succession to Alireza Tangsiri, killed 26 March 2026; the interview aired on the night of 21 Mehr, 13 October.
- Banner: Above the box, «طولانی‌ترین کریدور ایران، در یک قدمی راه‌اندازی», Iran's longest corridor one step from launch, on the Chabahar to Zahedan railway and its claimed effect on transit capacity.
- Sub-item: Channel item 31077, «سخنگوی سپاه: حمله به کشتی‌های متخلف پاسخی به سومین نقض عهد آمریکا بود», the IRGC spokesman saying the attack on the violating ships was a response to America's third breach of its undertaking. The verb is «حمله», attack, and the object is plural.
- Sub-item: Channel item 31076, «آمریکا استفاده کارمندان خود از فرودگاه‌های عربستان را محدود کرد», the United States restricting its employees' use of Saudi airports, with the suspension at Riyadh's King Khalid extended to 17 October.
- Banner: Top left, «صداوسیما زیر آتش حاشیه‌ها», the broadcaster under fire from controversies, and «شرایط جدید، دکترین جدید», new conditions, new doctrine.
- Sub-item: A strip of six portraits across the middle of the page carrying the day's quoted officials, and a lower package on «زنان قهرمان هدف عقده‌گشایی تروریست‌ها», champion women as the target of terrorists' resentment.

ANALYST NOTE The state broadcaster's own paper is where the contradiction at the centre of this edition becomes visible inside a single masthead. Its front page runs a commander promising to sink American warships, and its channel runs the IRGC spokesman calling the merchant sinkings «حمله», an attack, and a response to a third American breach. That is the admission that the English-language official paper's mine account does not survive contact with: one house, two incompatible causes, published hours apart. The Chabahar corridor banner is the counterweight the broadcaster keeps on the same sheet, a land-transit story offered precisely while the sea route is being closed.

Hamshahri

Tehran Municipality daily, centrist

HIGH: a commander's taunt to American warships carried as civic-press front-page voice

"The world's expensive drugs have become Iranian" «داروهای گران جهان ایرانی شدند»



- Main: «داروهای گران جهان ایرانی شدند» over a staged photograph of masked clinicians lifting a trophy wrapped in the national flag, with «ساخت ۴ داروی پیشرفته خارجی با دانش متخصصان ایرانی» and the claim that domestic nano-drug production for cancer and dangerous infections has prevented 400 million dollars of currency outflow.
- Sub-item: «یمن، سپر آمریکایی را سوراخ کرد», Yemen punctured the American shield, with «حملات پهپادی و موشکی یمن ناکارآمدی تسلیحات میلیارددلاری آمریکایی در دفاع از عربستان را آشکار کرد», Yemeni drone and missile attacks revealed the ineffectiveness of billion-dollar American weapons in defending Saudi Arabia.
- Sub-item: «هرمز باز است؟ نزدیک شوید», is Hormuz open? come closer, beside a photograph of the burning container ship, with «با وجود لفاظی‌های کاخ سفید، ایران قدرت‌نمایی می‌کند: کشتی متخلف با ۲۵۰۰ کانتینر در هرمز غرق شد», despite the White House's rhetoric Iran displays power: a violating ship with 2,500 containers sank in Hormuz.
- Right rail: «ایران پیشرو در نانوفناوری جهان», Iran a world leader in nanotechnology, running the length of the page beside the lead.
- Sub-item: «کاشت ۱۰ درخت به جای هر درخت قطع شده در چیتگر», ten trees planted for each one felled in Chitgar, the municipal item that closes the page.

ANALYST NOTE The municipal daily is the clearest measure of how far the chokepoint line has travelled from the security press into general circulation: it leads on pharmaceutical self-sufficiency, the standard centrist resilience story, and then runs the taunt «نزدیک شوید», come closer, as a news headline. That line is not Hamshahri's invention; it is the IRGC Navy commander's televised phrasing, which means the municipal paper is republishing a commander's challenge to American warships as its own front-page voice. The Yemen item does the same work in the other theatre, crediting Ansarullah with exposing American air defence, and the pairing is the civic-press version of the two-front theory Vatan-e Emrooz prints in doctrinal form.

Vatan-e Emrooz

Hardline principlist daily, Tehran

SEVERE: maritime enforcement framed as a bill rendered, with punishment of merchant vessels presented as routine

"The Hormuz Bill" «قبض هرمز»



- Main: The whole sheet above the fold is one photograph of the burning container ship under the two-word banner «قبض هرمز», the Hormuz bill, with «قبض» carrying the sense of an invoice presented for payment rather than a penalty imposed.
- Kicker: «افزایش بی‌سابقه مجازات شناورهایی که قصد عبور غیرقانونی از تنگه هرمز را داشتند / روایت ادعایی ترامپ مبنی بر تردد پرحجم از این آبراه را رسوا کرد», an unprecedented increase in the punishment (مجازات) of vessels that intended illegal passage through the Strait of Hormuz has exposed Trump's claimed narrative of heavy traffic through this waterway. The vocabulary is juridical rather than military: the ships are not attacked, they are punished.
- Right rail: «پاشنه آشیل سعودی», the Saudi Achilles heel, over a photograph of a Saudia airliner being hosed down, with the kicker «انصارالله چگونه توانست از ضعف توان دفاع موشکی عربستان برای وارد آوردن آسیب‌های شدید به آل سعود استفاده کند؟», how Ansarullah exploited the weakness of Saudi missile defence to inflict severe damage on the House of Saud (page 2).
- Right rail: «ترس آمریکایی‌ها از هرمز», the Americans' fear of Hormuz, sourced to the IRGC Navy commander on «سیطره اطلاعاتی و عملیاتی نیروهای مسلح ایران بر آبراه‌های جنوبی», the intelligence and operational dominance of Iran's armed forces over the southern waterways (page 3).
- Right rail: «اول اوکراین دوم اروپا!», first Ukraine, second Europe, marked «ویژه», on European gas stocks running below their five-year average while the Union seeks emergency reserve cover (page 3).
- Banner: Above the masthead, «آذربایجان علیه علی‌اف», Azerbaijan against Aliyev, and «درس‌های ارزی برای روزهای جنگی», currency lessons for wartime days.
- Sub-item: The channel carries «استرالیا برای اتباع خود در عربستان هشدار صادر کرد» at item 28632, Australia telling its nationals in Saudi Arabia to stay clear of oil facilities and New Zealand advising against travel, and «واکنش سفارت ایران در باکو به ادعاهای مطرح‌شده در گزارش یک خبرگزاری جمهوری آذربایجان» at item 28642, the Iranian embassy in Baku rejecting an Azerbaijani agency report tying school dress rules and unrest to Iran.
- Sub-item: Item 28635 reports federal agents seizing Representative Ilhan Omar's telephone in an immigration-records inquiry. The external record confirms a Homeland Security Investigations search of her Washington-area home on 12 October under a judicially authorised

warrant; no source available at compile time confirms a telephone seizure, and that detail is the paper's own.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Vatan-e Emrooz is the title that converts the chokepoint campaign from an act into an institution: «قبض» frames the sinking of a merchant ship as a bill rendered against a vessel that broke a rule, which is the same legal-administrative register the IRGC has used since the permit regime was asserted. The pairing with the Saudi Achilles-heel item is the day's clearest statement of the two-front economic theory, Hormuz against American shipping claims and Ansarullah against Saudi oil and aviation, and the italicised «ویژه» on the European gas item completes it by naming the third market. Track whether «قبض» recurs as the standing noun for maritime enforcement, which would mark a settled doctrinal vocabulary rather than a headline writer's flourish.

Javan

Hardline daily affiliated with the IRGC

SEVERE: zeroing of Hormuz oil traffic published as an objective, keyed to the American election calendar

“Containers: gone!” «کانتینر پَر!»



- Main: A full-page acid-green cartoon, the Statue of Liberty in a gas mask under a Trump cap with black smoke pouring from the torch, standing over the burning container ship, under the two-word banner «کانتینر پَر!», containers gone, in the colloquial register in which «پَر» means vanished.
- Sub-item: Under the cartoon, «۳ / تاکتیک‌های جدید برای «صفر نفتی هرمز» هفته به انتخابات امریکا», new tactics for the oil-zeroing of Hormuz, three weeks to the American elections (page 12). The phrase «صفر نفتی» names an objective, not a pressure: zero oil through the strait.
- Banner: Across the top, «وزیر جدید با سلاح جدید می‌آید», the new minister comes with a new weapon, with «مهرداد اخلاقی کتابچی، وزیر پیشنهادی دفاع از برنامه‌های تحولی خود به مجلس گزارش داد / تسلیحات جدید برای معادلات جدید، بازدارندگی ایران در مسیر تحول», the proposed defence minister reported his transformation programmes to parliament; new weapons for new equations, Iran's deterrence on a path of transformation (page 2).
- Op-ed: Below the fold, addressed in the vocative, «آقای خامنه‌ای! دفاع از فلسطین هم اسلامی و اخلاقی است، هم حقوقی», Mr Khamenei, defending Palestine is Islamic and ethical, and legal as well. The byline is below the resolution of the retrievable scan and the piece is not reproduced on the retrievable channels, so the author is recorded as unidentified rather than guessed.
- Right rail: A columnist's piece under a portrait, and a bottom strip carrying the Kashaneh housing feature and an economics item.

ANALYST NOTE Javan is the surface that states the objective in plain words. One cycle ago it argued a legal theory for taxing submarine cables; today it drops the legal register entirely and prints «صفر نفتی هرمز», zero oil through Hormuz, next to a countdown to the American vote, which converts what this monitor has tracked as a timing inference into a published aim. The defence-nominee banner on the same page matters for a different reason: it places Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi before parliament, where one cycle ago he was visible only in a production meeting with the Guard. The vocative «آقای خامنه‌ای» is the anomaly to watch, because the Guard's own daily does not normally address the Leader without honorifics, and until the byline is retrievable this monitor will not assert whom it addresses.

Statue of Liberty in a gas mask beneath a Trump cap, black smoke from the torch, standing over the burning container ship on an acid-green field

Sazandegi

Reformist daily of the Kargozaran-e Sazandegi party

LOW: domestic ideological repositioning, with a negotiation headline overstated against its own sub-line

“Khatami draws a line against liberalism” «مرزبندی خاتمی با لیبرالیسم»



- Main: «مرزبندی خاتمی با لیبرالیسم» over a near full-page portrait of Mohammad Khatami, hand to his face, with «سیدمحمد خاتمی در تازه‌ترین سخنان خود، با انتقاد از انحصار لیبرالیسم در الگوی توسعه، تجربه چین را نمونه‌ای از پیگیری منافع ملی در دل نظم جهانی دانست», Khatami, criticising the monopoly of liberalism in the development model, described China's experience as an example of pursuing national interests within the global order.
- Main: The standfirst turns the remarks into an internal question, «آیا گفتمان اصلاحات نیاز به بازنگری در الگوی توسعه دارد؟», does the reform discourse need to revise its development model, and says Sazandegi has taken the subject up. The external record supports the rendering: Khatami called the present world order unjust but a reality to be worked within, named China as the state that has done so, and rejected liberalism as a path of salvation.
- Banner: Teaser 3, «پایان مذاکرات بی‌نتیجه», the end of inconclusive negotiations, with «وزیر امور خارجه عمان از پایان مذاکرات با ایران خبر داد و گفت: همه‌چیز به مذاکرات تهران و واشنگتن گره خورده است». The underlying statement is narrower than the headline: Badr Albusaidi said the bilateral Oman-Iran track on the Strait of Hormuz has concluded and that implementing its understandings and resuming maritime traffic depend on the Iran-United States negotiations. The word «بی‌نتیجه», fruitless, is the paper's addition.
- Banner: Teaser 7, «زمین در برابر کالا», land in exchange for goods, on the return of a portion of Iranian soil to Afghanistan, and teaser 5, «نوازندگی بدون زنان؟», playing without women, on the suspension of several music groups' performances.
- Banner: Teaser 8, «اقتصاددان خیالی», the imaginary economist, a signed critique in the opinion section, and teaser 4, «یک دنیا علم و حلم», a commemoration of Reza Seyed-Hosseini.
- Op-ed: The right column runs «یادداشت روز» under a portrait byline the scan does not resolve.

ANALYST NOTE Sazandegi is where the day's most consequential domestic argument sits, and it is not about the sea. A former reformist president publicly detaching the reform project from liberalism and pointing at China is a repositioning of the camp that the hardline press has spent this week accusing of being America's domestic ambassadors, and Sazandegi frames it as an open question to its own readers rather than as doctrine. The Oman teaser is the cycle's clearest case of headline drift: the sub-line renders Albusaidi accurately and the headline above it adds a verdict the statement does not carry, which is the kind of error this monitor records against a reformist title as readily as against a hardline one. Track whether other reform titles take up the China-model question or leave Sazandegi exposed on it.

Ta'adol

Economic daily, 'driver of Iran's economy'

“Decoding the dollar's effect on the equity market” «رمزگشایی از اثر دلار بر بورس»

LOW: the campaign priced as a cost to Iranian cargo and Iranian gas


تعادل

رمزگشایی از اثر دلار بر بورس

بحران گاز سوغات گذشته

- Main: The page lead is «رمزگشایی از اثر دلار بر بورس», decoding the dollar's effect on the equity market, with «تعادل» در یادداشتی از بهنام علیخانی وضعیت بازار سرمایه را بررسی می‌کند», Ta'adol examining the state of the capital market in a note by Behnam Alikhani.
- Main: Top right, «گزارش «تعادل» از حبس طلای سیاه در قفس لجستیک / جزیره‌ای شدن نفت در روزگار جنون نفتکش‌ها», Ta'adol's report on black gold imprisoned in a logistics cage: the islanding of oil in the era of tanker madness. The subject is Iranian crude cut off from its buyers by the same maritime disorder the security press is celebrating.
- Main: Top left, «از وعده فروپاشی دو هفته‌ای تا حضور همتی در اجلاس صندوق بین‌المللی پول / چرا جنگ اقتصادی به بن‌بست راهبردی رسیده است؟», from the promise of a two-week collapse to Hemmati's attendance at the International Monetary Fund meeting: why has the economic war reached a strategic deadlock? Abdolnaser Hemmati has been Central Bank governor since December 2025; the Fund's annual meetings are running in Bangkok from 12 to 18 October.
- Op-ed: Centre page, «علی شمس اردکانی در گفت‌وگو با «تعادل» از بحران کمبود گاز در زمستان گفت: بحران گاز، سوغات گذشته», the energy veteran Ali Shams Ardakani telling Ta'adol that the gas crisis is a souvenir of the past, over a photograph of a frost-covered wellhead.
- Sub-item: The pull quote under it is the sharpest domestic line of the edition, «روزانه ۵۰ میلیون مترمکعب گاز را می‌سوزانیم و از ناترازی حرف می‌زنیم!», we burn fifty million cubic metres of gas a day and then talk about imbalance.
- Right rail: «خبری از جهش قیمت تا پایان سال نیست» and «ترخیص مشروط شماره‌گذاری متوقف», conditional clearance of halted vehicle registration, with a lower package on «حمایت دولت یا واقعیت تولید» and a signed column.

ANALYST NOTE The economic press is this monitor's standing counterweight and today it prices the campaign rather than arguing with it. «جزیره‌ای شدن نفت», the islanding of oil, concedes in one phrase what no front page above it will say: the chokepoint works on Iranian cargo as well, and the logistics cage holds Iranian crude. The Hemmati line does something else and is the more durable finding, because a title inside the system is using the governor's presence at the Fund's annual meetings as evidence that the adversary's two-week collapse prediction failed, which converts an ordinary technocratic trip into a scoreboard entry. Shams Ardakani's fifty million cubic metres is the domestic ledger the same page keeps: the shortage is charged to Iranian waste, not to the enemy.

Jomhouri-ye Eslami

Traditional clerical-conservative daily, managing editor Masih Mohajeri

“Six Royan Institute researchers on the list of the world's top two percent of scientists” «۶ محقق پژوهشگاه رویان در فهرست دو درصد دانشمندان برتر جهان»

MODERATE: the day's maritime claim carried without amplification and with the cause withheld


جمهوری اسلامی

۶ محقق پژوهشگاه رویان در فهرست دو درصد دانشمندان برتر جهان

۴ هزار پرستار در تأمین اجتماعی جذب می‌شوند

- Main: The lead is a science item, six Royan Institute researchers named to the global top two percent, set beside «۴ هزار پرستار در تأمین اجتماعی جذب می‌شوند», four thousand nurses to be recruited into Social Security, and a photograph of nursing staff captioned «پرستاران، فرشتگانی که در روزهای جنگ هم از بالین بیماران دور نشدند», nurses, angels who did not leave patients' bedsides even in days of war.
- Sub-item: «سپاه: کشتی کانتینربر متخلف با ۲۵۰۰ کانتینر در جنوب تنگه هرمز غرق شد», the IRGC saying a violating container ship with 2,500 containers sank south of the Strait of Hormuz. The sinking is attributed to the Guard as the reporting authority, in a construction that leaves the cause unstated.
- Sub-item: «در دیدار وزیر پیشنهادی دفاع با فرمانده کل سپاه مطرح شد: تأکید بر نقش راهبردی توانمندی‌های بومی در تأمین نیازهای دفاعی و پشتیبانی از رزمندگان», the proposed defence minister's meeting with the IRGC commander-in-chief and its emphasis on indigenous capability in meeting defence needs and supporting fighters. One cycle ago this item existed only on two agency wires; today it holds a front page.
- Right rail: «انتقاد روزنامه‌های ترکیه از ممنوعیت حجاب در آذربایجان», Turkish newspapers criticising the hijab ban in Azerbaijan (page 8). The authorship assigned to the Azerbaijani measure has moved from Israel, where four Iranian surfaces placed it one cycle ago, to the Turkish press as citing party.
- Right rail: «خود اسرائیلی‌ها هم رژیم صهیونیستی را اشغالگر و جنایتکار می‌دانند», even the Israelis themselves consider the Zionist regime an occupier and a criminal, and «پزشک ایرانی جایزه سازمان بهداشت جهانی در حوزه سرطان را دریافت کرد» (page 3).
- Banner: Above the masthead, «تکمیل تعمیرات اساسی پالایشگاه پدیده برای پایداری تولید گاز در فصل سرد» and «انتقال آب دریا به فلات مرکزی پرهزینه است، صنایع در ساحل مستقر شوند», seawater transfer to the central plateau is costly, industries should be sited on the coast.

ANALYST NOTE Jomhouri-ye Eslami is the control case for how much of the edition is editorial choice rather than directed convergence: it had the same IRGC statement available and put it below a research-prize story and a nursing-recruitment story, which is a clerical-conservative paper declining to lead on a sunk merchant vessel. Its construction of the sinking matters more than its placement, because «سپاه: ... غرق شد», the Guard says it sank, attributes the reporting and withholds the cause, which is a third distinct formulation inside one morning. The Azerbaijan item is the quiet correction of the cycle: the Israeli authorship claim this monitor flagged against the external record one cycle ago has been replaced here by a Turkish-press citation, without retraction.

Etemad Reformist daily

LOW-MODERATE: direct reformist pushback against the loyalty campaign, confined to the channel

“You sow division, you slander, you act against the Leader's view, and you call it revolutionism” «تفرقه‌افکنی می‌کنید، تهمت می‌زنید، خلاف نظر رهبری عمل می‌کنید و اسمش را انقلابی‌گری می‌گذارید»

- Main: Item 539250 carries the rebuke in full, that criticism of officials is necessary but must not become character assassination, and that those who divide and slander are acting against the leadership's counsel on national unity while calling it revolutionary conduct. It is published on the morning Kayhan names three former office-holders as America's ambassadors.
- Sub-item: Item 539251, Rakei of the Muslim Women's Renaissance Society saying that the whole effort of Pezeshkian and his team is that no war should occur and that negotiations should reach an honourable outcome, with a call for a direct channel between the president and the public.
- Sub-item: Item 539247, «وال‌استریت ژورنال: عربستان ده‌ها هواپیما را از فرودگاه ریاض خارج کرده است», a rendering of a Wall Street Journal report with flight-tracking data putting aircraft at Riyadh airport down from 134 to 38 by Wednesday noon. The underlying report could not be retrieved at compile time; the surrounding disruption is independently supported, with Lufthansa suspending Riyadh service to 16 October and Cathay Pacific extending its suspension into 2027.
- Sub-item: Item 539248, the Australian and New Zealand advisories after Houthi warnings and attacks, carried identically across six surfaces this cycle.
- Sub-item: Item 539255, «ایکس مدعی اقدام علیه حساب‌های کاربری منتسب به ایران شد», the platform saying it suspended accounts attributed to Iran, Russia and China ahead of the American midterms.
- Sub-item: Item 539252, a dispute over Mohammad-Reza Bahonar's claim that a former television presenter had left the country, with the presenter denying it by telephone to Tasnim, and item 539253 on ministries refusing remote working for mothers.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Etemad is the only surface in the retrievable record that answers the editorial campaign directly, and it answers it on the hardliners' own ground by invoking the leadership's counsel on unity against them rather than defending the accused. That is a tactically precise move and it is also a limited one: it names nobody, it ran on a channel rather than on a retrievable front page, and it sits beside a Wall Street Journal rendering the paper could not have verified itself. The Rakei item is the cycle's clearest statement of the government's own position, that the object is to prevent a war, published on the morning the Guard's daily prints an oil-zeroing objective; the two cannot both describe state policy.

Iran

Official daily of the government

LOW: a negotiated chokepoint architecture published alongside the coercion line

“We must turn the conditions of the economic war into an opportunity to solve the country's accumulated problems”
«باید شرایط جنگ اقتصادی را به فرصتی برای حل مشکلات کشور و چالش‌های انباشته تبدیل کنیم»

- Main: Item 509879 leads on the president's cabinet remarks on unity under economic war, and item 509892 carries «آنچه نباید رخ دهد، نارضایتی اقشار کم‌درآمد است», what must not happen is discontent among low-income groups, which places the government's stated red line at household welfare rather than at the strait.
- Sub-item: Item 509886, «ایران و عمان در پی سازوکار منطقه‌ای برای مدیریت تنگه هرمز», Iran and Oman seeking a regional mechanism for managing the Strait of Hormuz without outside powers, with the analyst Hadi Afghahi arguing that post-war arrangements must respect littoral states' rights.
- Sub-item: Item 509891, «آینده تنگه هرمز پس از جنگ چه خواهد شد؟», with Afghahi saying Iran has put seven axes for diplomacy to Washington through a Qatari mediator and that its demands include the release of frozen Iranian assets and a declared end to the war. The external record supports an active Hormuz track: Oman's foreign minister said on 14 October that the bilateral Oman-Iran talks on the strait had concluded and that implementation depends on the Iran-United States negotiations, and Reuters reported on 12 October that Iran was reviewing the American response to a Tehran proposal on reopening it.
- Sub-item: Item 509892 also carries the video headline «کشتی کانتینربر متخلف در تنگه هرمز غرق شد», the government daily's own rendering of the sinking, which like Jomhouri-ye Eslami's states the outcome and withholds the cause.
- Sub-item: Item 509883, Ghalibaf as speaker mocking the deadlines set by the American Treasury Secretary and saying the predicted economic collapse did not occur.
- Sub-item: Item 509887, a rendering of Senator Chris Murphy warning of a wider war with Iran and a possible full war between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, citing twenty American deaths and a hundred billion dollars in cost. No contemporaneous source for these remarks could be retrieved at compile time and the figures are therefore the paper's, not the senator's, on this record.

> **ANALYST NOTE** The government daily is where the second Iranian policy lives, and this cycle it is unusually explicit: two separate items set out a negotiated Hormuz architecture, a regional mechanism with Oman and a seven-point package to Washington through Qatar, including a demand that the war be formally declared over. That is irreconcilable with «صفر نفتی هرمز» on the Guard's front page, and the contradiction is not rhetorical, because one track needs the strait usable and the other needs it closed. The Murphy rendering is the kind of item that earns a flag rather than a quotation: the senator's long record on Yemen makes the thrust plausible, but the casualty and cost figures reach this monitor only through an Iranian government paper.

Kayhan

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

SEVERE: closure declared achieved by price, and named domestic figures framed as agents of a foreign state

"Oil at 150 dollars means the Strait of Hormuz is closed" «نفت ۱۵۰ دلاری یعنی تنگه هرمز بسته است»

- Main: The front-page digest at item 86812 leads with «خبردرمانی‌های ترامپ جواب نمی‌دهد», Trump's news-cure remedies are not working, and «نفت ۱۵۰ دلاری یعنی تنگه هرمز بسته است», oil at 150 dollars means the Strait of Hormuz is closed, carried in full at item 86826. The price is offered as proof of closure, which inverts the usual direction of the argument: the market, not the Iranian navy, certifies the result.
- Main: «کشتی متخلف با ۲۵۰۰ کانتینر در جنوب تنگه هرمز غرق شد» runs in the same digest, and item 86810 widens it to «قعر دریا، سرنوشت کشتی‌های متخلف در هرمز», the sea bed as the fate of violating ships in Hormuz, reporting two vessels struck and sunk near the strait, both said to be carrying cargo for the United Arab Emirates.
- Op-ed: The «یادداشت روز» at items 86814 and 86824 is «آمریکا در ایران سفارتخانه ندارد ولی ده‌ها سفیر دارد!», America has no embassy in Iran but it has dozens of ambassadors, signed Hossein Shariatmadari. It names Mohammad Javad Zarif over a defence of the Turkmenchay treaty, Hossein Marashi over a call for tactical retreat, and Hassan Rouhani over a wartime referendum proposal, and closes by citing the assassinated Leader's warning that judicial and security bodies should act against those who cooperate with the enemy.
- Sub-item: «افسر سابق اطلاعاتی آمریکا: سرنوشت شاه ایران در انتظار آل‌سعود است», a former American intelligence officer saying the Shah's fate awaits the House of Saud, and «مرشایمر: عملیات حماس در ۷ اکتبر اقدامی قانونی بود», Mearsheimer saying the 7 October operation was a legal act. Both are second-hand renderings of foreign speakers and are not verified here; quoting a rendering does not authenticate it.
- Sub-item: «پلوسی: جنگ ترامپ علیه ایران، هزینه‌های زندگی در آمریکا را افزایش داده است» at item 86811, a rendering of Nancy Pelosi on the war's effect on American living costs, carried as domestic-cost evidence against the adversary.
- Sub-item: «استرالیا برای اتباع خود در عربستان هشدار صادر کرد» at item 86827 and a Yemeni armed forces claim at item 86828 that a Saudi Typhoon was downed over Saada province. The Typhoon claim is a belligerent's claim and is unconfirmed; Nour News itself marked it as requiring independent confirmation.
- Sub-item: «افزایش رقم کالابرگ» under the sub-headline «اجرای بدِ یک طرح خوب», the bad execution of a good scheme, the one domestic item on which the paper criticises the government.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Kayhan supplies the edition's two most useful instruments. The first is «نفت ۱۵۰ دلاری یعنی تنگه هرمز بسته است», which abandons the claim that the strait is open to compliant traffic and substitutes a price test, meaning the paper closest to the Leader's office has moved from justifying enforcement to declaring the objective achieved. The second is the editorial, which escalates the campaign against the negotiating camp from the sitting foreign ministry to three named former office-holders and ends on a quotation from the assassinated Leader recommending judicial action, a construction that converts a political argument into a prosecutorial invitation. Note also what it does not do: it reports two sunk ships, where the external record for this cycle supports one sinking and one damaged hull, and it does not adopt the mine account at all.

Sobh-e No Principlist daily

HIGH: escalation acknowledged in plain terms, with the cable-leverage claim redirected onto Gulf neighbours

“The strait has been triple-locked” «تنگه سه قفله شد»

- Main: Item 116741, «تنگه سه قفله شد», the strait has been triple-locked, reporting that Iran's Hormuz strategy has entered a more aggressive phase and that attacks on rule-breaking vessels have reached a weekly high. The paper uses «حملات», attacks, without the legal softening the other hardline titles apply.
- Sub-item: Item 116744, «وابستگی ۹۵ درصدی بحرین و قطر به کابل‌های اینترنت تنگه هرمز», a 95 percent dependence of Bahrain and Qatar on the internet cables running through the Strait of Hormuz. One cycle ago the submarine-cable argument was aimed at American technology firms; here the stated dependants are two Gulf Arab neighbours.
- Sub-item: Item 116750, «قالیباف: به وزیر خزانه‌داری آمریکا نوبل فیزیک بدهید!», Ghalibaf saying the American Treasury Secretary should be given the Nobel Prize in physics, mocking Scott Bessent's collapse deadlines, and item 116751, «قالیباف: هم می‌جنگیم و هم مذاکره می‌کنیم», we will both fight and negotiate.
- Sub-item: Item 116746, Iran's foreign minister and Lebanon's president discussing Israeli attacks on Lebanon and the occupation of southern areas. Lebanon returns to the retrievable record after this monitor filed its absence as a finding one cycle ago.
- Sub-item: Item 116749, «سخنگوی ارتش: آمریکا دچار تنهایی استراتژیک شده است», the Army spokesman saying America has fallen into strategic loneliness, and item 116745, a Yemeni military figure addressing Aramco shareholders, carried as an argument to sell.
- Sub-item: Item 116742, critics inside Azerbaijan accusing Ilham Aliyev of acting for Israel over school hijab rules, and item 116756, the Iranian embassy in Baku rejecting a report linking the rules to Iran. The two run on the same channel within one cycle.
- Sub-item: Item 116748, a reported vehicle-ramming in the Ariel settlement in the West Bank, and item 116747, protesters confronting the American Defense Secretary at a speech.

> **ANALYST NOTE** Sobh-e No is the title that says the quiet part in both directions. «تنگه سه قفله شد» drops the enforcement vocabulary and calls the campaign what the external record shows it to be, an escalating series of attacks at a weekly high, and the cable item moves the digital-leverage theory off Silicon Valley and onto Bahrain and Qatar, which converts a claim against a distant adversary into pressure on two states whose cooperation Tehran needs for any sanctions-era financial channel. Ghalibaf's «هم می‌جنگیم و هم مذاکره می‌کنیم» is the formulation to carry forward, because it is a sitting speaker of parliament authorising both tracks at once on the morning the Omani track was declared concluded.

Appendix A - The Leader's message: absence recorded, with the evidence trail

Nine Persian and one English front page of 23 Mehr 1405; the kayhan_online, vatanemrooz, jamejamdaily, etemadonline, IranNewspaper and sobhe_no channels; the defapress_ir, farsna and Nournews_ir wires; the Leader's official sites were unavailable at the time of compilation

This appendix exists where a full translation of the Leader's lead message would normally sit. There is no such message in this cycle's retrievable record. Mojtaba Khamenei appears on none of the nine Persian front pages, on none of the four text-sourced newspaper channels, and on none of the three agency wires read for this edition. This is the tenth consecutive cycle in which the incumbent Leader is absent from the front-page record, and this monitor files the absence as a finding rather than passing over it in silence.

The external record places his last reported remarks on 8 October, addressed to the domestic security forces and carried by state outlets, with a follow-on amplification around 10 October praising the State Security Forces as a pillar of national security and calling for their reinforcement in personnel, hardware and software. No video or audio of him has been independently confirmed in that reporting. His first statement, in March 2026, was read aloud by a state television anchor over a still photograph; no public appearance has been confirmed since. Reporting at the time of that first statement described his health and whereabouts as unclear.

Two Leader-adjacent texts do occur in this cycle, and both are instructive about the shape of the absence. The first is in Kayhan's editorial, which closes by invoking the assassinated predecessor's warning that judicial and security bodies should act against those who cooperate with the enemy. The Leader-level authority cited in the hardline press this morning is therefore the dead one, not the living one. The second is on Javan's front page, where a piece addresses «آقای خامنه‌ای!», Mr Khamenei, in the vocative and without honorific, to argue that the defence of Palestine is legal as well as Islamic and ethical. The byline is below the resolution of the retrievable scan and the piece is not carried on the channels read for this edition, so this monitor does not assert whom it addresses or who wrote it.

The tracking cue is unchanged and testable: a dated text, a photograph, or a broadcast appearance attributable to the incumbent and carried on a front page, as distinct from a statement read on his behalf or an item attributed to his office. Until one appears, the succession evidence in this product rests on reporting and on the absence of contradiction, and it is flagged as such in the sourcing note.

Appendix B - Kayhan, «یادداشت روز»: «آمریکا در ایران سفارتخانه ندارد ولی ده‌ها سفیر دارد!»

Kayhan, «یادداشت روز», 23 Mehr 1405; kayhan_online items 86814 and 86824, front-page digest at 86812; author as printed: حسین شریعتمداری (Hossein Shariatmadari), the paper's managing editor

Retrieval note, stated before the content: the channel publishes this editorial in two parts and the retrieval path available for this edition returns those posts under a short-quotation limit. The full Persian text could not be reproduced. What follows records the author's own argument in his order. Nothing below is presented as a quotation that was not retrieved as one, and the title is given as printed. The author is verified as Hossein Shariatmadari from the signature carried on both parts.

The title states the thesis: America has no embassy in Iran, but it has dozens of ambassadors. The argument is that the function of the embassy closed in 1979 is now performed from inside the country, by Iranians whose public positions, in the author's characterisation, advance American objectives. The piece does not argue that these figures are agents in any evidentiary sense; it argues that the effect of their positions is indistinguishable from the work an embassy would do.

Three men are named. Mohammad Javad Zarif is cited over a defence of the Turkmenchay treaty. Hossein Marashi is cited over a call for tactical retreat. Hassan Rouhani is cited over a proposal for a referendum during the war, which the author characterises as serving American and Israeli goals. These are the author's renderings of their positions. The positions themselves were not independently retrieved in this cycle and are not reproduced here as those men's words; a reader should treat the attributions as contested until the underlying statements are read in full.

Between the naming and the conclusion the author inserts the war's own record: that the United States expected to finish the Islamic Republic within two weeks and met resistance instead. This is the same two-week prediction that Ta'adol turns against the adversary on its own front page this morning and that Ghalibaf mocks on two channels. The prediction has become a shared possession of the Iranian press across factional lines, used by each to prove a different point.

The close is the part that matters for threat assessment. Having named three former office-holders, the author invokes a warning attributed to the assassinated Leader that judicial and security bodies should act against those who cooperate with the enemy. That moves the piece out of polemic: it is an editorial in the newspaper closest to the Leader's office, naming living former ministers and a former president, and ending on a citation recommending prosecution. The loaded register is retained in the author's own terms, with «سفیر», ambassador, doing the work of an accusation that the piece never has to make in law.

Analyst flag: this is hostile domestic content documented for defensive assessment. Nothing in it is endorsed or treated as established. The escalation to track is not the rhetoric but the venue: whether any judicial or security body acts on the invitation, and whether the named figures respond in print. Etemad's rebuke on the same morning, that those who divide and slander are acting against the leadership's own counsel on unity, is the only answer retrievable in this cycle and it names nobody.

Appendix C - Methodology and sourcing notes

Compiled 15 October 2026 from the day's kiosk batches and outlet channels

Scan coverage. Nine front-page scans were gathered for 23 Mehr 1405, eight Persian from the NewspaperTasnim kiosk album posted at 00:25 UTC and one English from the Newspapers_Iran album posted at 04:31 UTC. The stale-batch guard compared the album's own printed Jalali date to the target date and matched on the first attempt; no fallback sources were needed and no edition was published from a stale batch. The eight Persian pages were identified from their mastheads: Shargh, Jam-e Jam, Hamshahri, Vatan-e Emrooz, Javan, Sazandegi, Ta'adol and Jomhouri-ye Eslami. The English page is Iran Daily.

Text coverage. Four further newspapers were read from their own channels rather than from a kiosk scan, because no scan of them appeared in the day's batch: Kayhan, Sobh-e No, Etemad and Iran. Three agency wires, Defa Press, Fars News and Nour News, were read for corroboration only; their material is folded into the trends and judgments and is labelled as claims, and none of it is presented as a front page. Tehran Times and the Leader's official sites were both unavailable at the time of compilation and nothing from them is reported here.

Resolution limits, stated plainly. The kiosk scans are approximately 800 pixels tall. Banner headlines, standfirsts and pull quotes are legible under magnification and are quoted in the original script. Body text, small bylines and some column signatures are not. Where a byline or a single word could not be resolved, this edition says so in place: the author of Javan's vocative Palestine piece, the author of Shargh's editorial, and one noun in Shargh's Trump strap are recorded as unresolved rather than guessed.

Named-figure verification. Rear Admiral Ali Azmaei was confirmed as the IRGC Navy commander quoted on Jam-e Jam's front page, in post since July 2026 in succession to Alireza Tangsiri, killed 26 March 2026, with his televised interview aired on the night of 13 October. Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi was confirmed as the defence nominee named on Javan's banner. Abdolnaser Hemmati was confirmed as Central Bank governor, in post since December 2025, and the Fund's annual meetings were confirmed as running in Bangkok from 12 to 18 October. Mohammad Khatami's remarks were confirmed against the external Persian record. Badr Albusaidi's statement was confirmed and found narrower than the headline Sazandegi placed over it.

The central incident and its three Iranian accounts. The external record identifies the vessel as the GFS Pride, a Singapore-registered container ship that sank in the Strait of Hormuz on 14 October after being struck by an unidentified projectile and catching fire, with all twenty-one crew evacuated and no injuries reported by Singapore's maritime authority. A maritime security firm said there is no independent evidence that a mine caused the sinking. Within the Iranian record this monitor read three incompatible accounts in one morning: Iran Daily's English front page states a mine struck on an unauthorised route; the IRGC spokesman, on the state broadcaster's channel, calls it «حمله», an attack, and a response to a third American breach; Jomhouri-ye Eslami and the government daily report that the ship sank and withhold the cause. All three are recorded as claims and none is adopted.

Counting discrepancies, left open. Kayhan reports two ships struck and sunk near the strait. Karbaschi, on Nour News, says three ships were struck. The external record for this cycle supports one sinking, the GFS Pride, plus hull damage to a second Singapore-registered container ship, the GFS Giselle, with a third vessel hit on 23 September reported to be sinking after a failed salvage, and more

than twenty vessels attacked this month across Hormuz, the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. The discrepancy between the Iranian counts and the external record is not resolved here and is recorded as an open item.

Single-source and unverified items, listed. Vatan-e Emrooz's claim that federal agents seized Representative Ilhan Omar's telephone goes beyond the confirmed record, which establishes a Homeland Security Investigations search of her Washington-area home on 12 October under a judicially authorised warrant. The Wall Street Journal aircraft figures relayed by Etemad and Fars News, 134 down to 38 at Riyadh airport, could not be retrieved at compile time, although the surrounding aviation disruption is independently supported. The Chris Murphy remarks and figures relayed by the government daily could not be matched to any contemporaneous source. The Yemeni claim to have downed a Saudi Typhoon over Saada is a belligerent's claim, and Nour News itself marked it as requiring independent confirmation. Kayhan's renderings of Pelosi, Mearsheimer and an unnamed former American intelligence officer, and Shargh's third-hand relay of a CNN report on munitions planning, are renderings and are not authenticated by their republication.

The succession evidence. The identification of the incumbent Leader as Mojtaba Khamenei rests on reporting from March 2026 and on the absence of contradiction in the Iranian press, not on a primary text read in this cycle. He is absent from the front-page record for the tenth consecutive cycle. Where a page prints «آقای خامنه‌ای» or «رهبر» this monitor reads the printed name and does not infer; where the reference is to «شهید سیدعلی» or to the assassinated Leader, it is recorded as the predecessor.

Handling. This product documents and analyses hostile foreign-press rhetoric for defensive assessment only. Nothing in it endorses, amplifies or operationalises that rhetoric. Unverified attributed quotations are not to be reproduced as authentic without primary-source confirmation. Translations are editorial; original script is retained beside English wherever the phrasing carries the framing.

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.