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SEVEN SHIPS AND A SEVERED CABLE EDITION

Ten Iranian front pages of 30 Mehr 1405, read in full, together with six newspaper channels and three agency wires. The English-language kiosk batch available to this edition was two days old, and Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation.

Front pages published the morning of 22 October 2026, reflecting events through late 21 October local.

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



Front page: Javan

Executive Summary

The lead judgment of this edition is that the succession's documentary record closed a gap today, and that what the record contains is an instruction about crowds rather than about war. Seven of the ten Persian front pages in the batch carry the Speaker of parliament's meeting with the Leader. The Iran newspaper and Jam-e Jam print a photograph of a sayyid cleric in a black turban above it; the Iran and Javan pages print the office holder's name in the body text as «آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای», and the Sobh-e No channel gives the same name independently. For six consecutive cycles this monitor filed the office holder's appearance as text only, with no dated public event and no confirmed photograph anywhere in the monitored set. That absence has now been answered. The content of the answer is the second finding: the readout's operative emphasis is «استمرار حضور آگاهانه و بازدارنده ملت مبعوث در اجتماعات میدانی», the continued conscious and deterrent presence of the commissioned nation at field gatherings. Kayhan illustrates it the same morning with a 50,000-strong Jan-Feda exercise in Arak. The first photographed act of the new office is a call for turnout.

The cycle's hardest operational material is a single attributed statement that reached five Iranian surfaces inside roughly ninety minutes. The IRGC Navy's public relations office says four «متخلف», non-compliant, tankers were struck and set on fire during ship-to-ship oil transfers in the north-central Persian Gulf, that three further vessels struck mines west of the Strait of Hormuz overnight, and that «این یک اخطار جدی است», this is a serious warning, with American bases in the region named as the next step if the conduct continues. Defa Press adds the line that matters most for reading Tehran's position: the Navy «تنگه هرمز را مدیریت و کنترل می‌کنند», manages and controls the Strait of Hormuz. On 21 October this monitor recorded three incompatible Iranian descriptions of the waterway, closed, not fully open, and not completely closed. Managed and controlled is a fourth formula and the only one consistent with the rest of the evidence: a toll rather than a wall. It is also the first time in this monitor's record that interference with shipping has been claimed by a named military authority rather than listed in an unowned line, as it was on the Iran newspaper's own page on 21 October.

The submarine-cable file moved three steps in one cycle and now spans the factional spectrum. Javan, the Guard's daily, leads on «قطعی کابل‌ها قطعی شد», a pun in which the cutting of the cables is also the settling of the question, over a full-width illustration of a severed fibre-optic cable glowing red at the break. Farhikhtegan, principlist, publishes the argument rather than the threat: «چرا تهدید به حمله به کابل‌های اینترنت در دریا جدی و مؤثر است؟ / حمله به کارفرمایان جنگ», why the threat to attack undersea internet cables is serious and effective, framed as striking the war's paymasters. Shargh, reformist, reaches the same subject under the heading «تنگه هرمز؛ بازدارندگی دیجیتال», the Strait of Hormuz as digital deterrence. On 20 October this was a spokesman's warning, on 21 October a signed column naming seven cables, and today it is a lead image, a published rationale and a reformist analytical frame. Nothing in the monitored set establishes that any cable has been cut, and the Javan headline is a pun rather than a claim of an accomplished act. What has changed is that the target class has been argued for in public, which is the step that normally precedes rather than follows an operation.

The negotiation is being closed from both ends, and this reverses the pattern this monitor recorded on 21 October. Yesterday the refusal was printed and the acceptance travelled only on a channel. Today Javan prints «عراقچی: امریکا تمایلی به تفاهم ندارد», America has no inclination toward an understanding, while the same foreign minister is quoted on four separate channels saying Iran will give diplomacy another chance if Washington shows sincere intent and warning Trump of «توافق شرافتمندانه یا شکست راهبردی», an honourable agreement or a strategic defeat. Hassan Qashqavi, on the Sobh-e No channel,

goes further than any front page: «از مرحله مذاکره عبور کرده‌ایم / توپ در زمین آمریکاست», we have passed the stage of negotiation, the ball is in America's court, and neither Lavrov nor Munir, he says, brought a concrete proposal. From the other side, Trump is relayed on three Iranian channels saying «ما با ایرانی‌ها مذاکره نمی‌کنیم», we are not negotiating with the Iranians, that something will happen soon, and that the war was the biggest thing America has done. Asr-e Iranian's signed front-page editorial completes the picture by indicting the negotiating premise itself rather than any set of terms.

A second front has opened that is not maritime at all. Shargh leads the whole batch's one genuinely new story: «تحریم مرزی», a border embargo, strapped «شرق از فشار آمریکا بر همسایگان برای بستن مرزهایشان به روی تجارت ایران گزارش می‌دهد», American pressure on the neighbours to close their borders to Iranian trade. Three other surfaces touch the same file from different directions in the same cycle. Jam-e Jam attacks Iraq's prime minister by name, «بازی الزیدی در زمین آمریکا», al-Zaidi's game on America's pitch, strapped from the suspension of flights to the closure of crossings; the same paper's channel carries Baghdad's own statement that the Al-Shib crossing was halted for technical upgrades and that Iraq will not let its soil be used to threaten neighbours; and Kayhan prints a governor's reassurance that traffic at the Mehran crossing is flowing. The Iran Daily issue of 20 October had already published the answer, an op-ed arguing that Iran's northern corridors through the Caspian and Central Asia are the opportunity. A reformist paper naming the squeeze, a state paper blaming a neighbouring head of government, and a hardline paper denying the effect, all in one morning, is the clearest available evidence that the land-transit file is live.

Two items sit outside the day's running threads and are the ones most worth watching. Kayhan's right rail carries, without a banner, its own managing director saying at a Quranic-politics session that «دکترین تولید سلاح هسته‌ای با تغییر زمانه ممکن است تغییر کند», the doctrine on producing a nuclear weapon may change as the times change. On the same cycle the Vatan-e Emrooz channel relays Netanyahu accusing Iran of seeking a bomb and claiming that the Leader has decided to lift the prohibition on building one. A right-rail box in a newspaper is not a policy announcement and an adversary's assertion relayed by an Iranian channel is not evidence of a decision, but the two appearing together in one cycle is the first time in this monitor's record that the doctrinal question has been live on both sides at once. Separately, the Jam-e Jam channel reports that several explosions were heard at Kerpan Sirik in Hormozgan with the source and cause unknown, and no front page in the batch mentions it.

Net assessment: this is a demonstration edition rather than a negotiation edition. Every significant item in it, the named naval claim against seven vessels, the severed cable on the Guard's front page, the published justification for cable interdiction, the mass exercise in Arak, the attack on a neighbouring prime minister, is an exhibition of leverage addressed to an audience rather than an exchange of terms with a counterparty. The negotiating track is being argued against by its own press on the morning its foreign minister is printed saying the other side is not interested. Lebanon reaches no front page for a fourth consecutive cycle although three wires carry Israeli strikes on it, and the numbered drone-attrition series is absent for a second. The edition's one genuinely new fact, the photographed meeting, points the same way: the instruction it carries is for the population to assemble, which is what a leadership does when it expects to have to absorb pressure rather than to settle it.

BOTTOM LINE On the morning the Leader of the Revolution appeared in a photographed, dated meeting for the first time in this monitor's record, the Guard's newspaper put a severed undersea cable on its front page and the IRGC Navy claimed seven vessels struck or mined around the Strait of Hormuz, which means Tehran spent the cycle demonstrating leverage rather than trading it.

CRITICAL SOURCING NOTE Ten Persian front pages were read from the NewspaperTasnim kiosk album of 30 Mehr 1405 (t.me/NewspaperTasnim/45348); the stale-batch guard matched the album's printed Jalali date to the target date on the first attempt. All ten mastheads carry the date 30 Mehr 1405 / 11 Jumada al-Awwal 1448 / 22 October 2026. Six newspaper channels (Kayhan, Vatan-e Emrooz, Jam-e Jam, Etemad, Iran, Sobh-e No) and three agency wires (Defa Press, Fars News, Nour News) were read through the public web preview; agency material is used for corroboration and threat context, labelled as claims, and is not treated as front-page content. The English-language kiosk batch available to this edition carried the Iran Daily of Tuesday 20 October, two days old, and is read for continuity only; Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation, and no Iranian English-language front page of the day reached this monitor. The IRGC Navy's seven-vessel claim is corroborated across five Iranian surfaces, which establishes central issuance and not truth: no flag, name, tonnage, date or operator is given for any vessel and no independent maritime source was available. The Financial Times, New York Times, Goldman Sachs, Reuters and Ipsos items all reach this monitor only as Iranian renderings and none is verified against its original; Kayhan's own front page and channel give the oil-freight multiple as sevenfold and thirtyfold respectively, which is noted as an internal inconsistency. Quotations attributed to Netanyahu and Trump are Iranian renderings of foreign-language statements and are evidence of Iranian editorial choice, not of what was said. The office holder's name was read from the printed body text on two front pages and independently from one channel; the photographs are identified from the printed name, not from the face. Ali al-Zaidi was verified by web search as Iraq's prime minister since 14 May 2026. The Shargh editorial byline was not legible at the available scan resolution and is therefore not named. Kayhan's own front page labels this the two hundred and thirty-sixth day of the war against this product's calendar count of Day 233; the discrepancy is recorded as an outlet datum, not a correction.

Macro Trend Analysis

1 The succession's first photographed act is an order for turnout

Seven of ten front pages carry the Speaker's meeting with the Leader; the Iran newspaper and Jam-e Jam run a photograph above it, and the Iran and Javan bodies print «آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای» in full. The readout's operative line is «استمرار حضور آگاهانه و بازدارنده ملت مبعوث در اجتماعات میدانی», the continued conscious and deterrent presence of the commissioned nation at field gatherings, with the loaded term مبعوث borrowing the vocabulary of prophetic commissioning. Each paper frames the enemy's war to its own taste: Vatan-e Emrooz as «نظامی، اقتصادی و شناختی», military, economic and cognitive; Farhikhtegan as «نبرد ترکیبی», the combined battle; Hamshahri as livelihood and cohesion. The convergence on a single readout with factionally tuned framings is central supply with local decoration, and the thing supplied is mobilisation rather than escalation.

2 Interference with shipping is now owned, named and multiplied

On 21 October the only maritime claim in the batch was one unowned line on the government daily's page about two non-compliant vessels set on fire. Today the IRGC Navy's public relations office states that four tankers were struck and burned during ship-to-ship oil transfers in the north-central Gulf and that three more struck mines west of the Strait, on five Iranian surfaces within about ninety minutes, with the Kayhan channel adding that the four were American or carrying American cargo and the statement itself warning that US bases could follow. Defa Press carries the formula that organises the rest: the Navy «تنگه هرمز را مدیریت و کنترل می‌کنند», manages and controls the Strait. That is the answer to the three incompatible descriptions recorded on 21 October, and it describes a toll, not a closure.

3 Submarine cables crossed from threat to argument

Javan leads with «قطعی کابل‌ها قطعی شد» over an illustration of a cut fibre-optic cable; Farhikhtegan publishes the rationale, that striking the cables strikes «کارفرمایان جنگ», the war's paymasters; Shargh houses the same subject inside «بازدارندگی دیجیتال», digital deterrence. Three mastheads from three factions reach the data layer under the waterway in one morning, two cycles after it was a single spokesman's warning. The profile that made the cables attractive has not changed, deniable, cheap and catastrophic for the Gulf economies, but a target class that is being publicly justified is further along than one that is being threatened.

4 The negotiating track is being closed from inside the Iranian press

Javan prints the foreign minister saying America has no inclination toward an understanding; four channels carry the same minister offering diplomacy another chance; Qashqavi says on the Sobh-e No channel that «از مرحله مذاکره عبور کرده‌ایم», we have passed the stage of negotiation, and that neither Lavrov nor Munir brought a concrete proposal, which is the first indication in this monitor's record of a Russian mediation attempt alongside the Pakistani one. Asr-e Iranian's signed front-page editorial attacks the premise rather than the terms, reconstructing the foreign minister's appointment as the consequence of a mistaken belief in de-escalation. The 21 October asymmetry, refusal in print and acceptance on the channel, has flattened: today both surfaces carry refusal and only the minister's own words cut the other way.

5 The land borders are the cycle's new front

Shargh reports American pressure on Iran's neighbours to close their borders to Iranian trade. Jam-e Jam names Iraq's prime minister and straps the piece from suspended flights to closed crossings; the Jam-e Jam channel carries Baghdad saying the Al-Shib crossing is halted for technical upgrades and that Iraq will not let its soil be used to threaten neighbours; Kayhan prints a governor saying traffic at Mehran is flowing. Two days earlier the English-language Iran Daily had already published the counter-argument, that the northern corridors through the Caspian and Central Asia are the opportunity. A squeeze that the reformist press reports, the state press blames on a neighbour, the hardline press denies, and the English press pre-answers for foreigners is a squeeze that is being felt.

6 The Gulf aviation collapse is now documented by its own victims

On 21 October the evidence was an aviation analytics firm quoted by Kayhan. Today it is official: the Saudi Civil Aviation Authority reports an attack on King Fahd International at Dammam killing one and injuring eight; the Saudi Energy Ministry reports an intercepted drone over the Shaybah field with two non-citizen residents killed; Saudi air defences engaged drones over the Eastern Province; the US Embassy in Riyadh issued a security alert over threats to Saudi infrastructure and airports; and the State Department is relayed saying the regional departure warning applies to Saudi Arabia alone. Iranian surfaces add Jeddah airport halted with four aircraft circling and Kuwait airport stopped, both from unnamed sources and both unconfirmed. Jam-e Jam converts the whole cluster into «فرار سرمایه از سعودی», capital flight from Saudi Arabia, and Vatan-e Emrooz into bin Salman searching for an exit from a strategic deadlock with Bab al-Mandab named beside Hormuz.

7 Iran is publishing the oil price as the scoreboard of its own refusal

Kayhan's lead ties the number to the position directly: «پاسخ قاطع ایران به نیرنگ آمریکا قیمت نفت را به ۱۱۱ دلار رساند», Iran's decisive answer drove oil to 111 dollars. Fars reports Brent breaking 110 and reaching 111. Kayhan's top-left banner attributes a sevenfold rise in global oil freight costs to Goldman Sachs, while its own channel text says thirtyfold. Nour News reports the United States drawing on its emergency diesel reserve weeks before the midterms, and the Jam-e Jam channel reports OFAC adding five individuals, four entities and nine vessels to the Iran list. The argument is coherent and it is

also a hostage to the data: a case built on published market numbers has to be abandoned in public if the numbers move.

8 Domestic strain is being published as administration rather than as grievance

Jam-e Jam reports ten million people left out of the food-coupon increase; the Jam-e Jam channel reports train tickets up twenty percent without notice and an apology from the rail association; the Iran newspaper's channel reports a decree granting eligible civil servants at least two remote working days a week, which Asr-e Iranian immediately turns against parliament as «مردم پای کار، مجلس دورکار», the people at work, the parliament working from home; Farhikhtegan defends the medicine-currency allocation as twice the 1403 level; and Qods reports the judiciary chief personally taking over the biggest economic case of the moment. Hamshahri meanwhile runs a second consecutive front page comparing Iranian young people favourably with French ones, now adding Azerbaijan. The register is managerial and defensive, which is what a system publishes when it expects the cost-of-living frame to be legible at home.

Key Judgments

KJ-1 **[HIGH]** The standing finding that the office holder appears only as text is closed, and the content of his first photographed appearance is an instruction about crowds rather than about the war. The evidence is a convergence across seven of ten front pages: Jam-e Jam leads on «در دیدار رهبر معظم انقلاب با رئیس مجلس تأکید شد: استمرار حضور بازدارنده ملت مبعوث در تجمعات میدانی»; the Iran newspaper and Jam-e Jam both print a photograph of a sayyid cleric in a black turban; the Iran and Javan bodies print «آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای» and source the readout to the Leader's office; Hamshahri, Farhikhtegan, Vatan-e Emrooz and Kayhan carry the same meeting with their own framings; and the Sobh-e No channel names the office holder independently. For six consecutive cycles this monitor filed the absence of any dated appearance or confirmed photograph. The significance is twofold: the institution has now produced the documentary act it had withheld, and what it chose to transmit through it is «استمرار حضور آگاهانه و بازدارنده ملت مبعوث در اجتماعات میدانی», the continued deterrent presence of the commissioned nation at field gatherings, which Kayhan illustrates with a 50,000-strong exercise in Arak. Calibration: the photographs are identified by the printed name beside them and not by the face, no video, location or date of the meeting itself reached this monitor, and nothing here establishes anything about the office holder beyond what the Iranian press published.

KJ-2 **[HIGH]** Interference with shipping has moved from an unowned line to a named military claim covering seven vessels, and the authority that issued it describes the Strait as managed rather than closed. The evidence is one statement on five surfaces. The IRGC Navy's public relations office says four «متخلف» tankers were struck and set on fire during ship-to-ship oil transfers in the north-central Persian Gulf, «هر ۴ کشتی همزمان مورد اصابت قرارگرفته و در آتش می‌سوزند», and that three further ships struck mines west of the Strait overnight, closing with «این یک اخطار جدی است» and a warning that US bases in the region could follow; Defa Press, Fars News, Nour News, the Vatan-e Emrooz channel and the Iran newspaper channel all carry it within roughly ninety minutes, and the Kayhan channel adds that the four belonged to the United States or carried cargo for an American company. Defa Press also carries the Navy saying it «تنگه هرمز را مدیریت و کنترل می‌کنند», manages and controls the Strait. The significance is that the 21 October finding, a commerce-interdiction claim printed without a claiming authority, has been replaced by an owned one an order of magnitude larger, and that the

fourth description of the waterway supersedes the three incompatible ones recorded yesterday: a managed passage is a toll, and a toll is a thing that can be traded. Calibration: five Iranian surfaces carrying one statement establishes central issuance and not truth; no flag, name, tonnage, date or operator is given for any of the seven vessels and no independent maritime source was available to this monitor.

KJ-3 **[HIGH]** The submarine-cable file has moved from threat to front-page certainty and has acquired a published justification, which makes it the most advanced escalation option in the monitored set. The evidence is three mastheads from three factions in one cycle. Javan, the Guard's own daily, leads on «قطعی کابل‌ها قطعی شد», in which قطعی is both the cut and the settled question, over a full-width illustration of a severed fibre-optic cable, returning to the IRGC political deputy's warning that cables in the Strait will be struck if Iranian infrastructure is attacked. Farhikhtegan publishes the rationale rather than the threat: «چرا تهدید به حمله به کابل‌های اینترنت در دریا جدی و مؤثر است؟ / حمله به کارفرمایان جنگ», striking the war's paymasters. Shargh, reformist, frames the same subject as «تنگه هرمز؛ بازدارندگی دیجیتال». On 20 October this was a spokesman's line and on 21 October a signed column naming seven cables under the Strait. The significance is that target classes that are publicly argued for are further along than target classes that are merely threatened, and that the argument offered, that the cables belong to the war's financiers rather than to its combatants, is a proportionality claim built for the moment after an act. Calibration: nothing in the monitored set establishes that any cable has been cut, the Javan headline is a deliberate pun rather than a claim of an accomplished act, and the assertion that cable cutting figured in the Witkoff and Putin meeting reaches this monitor through one Iranian paper's unsourced rendering.

KJ-4 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** The nuclear-doctrine question became live on both sides within a single cycle, for the first time in this monitor's record. The evidence is a pairing. Kayhan's right rail carries its own managing director, the post held by Hossein Shariatmadari, telling a session on the political wisdom of Islam in the Quran that «دکترین تولید سلاح هسته‌ای با تغییر زمانه ممکن است تغییر کند», the doctrine on producing a nuclear weapon may change as the times change; the box carries no banner and no other title in the batch repeats it. On the same cycle the Vatan-e Emrooz channel relays Netanyahu accusing Iran of seeking a bomb and claiming specifically that the Leader has decided to lift the prohibition on building one, closing with «یا ما وجود خواهیم داشت یا آن‌ها». The significance is that the Iranian formulation and the Israeli accusation are the same proposition stated from opposite ends, and that the Iranian one appears in the paper most closely associated with the Leader's office. Calibration runs hard both ways: a right-rail remark by a newspaper editor is not a policy announcement and treating it as one would badly overstate it, while an adversary's claim relayed by an Iranian channel is evidence of Iranian editorial choice and not of any decision. Tracking cue: whether the Kayhan formulation is repeated by any official body, by the Leader's office, or on any other front page.

KJ-5 **[HIGH]** The negotiating track is being closed from both ends, which reverses the asymmetry recorded on 21 October. The evidence is a set of same-cycle contradictions. Javan's front page prints «عراقچی: امریکا تمایلی به تفاهم ندارد», America has no inclination toward an understanding, while the Vatan-e Emrooz, Jam-e Jam, Sobh-e No and Iran newspaper channels carry the same foreign minister saying Iran is ready to give diplomacy another chance if Washington shows sincere intent, and warning Trump of «توافق شرافتمندانه یا شکست راهبردی». Hassan Qashqavi, on the Sobh-e No channel, says «از مرحله مذاکره عبور کرده‌ایم / توپ در زمین آمریکاست» and that neither Lavrov nor Munir

brought a concrete proposal. Trump is relayed on three Iranian channels saying «ما با ایرانی‌ها مذاکره نمی‌کنیم», that something will happen soon, and that the war was the biggest thing America has done. The significance is that yesterday the refusal was printed and the acceptance travelled only by channel, which this monitor read as management; today both surfaces carry refusal, the foreign minister is the only figure on either surface still offering a track, and the one paper that engages the question directly, Asr-e Iranian, attacks the premise of negotiating rather than any set of terms. Calibration: the Trump and Araghchi lines reach this monitor only as Iranian renderings, and a foreign minister saying different things to different audiences is normal diplomatic conduct rather than evidence of a rupture.

KJ-6 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** A land-transit front has opened alongside the maritime one, and Iran has begun naming a neighbouring head of government for it. The evidence is four surfaces from four directions. Shargh leads on «تحریم مرزی», a border embargo, strapped «شرق از فشار آمریکا بر همسایگان برای بستن مرزهایشان به روی تجارت ایران گزارش می‌دهد». Jam-e Jam's rail runs «بازی الزیدی در زمین آمریکا», al-Zaidi's game on America's pitch, strapped from the suspension of flights to the closure of crossings; Ali al-Zaidi has been Iraq's prime minister since 14 May 2026. The Jam-e Jam channel carries Baghdad's own spokesman saying the Al-Shib crossing was halted for technical upgrades and that «اجازه نمی‌دهیم از خاک کشور برای تهدید همسایگان استفاده شود». Kayhan prints a governor saying traffic at the Mehran crossing is flowing. The significance is that the pressure Iran answered on 21 October with a reopened Pakistani border is reappearing on the Iraqi one, and that the state broadcaster's paper is preparing an Iranian readership to blame a neighbouring government rather than only Washington. Calibration: Baghdad's technical explanation may be true, one halted crossing is not an embargo, and Shargh's reporting of American pressure is the paper's own and is not corroborated elsewhere in the batch. Tracking cue: whether a second neighbouring government is named in the same register.

KJ-7 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** The Gulf aviation and infrastructure collapse is now documented by Saudi and American official sources rather than by Iranian claim, which both strengthens the finding and limits what Iran can claim about it. The evidence has changed character in one cycle. On 21 October it was aviation-analytics figures quoted by Kayhan. Today the Etemad channel carries the Saudi Civil Aviation Authority on an attack at King Fahd International in Dammam killing one and injuring eight; Defa Press carries the Saudi Energy Ministry on an intercepted drone over the Shaybah field with two non-citizen residents killed, and Saudi air defences engaging drones over the Eastern Province; the Jam-e Jam channel carries flight-radar data showing repeated halts at Dammam and the US Embassy in Riyadh issuing a security alert over threats to Saudi infrastructure and airports; Nour News relays the State Department limiting its regional departure warning to Saudi Arabia; and Fars reports Riyadh's airport closed to flights for twelve days from 10 October with 108 cancellations in one day. Jam-e Jam converts this into «فرار سرمایه از سعودی», capital flight from Saudi Arabia, and Vatan-e Emrooz into bin Salman seeking an exit from a strategic deadlock, with Bab al-Mandab named alongside Hormuz. The significance is that the Gulf's maritime and aviation arteries are both now degraded on evidence that is not Tehran's. Calibration: the Jeddah airport strike and the Kuwait airport stoppage rest on unnamed sources in Iranian renderings and are not confirmed; the Yemeni attribution of these attacks is the Iranian press's, and Egypt's president is relayed saying Cairo has no plan to attack Yemen and is defending Saudi territory only.

KJ-8 **[MODERATE-HIGH]** Iran is publishing the oil price as the scoreboard of its own refusal, and has built its economic case on numbers that can move against it. The evidence is the lead itself plus three supports. Kayhan's main headline reads «پاسخ قاطع ایران به نیرنگ آمریکا قیمت نفت را به ۱۱۱ دلار رساند» under the kicker that Asim Munir returned empty-handed; Fars reports Brent breaking 110 and touching 111, a level it says has occurred only once before; Kayhan's top-left banner attributes a sevenfold rise in world oil freight costs to Goldman Sachs; Nour News reports the United States drawing on its emergency diesel reserve weeks before the midterms; and the Jam-e Jam channel reports OFAC adding five individuals, four entities and nine vessels to the Iran-related list. The significance is that an argument explicitly priced in dollars is falsifiable in dollars, and that Iranian outlets have now twice in three cycles published the finding that mediation lowers the price and refusal raises it, which makes the domestic claim that holding the chokepoint is costless harder to sustain in Iran's own press. Calibration: Kayhan's own front page and channel give the freight multiple as sevenfold and thirtyfold in the same cycle, which is an internal inconsistency inside one outlet, and all the market figures reach this monitor through Iranian renderings.

KJ-9 **[MODERATE]** Negative evidence, filed as a finding: Lebanon has now failed to reach any Iranian front page for a fourth consecutive cycle, while three separate Iranian surfaces carry Israeli strikes on it in the same twenty-four hours. The evidence is the pairing of a complete printed silence with a steady wire flow. Defa Press reports Israeli army artillery striking an area between the town of Hadatha and the village of Harithis in southern Lebanon; Fars reports local sources hearing several explosions in southern Lebanon framed as continued Israeli attacks; the Sobh-e No channel reports Israeli fighter aircraft bombing an area between Shaqra and Mays al-Jabal. Not one of the ten Persian front pages mentions Lebanon. On 19 October this monitor read the absence as crowding, on 20 October as a choice, on 21 October as beyond crowding; a fourth cycle with three dated strike reports available on Iranian wires settles it. The significance is that an entire theatre is being kept off the domestic agenda while the Hormuz, border and mobilisation files run, which is what deliberate de-emphasis of a front looks like when acknowledging it would complicate the other three. Tracking cue: whether Lebanon reappears on a front page if a negotiating round convenes or if a strike produces a named Iranian casualty.

KJ-10 **[MODERATE]** Negative evidence, filed as a finding: the numbered drone-attrition series remains absent for a second consecutive cycle, and no MQ-9 claim appears anywhere in the monitored set. The evidence is an absence measured against a pattern. On 20 October four surfaces carried the Guard's claim of a fifty-fourth MQ-9 destroyed over the Strait within three hours of each other; on 21 October this monitor filed the series' interruption; today no shootdown claim of any kind appears on any front page, channel or wire read for this edition, and the only aerial tracking published is the Iraqi resistance media's routine daily count relayed by the Vatan-e Emrooz channel of four MQ-9s, one E-11, one F-16 and one F-15 over Iraq. The significance is that the series was the main advertised proof of defensive success, and its continued suspension in the same cycle in which the Navy publishes a seven-vessel interdiction claim suggests a reallocation of what gets advertised rather than a pause in activity. Filed as an absence: two cycles is a short run, and the alternative explanation, that there have been no engagements to claim, is not excluded by anything in this batch. Tracking cue: whether the numbering resumes at fifty-five.

KJ-11 **[MODERATE]** The mediation record is being written out of the Iranian press one day after it produced its only verifiable deliverable, and a second mediator has surfaced without ever having

reached a front page. The evidence is three items. Kayhan's kicker reads «عاصم منیر دست خالی برگشت», Asim Munir returned empty-handed, on the morning after the visit that reopened the Iran-Pakistan crossings, a deliverable no Iranian front page has yet credited. Hassan Qashqavi, on the Sobh-e No channel, says that neither Lavrov nor Munir brought a concrete proposal, which is the first indication in this monitor's record of a Russian mediation attempt running alongside the Pakistani one. The Sobh-e No channel also relays Tom Barrack at the Doha security forum conceding that the United States is no longer «ارباب جهان», the master of the world, and saying Washington wants a peace deal with Iran over Hormuz. The significance is that Tehran is simultaneously receiving mediators, declining to credit them in print, and publishing an American official's admission that a deal is wanted, which is the posture of a party that intends to be paid for the chokepoint rather than relieved of it. Calibration: the Barrack and Qashqavi lines reach this monitor through one Iranian channel each and are not verified against their originals.

KJ-12 **[MODERATE]** Domestic economic strain is being handled in the press as administration rather than as grievance, and the comparative-morale argument has now run on two consecutive Hamshahri front pages. The evidence is a cluster across the civilian register. Jam-e Jam reports ten million people left out of the food-coupon increase and the interior ministry agreeing to expand municipal powers; the Jam-e Jam channel reports train tickets raised twenty percent without notice with an apology from the rail association; the Iran newspaper's channel reports a government decree granting eligible civil servants at least two remote working days a week, which Asr-e Iranian turns against parliament as «مردم پای کار، مجلس دورکار»; Farhikhtegan defends the medicine-currency allocation as twice the 1403 level; Qods reports the judiciary chief personally taking charge of the biggest economic case of the moment and searching for a supervision mechanism over the trusts. Hamshahri meanwhile runs «خوب، بد، زشت», one generation and three fates in Tehran, Paris and Baku, the second consecutive front page built on a favourable comparison between Iranian and French young people. The significance is that defensive arguments are made about live risks, and a municipal daily with the batch's largest civilian readership returning to the same comparison twice in two days is an indicator of expected domestic legibility, not a prediction about the street.

KJ-13 **[LOW-MODERATE]** An unexplained domestic security event in Hormozgan was reported by the state broadcaster's own channel and reached no front page, which is worth recording precisely because nothing was made of it. The evidence is a single item: the Jam-e Jam channel reports «صدای چند انفجار در کرپان سیریک استان هرمزگان شنیده شد», the sound of several explosions heard at Kerpan Sirik in Hormozgan province, with the source and cause stated as not yet known. Hormozgan is the province that fronts the Strait of Hormuz. No Persian front page in the batch mentions it, no agency wire elaborates, and no authority is quoted. The significance is that in a cycle in which the same press published a seven-vessel interdiction claim, a severed-cable front page and a mass exercise in Arak, an unexplained set of explosions on Iranian soil beside the waterway was allowed to pass without framing, which is unusual enough to note. Filed with a single-source flag and no inference as to cause. Tracking cue: whether any Iranian surface returns to it with an attribution.

Named-Figure Tracker

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei	Leader of the Islamic Revolution, as printed on the Iran and Javan front pages and on the Sobh-e No channel	Receives the Speaker; the readout emphasises strengthening the components of national power and the continued deterrent presence of the «ملت مبعوث» at field gatherings. Photographed on the Iran and Jam-e Jam pages, identified here by the printed name and not by the face.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf	Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly	The meeting's other party on seven front pages; presents reports on parliamentary activity since the start of what the readout calls the third imposed war.	WATCH
Masoud Pezeshkian	President	On three front pages refusing talks under pressure, «گفت‌وگو با زبان تهدید و فشار معنا ندارد»; on Javan's page tying America's JCPOA breach to its signature on an Islamabad accord; on Shargh's page saying Iran is not seeking war but will stand against American bullying.	WATCH
Seyyed Abbas Araghchi	Foreign Minister	Printed on Javan's front page saying America has no inclination toward an understanding, and on four channels offering diplomacy another chance; named in Asr-e Iranian's editorial as the embodiment of the de-escalation error; reported by Qods as writing in the Financial Times about readiness to defend.	WATCH
Donald Trump	President of the United States	Drawn as a clown with a burning flag on Vatan-e Emrooz's front page and as an addicted gambler in Kayhan's war report; relayed on three channels saying America will not negotiate with Iranians, that something will happen soon, and that the war was the biggest thing America has done; credited by Qods, via the Financial Times, with halting an Israeli strike plan.	TARGET FRAMING
Benjamin Netanyahu	Prime Minister of Israel	Relayed by the Vatan-e Emrooz channel accusing Iran of seeking a nuclear bomb and claiming the Leader has decided to lift the prohibition on building one; drawn beside Trump in convict stripes in the Asr-e Iranian cartoon «بازندگان!».	TARGET FRAMING
Hossein Shariatmadari	Managing director of Kayhan, a post filled	Carried on Kayhan's own front page, by title, saying the doctrine on producing a nuclear weapon may	WATCH

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
	by the Leader's office	change as the times change; on the Kayhan channel the same evening arguing that the hardliner label is an enemy construction and framing the Iran-US conflict as existential.	
Saeed Jalili	Representative of the Supreme Leader	Given Asr-e Iranian's whole front-page photograph for a remark on the media's duty to publish the truth with regard for social good and security, at the same session that produced the Kayhan nuclear-doctrine line.	WATCH
Ali al-Zaidi	Prime Minister of Iraq since 14 May 2026	Named in Jam-e Jam's rail as playing on America's pitch, over flight suspensions and crossing closures; his government's spokesman is relayed the same cycle saying the Al-Shib crossing was halted for technical upgrades and that Iraq will not let its soil be used to threaten neighbours.	TARGET FRAMING
Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir	Chief of Army Staff, Pakistan	Kayhan's kicker says he returned empty-handed, one day after the visit that reopened the Iran-Pakistan crossings; Qashqavi says he brought no concrete proposal.	COERCION SPOKESMAN
Sergei Lavrov	Foreign Minister of Russia	Named by Qashqavi on the Sobh-e No channel as having brought no concrete proposal, which is the first indication in this monitor's record of a Russian mediation attempt. He has reached no Iranian front page.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Steve Witkoff	United States envoy	Qods's lead kicker has him travelling to Russia and Ukraine to revive part of the Republican vote; Javan asserts that submarine cable cutting was among the concerns raised at his meeting with Putin.	WATCH
Tom Barrack	United States official, speaking at the Doha security forum	Relayed by the Sobh-e No channel conceding that the United States is no longer the master of the world and saying Washington wants a peace deal with Iran over Hormuz. Single-channel, unverified against the original.	NEW NAMED FIGURE
Hassan Qashqavi	Iranian diplomat	On the Sobh-e No channel: «از مرحله مذاکره عبور کرده‌ایم / توپ در زمین آمریکاست», and neither Lavrov nor Munir brought a proposal. The hardest closure of the track by any named Iranian official this cycle.	WATCH

Figure	Role / relevance	Today's framing	Flag
Yahya Saree	Military spokesman of the Yemeni armed forces (Ansarullah)	Kayhan's top banner quotes him on a strike against a Saudi command room in Aden, «دقیق زدیم!»; the Jam-e Jam channel carries his claim of 62 Saudi air raids on civilian targets in 24 hours.	COERCION SPOKESMAN
Mohammed bin Salman	Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia	Vatan-e Emrooz's rail has him searching for a way out of a strategic deadlock between the Yemen quagmire, the Bab al-Mandab bottleneck and Washington's hesitation; a Sobh-e No video shows him receiving the French president.	TARGET FRAMING
Masoud Barati	Author of the Asr-e Iranian front-page editorial, byline read from the page	Argues that de-escalation is the calculation error of Iranian foreign policy and reconstructs Araghchi's appointment as its consequence.	WATCH
Mojtaba Khamenei's predecessor	The martyred Leader	Absence noted in a new form: Nour News carries Hojjat ol-Eslam Solh Mirzaei giving further details after earlier remarks about «وصیت‌نامه رهبر شهید», the martyred Leader's will, created confusion. No front page in the batch carries it, and the succession's documentary record is being corrected on a security-linked wire rather than in print.	absence noted
Hezbollah and the Lebanese file	Absent principal	No named Lebanese figure appears on any front page for a fourth consecutive cycle, although three Iranian surfaces report Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon in the same twenty-four hours.	absence noted

Headline Summary Table

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Javan	The cutting of the cables is now certain	Hardline, IRGC-affiliated	A severed submarine cable as the lead image, and the Leader's readout in the rail	SEVERE: cable interdiction advertised on the Guard's own masthead
Vatan-e Emrooz	The contest against Trump	Hardline principlist	The war as an American electoral liability, with the nuclear-threshold accusation routed to the channel	HIGH: post-election strike planning and a nuclear claim relayed beneath a page arguing the war is spent

Outlet	Lead Headline (English)	Orientation	Theme	Threat signal
Kayhan	Iran's decisive answer to America's trickery drove the oil price to 111 dollars	Hardline; managing director appointed by the Leader's office	Oil at 111 dollars as the published price of refusal, with a nuclear-doctrine line in the rail	HIGH: doctrinal revision floated, and a claimed strike on a command node in Aden
Farhikhtegan	Television's black box	Principlist, Azad University	A published justification for striking undersea cables, and the Leader's meeting read as hybrid-war readiness	HIGH: the cable threat acquires a proportionality argument
Jam-e Jam	The continued deterrent presence of the commissioned nation at field gatherings	State broadcaster (IRIB)	The Leader's meeting as a mobilisation order, and Iraq's prime minister named	MODERATE-HIGH: mass turnout framed as deterrence, a neighbouring premier named as an American instrument
Asr-e Iranian	The media's mission: publishing the truth in the service of the good and the security of society	Principlist	A signed editorial indicting the negotiating premise itself	MODERATE-HIGH: the de-escalation track attacked by name on an editorial page
Iran	Pezeshkian: dialogue in the language of threat and pressure is meaningless	Government daily (IRNA)	The presidency refuses coercion in print while the Navy's seven-vessel claim travels by channel	MODERATE-HIGH: the day's hardest claim kept off the government's own page
Qods	A return to democracy out of fear of the Democrats	Conservative, Astan Quds Razavi	An Israeli strike plan printed on a front page and read as enemy hesitation	MODERATE-HIGH: an attack plan on the page, framed as reassurance
Shargh	A border embargo	Reformist	American pressure on the neighbours to close the land borders, reported as cost rather than posture	MODERATE: the transit squeeze named by the title least likely to be amplifying it
Hamshahri	The good, the bad and the ugly	Tehran municipality, centrist	A second consecutive comparison front page, now adding Baku, with the Leader's readout reduced to livelihood	LOW-MODERATE: domestic morale management
Iran Daily	Iran, Russia agree regional conflicts have no military solution: FM	English-language state daily; the available issue is dated 20 October	Northern corridors pre-argued for a foreign readership, two days before the border story broke at home	LOW: a two-day-old edition, read for continuity only

Per-Paper Front-Page Analysis

Iran Daily

English-language state daily published by IRNA; the scan available to this edition is two days old

LOW: a two-day-old English edition, read for continuity on trade corridors

"Iran, Russia agree regional conflicts have no military solution: FM"


Iran Daily

Iran, Russia agree regional conflicts have no military solution: FM

U23 Wrestling World Championships:

Khateri, Yousefi grab golds as Iran sweeps historic double

Iran's northern corridors offer new opportunities for regional trade

- Provenance first: the English-language kiosk batch that reached this monitor carries the issue of Tuesday 20 October, not of the day. It is read here for continuity only and none of it is presented as a front page of 22 October.
- Main: «Iran, Russia agree regional conflicts have no military solution: FM», which is the foreign minister's line to a Russian interlocutor two days before the same minister is printed in Tehran saying America has no inclination toward an understanding.
- Lead photograph: «U23 Wrestling World Championships: Khateri, Yousefi grab golds as Iran sweeps historic double», captioned «Leader congratulates Iran's U23 freestyle wrestling team on world title». The congratulation is the same form of appearance, a dated message with no dated public event, that this monitor recorded on the Sobh-e Sadegh cover on 21 October.
- Opinion exclusive by Mohsen Pakaein: «Iran's northern corridors offer new opportunities for regional trade», arguing that the Caspian and Central Asian routes matter more as southern passage becomes constrained. Two days later Shargh leads on American pressure to close the land borders, which makes the northern-corridor argument the government's published answer to a squeeze it had not yet named.
- Sub-items: «Iran, Pakistan to initiate Silk Road tours» and «Iran sets two-year plan to boost trade, transport and AI ties within SCO», both of which treat Pakistan and the Shanghai grouping as the economic exit.

> **ANALYST NOTE** The stale English issue earns its place for one reason: its northern-corridors op-ed is the alternative-routing argument that today's Persian front pages need and do not make. Where Shargh reports the border closures as a cost, the English-language surface aimed at foreign readers had already pre-argued that Iran has other roads. That is a division of audiences rather than a disagreement. Caveat: no Iranian English-language front page of 22 October reached this monitor, and Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation.

Kayhan

Hardline principlist daily whose managing director is appointed by the Supreme Leader's office, the post held by Hossein Shariatmadari

HIGH: nuclear-doctrine revision floated by the Leader's own newspaper, plus a claimed strike on a command node in Aden

"Iran's decisive answer to America's trickery drove the oil price to 111 dollars" «پاسخ قاطع ایران به نیرنگ آمریکا قیمت نفت را به ۱۱۱ دلار رساند»


کیهان

هزینه حمل نفت در جهان هفت برابر شد

عاصم منیر دست خالی برگشت

پاسخ قاطع ایران به نیرنگ آمریکا قیمت نفت را به ۱۱۱ دلار رساند

- Kicker: «عاصم منیر دست خالی برگشت», Asim Munir returned empty-handed. The page files the Pakistani chief of army staff's fifth visit as a failure one day after it produced a reopened border, and attaches the oil price to the refusal rather than to the mediation.
- Main: three numbered bullets under the lead read «مأموریت ناکام میانجی‌ها در تهران برای نجات ترامپ از بن‌بست انرژی و انتخابات با پاسخ قاطع ایران مواجه شد» (the intermediaries' failed mission in Tehran to rescue Trump from the energy and election deadlock met Iran's decisive answer) and «مسئولان یکصدا اعلام کردند: زیربار زور نمی‌رویم، حرف جدیدی وجود ندارد و مذاکره‌ای در کار نخواهد بود» (officials declared with one voice: we will not submit to coercion, there is nothing new to say, and there will be no negotiation).
- Banner, top left: «بانک آمریکایی گلدمن ساکس: هزینه حمل نفت در جهان هفت برابر شد», the American bank Goldman Sachs: the cost of shipping oil worldwide has risen sevenfold. The paper's own channel text the same morning puts the multiple at thirty, so the two figures published by one outlet in one cycle do not agree.
- Banner, top right: «حمله به اتاق فرماندهی مزدوران سعودی در عدن / یحیی سریع: دقیق زدیم!», a strike on the Saudi mercenaries' command room in Aden, with Yahya Saree, the Ansarullah military spokesman, quoted saying the hit was precise.
- Right rail, page 2 pointer: «دیدار رئیس مجلس با رهبر معظم انقلاب», the Speaker of parliament's meeting with the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, carried as a one-line referral with no photograph, where five other titles in the batch give the same meeting a picture or a lead.
- Right rail: «مدیرمسئول کیهان در جلسه حکمت سیاسی اسلام در قرآن: دکترین تولید سلاح هسته‌ای با تغییر زمانه ممکن است تغییر کند», Kayhan's managing director at a session on the political wisdom of Islam in the Quran: the doctrine on producing a nuclear weapon may change as the times change.
- Right rail: «جلیلی مطرح کرد: رسالت رسانه؛ انتشار حقیقت با ملاحظه خیر و امنیت جامعه», Saeed Jalili at the same session: the media's mission is publishing the truth with regard for the good and the security of society. Asr-e Iranian gives the Jalili remark its whole front-page photograph and omits the nuclear line entirely.
- Mid page: «رزمایش بزرگ ۵۰ هزار نفری جان‌فدا در اراک با حضور اقشار مختلف مردم», a 50,000-strong Jan-Feda exercise in Arak, strapped with a

deputy IRGC commander named in the reports as Izadi saying that fear of Iran's missiles has pushed the enemy 700 kilometres back from the Strait of Hormuz.

- Op-ed box «یادداشت روز»: «وقتی نقاب از چهره اروپا افتاد», when the mask fell from Europe's face, page 2.
- Left column, labelled as the report of the two hundred and thirty-sixth day of the war: «ترامپ مانند یک قمارباز معتاد دائماً در مقابل ایران شکست می‌خورد», Trump keeps losing to Iran like an addicted gambler, with the red strap quoting Trump saying he asked every country whether they would help in the war against Iran and they said no.

ANALYST NOTE Kayhan's own war counter reads 236 where this monitor's fixed-epoch calendar count reads 233, which is a useful calibration point: the outlet counts from an earlier start date than the one this product uses, and its day numbers should not be read as corroboration of ours. The page is the clearest instance yet of the pattern filed on 20 and 21 October, a hardline front built on the adversary's own institutions (Goldman Sachs, a quoted Trump line, Italian sentencing policy) rather than on Iranian operational reporting, while the single most consequential item on the page, the managing director's remark that the nuclear-weapons doctrine may change with the times, sits in a right-rail box with no banner. Tracking cue: whether that formulation is repeated by any other title or by an official body.

Iran

Official government daily, published by IRNA

MODERATE-HIGH: official refusal of talks under pressure, with the cycle's hardest operational claim kept off the page

"Pezeshkian: dialogue in the language of threat and pressure is meaningless" «پزشکیان: گفت‌وگو با زبان تهدید و فشار معنا ندارد»



- Main: the president's line runs across a photograph of an official gathering, strapped with the foreign minister, «عراقچی: تصمیم‌ها باید در چارچوب شرایط جنگی کشور اتخاذ شود», Araghchi: decisions must be taken within the framework of the country's wartime conditions.
- Top right, boxed with a photograph: «دیدار قالیباف با رهبر انقلاب اسلامی», Qalibaf's meeting with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. The body text names the office holder as printed, آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای, and says the meeting reviewed the latest developments of the imposed war and the hostile acts of the Israeli regime, the United States and some European states. The photograph shows a sayyid cleric in a black turban; the identification here rests on the printed name, not on the face.
- Sub-item: «همگرایی برای استمرار صادرات», convergence for the continuation of exports, run over a second photograph of the same gathering, which the paper's channel places at an export-day ceremony where the president said trade should move «بدون هیچ مانعی», without any obstacle.
- Right rail: «زنگ خطر در پنتاگون», alarm bells in the Pentagon, introduced as the finding of a new opinion survey.
- Right rail: «ایده مهم نیست، دیده شدن مهم!», the idea does not matter, being seen does, a social-media column, and «زنگ این مدرسه برای طلا به صدا درمی‌آید», this school's bell rings for gold, both of which carry the page's civilian register.
- The paper's own channel the same morning carries the IRGC Navy statement on four struck tankers and three mined ships, an energy expert on Hormuz transit raising insurance and freight costs, and Araghchi warning Trump of «توافق شرافتمندانه یا شکست راهبردی», an honourable agreement or a strategic defeat. None of the three reaches the printed front page.

ANALYST NOTE For a second consecutive cycle the government daily publishes the position and routes the operational claim to its channel: on 21 October it was the single unowned line about two burned vessels, today it is an attributed IRGC Navy statement about seven vessels that the front page does not carry at all. The page's own choice is the president's refusal of talks under pressure plus an export story, which is the government presenting itself as the party still trying to trade while others fight. Significance: the government surface is now the most reliable place to read what Tehran wants said and the least reliable place to read what it is doing.

Qods

Conservative Mashhad daily published under Astan Quds Razavi, the Razavi shrine endowment

MODERATE-HIGH: an Israeli strike plan printed on a front page, framed as evidence of adversary disarray

"A return to democracy out of fear of the Democrats" «بازگشت به دموکراسی از ترس دموکرات‌ها»



- Main kicker: «ویتکاف دوباره راهی روسیه و اوکراین شده است تا بلکه بتواند بخشی از سبد رأی جمهوری‌خواهان را احیا کند», Witkoff is on his way to Russia and Ukraine again in the hope of reviving part of the Republicans' vote basket. The lead reads the American envoy's travel as domestic electioneering rather than as diplomacy.
- Right rail, the page's hardest item: «فاینانشال‌تایمز از طرح اسرائیل برای حمله به ایران و توقف آن با مخالفت ترامپ خبر داده. همزمان عراقچی در همین روزنامه از آمادگی برای دفاع نوشته است / تردید در اردوگاه جنگ‌طلبان», the Financial Times has reported an Israeli plan to attack Iran halted by Trump's objection, while Araghchi has written in the same paper about readiness to defend: doubt in the warmongers' camp.
- Top box with a photograph of the judiciary chief: «رئیس قوه قضائیه شخصا پیگیر مهم‌ترین پرونده اقتصادی این روزها شد / جستجو برای ساز و کار نظارت بر تراستی‌ها», the head of the judiciary has personally taken up the most important economic case of these days: a search for a supervision mechanism over the trusts.
- Sub-item: the custodian of Astan Quds Razavi, meeting families of 110 people the paper says were martyred in the Ramadan war, is quoted saying «خانواده شهدا مشمول رحمت ویژه الهی‌اند», the families of martyrs are subject to a special divine mercy. The figure and the framing are the shrine endowment's own.
- Sub-item: «از جمهوری خاندانی تا سکولاریسم خاندانی», from dynastic republic to dynastic secularism, a historical survey of the hijab ban in the schools of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
- Op-ed: «آقای علیزاده متشکریم!», thank you Mr Alizadeh, a reply by the paper to the commentator Ali Alizadeh after he answered an earlier Qods critique.

ANALYST NOTE Qods is the only title in the batch to put an Israeli strike plan on its front page, and it does so through a foreign newspaper and in the service of a reassuring conclusion, that the warmongers are divided. Pair it with the Vatan-e Emrooz channel's rendering of a New York Times report that Washington and Tel Aviv have detailed plans for new strikes after the 3 November midterms, and the Iranian press is simultaneously publishing both that an attack was stopped and that an attack is planned, with the stopped version on the page and the planned version on the wire. Both reach this monitor only as Iranian renderings of foreign reporting and neither is verified against the original.

Asr-e Iranian

Principlist morning daily

MODERATE-HIGH: a signed front-page case against the negotiating premise itself, plus the Hormuz ownership claim in opinion form

“The media's mission: publishing the truth in the service of the good and the security of society”
«رسالت رسانه؛ انتشار حقیقت در راستای خیر و امنیت جامعه»



- Main: the whole upper page is a photograph of Saeed Jalili at the lectern, captioned «سعید جلیلی؛ نماینده مقام معظم رهبری در جلسه حکمت سیاسی اسلام در قرآن», Saeed Jalili, the Supreme Leader's representative, at the session on the political wisdom of Islam in the Quran. The same session produced Kayhan's nuclear-doctrine line, which this page does not carry.
- Editorial «سرمقاله», by Masoud Barati: «تنش‌زدایی، خطای محاسباتی سیاست خارجی», de-escalation, the calculation error of foreign policy. Its front-page text argues that the fourteenth government was formed on a de-escalation premise, that Pezeshkian appointed Seyyed Abbas Araghchi believing negotiation and de-escalation with America could lift sanctions, and identifies Araghchi as Zarif's deputy in the eleventh and twelfth governments; it continues on page 4.
- Signed note «یادداشت» by Mehdi Mahmoudi: «تنگهٔ هرمز صاحب دارد», the Strait of Hormuz has an owner, page 4. This is the ownership formula that the foreign minister used on 21 October (the Strait lying in the internal waters of Iran and Oman) carried into an opinion register.
- Sub-item: «ثابتی: پایان جنگ باید به‌گونه‌ای باشد که دشمن به فکر حمله مجدد نیفتد», Sabeti, named as a Tehran member of parliament: the end of the war must be such that the enemy does not think of attacking again, because an end only matters if it prevents a repetition of the enemy's aggression.
- Sub-item: «مردم پای کار، مجلس دورکار», the people at work, the parliament working remotely, a critique of a session held online, printed on the same morning the Iran newspaper's channel reports a government decree granting eligible civil servants at least two remote days a week.
- Sub-items: «اثرات دومینووار تنگه هرمز در اقتصاد جهانی چیست؟», what are the domino effects of the Strait of Hormuz on the world economy, by Esmaeil Lotfi; and «مرجفون امروز: از جنگ روانی تا هراس‌افکنی در دل جامعه», today's rumour-mongers, from psychological war to sowing fear inside society, which uses the Quranic term مرجفون for domestic spreaders of alarm.

ANALYST NOTE This is the one front page in the batch that attacks the negotiating track by name and in signed prose rather than by printing a refusal: Barati's editorial treats de-escalation itself as the error and reconstructs Araghchi's appointment as its consequence. Read against the Qashqavi line on the Sobh-e No channel, «از مرحله مذاکره عبور کرده‌ایم», we have passed the stage of negotiation, the hardline argument has moved on from the terms of a deal to the premise of having a foreign ministry that seeks one. That is the thread opened on 21 October when this monitor recorded the hardline press turning on

> the mediation track, and it has now reached the editorial column of a daily rather than a column inside one.



By Mehdi Nosrati, captioned «بازندگان!», The Losers! Two figures in convict stripes stand at lecterns bearing, as read from the podium seals, the Israeli state emblem and the seal of the President of the United States, raising fists under a shared speech bubble reading We Won! The identification is read from the seals and the caricature, not from any printed name.

Farhikhtegan

Principlist daily of Azad University

HIGH: a published justification for attacking submarine internet cables, framed as striking the war's paymasters

“Television's black box” «جعبه سیاه تلویزیون»



- Main: a staged photograph of an empty office with portraits on the wall, over a cultural lead on the documentary «رئیس سازمان», The Head of the Organisation, which the page says turns the pages of both the state broadcaster's history and part of the revolution's.
- Banner under the lead: «در دیدار رئیس مجلس با رهبر معظم انقلاب بررسی شد: آمادگی کامل کشور در نبرد ترکیبی», examined in the Speaker's meeting with the Supreme Leader: the country's full readiness in the combined battle. The phrase نبرد ترکیبی, combined or hybrid battle, is the frame the paper puts on the readout.
- Yellow banner: «پاسخی به یادداشت تحلیلی آقای حسام‌الدین آشنا ... بازخوانی یک پرونده یا بازتولید روایت آمریکایی؟», a reply to Hesamoddin Ashena's analytical note on a case involving the recovery of 0.7 billion dollars from America: a rereading of a file, or a reproduction of the American narrative?
- Bottom, left: «چرا تهدید به حمله به کابل‌های اینترنت در دریا جدی و مؤثر است؟ / حمله به کارفرمایان جنگ», why the threat to attack internet cables at sea is serious and effective: striking the war's paymasters. This is the first time in the monitored set that the submarine-cable threat appears as a reasoned justification rather than as a quoted warning.
- Bottom, middle: «چرا هر طرح نظامی جدید علیه ایران محکوم به شکست است / پروژه بزرگ ایران برای ساعت صفر», why any new military plan against Iran is doomed to fail: Iran's big project for zero hour.
- Bottom, right: «ارز دارو، ۲ برابر سال ۱۴۰۳ تأمین شده است», foreign currency for medicine has been supplied at twice the 1403 level, a government-defensive economic claim run by the paper as its own reporting.

ANALYST NOTE Farhikhtegan is the title that supplies the argument other pages supply only as a threat. Its cable item converts the warning that Vatan-e Emrooz printed on 21 October, and that Javan today puts in its banner, into a rationale: the cables are legitimate because they strike the war's paymasters rather than its soldiers. That is the language of target justification, and it is the step that usually precedes rather than follows an act. Significance: the cable file has moved in three cycles from a spokesman's threat, to a front-page banner, to a published argument for why it would be proportionate.

Shargh

Reformist daily

MODERATE: an economic-strangulation story told without a threat, on the title least likely to be amplifying it

"A border embargo" «تحریم مرزی»



- Main kicker: «شرق از فشار آمریکا بر همسایگان برای بستن مرزهایشان به روی تجارت ایران گزارش می‌دهد», Shargh reports on American pressure on the neighbours to close their borders to Iranian trade. The only front page in the batch to name a coordinated land-transit squeeze as the story.
- Top quote box with the president's photograph: «پزشکیان: دنبال جنگ نیستیم اما مقابل قلدری آمریکا خواهیم ایستاد», we are not seeking war, but we will stand against America's bullying.
- Contents strip: «در شرق امروز می‌خوانید: عراقچی: وضعیت کشور همچنان جنگی است», in today's Shargh: Araghchi, the country's condition is still a wartime one.
- Signed note: «تنگه هرمز؛ بازدارندگی دیجیتال», the Strait of Hormuz: digital deterrence. The reformist paper reaches the same subject as the hardline titles, the data layer under the waterway, and keeps it inside a deterrence vocabulary rather than a targeting one.
- Front-page editorial «سرمقاله»: «لنگ‌انداختن مقابل الی کوهن», throwing in the towel before Eli Cohen. The byline photograph is printed but the name is not legible at the resolution of the available scan and is therefore not reported here.
- Sub-items: the death of the theatre director Sirous Ebrahimzadeh, «سیروس ابراهیم‌زاده به خانه ابدی بدرقه شد»; a Larijani disqualification row; and «گسترش نمایندگی به شرط تقویت انضباط مالی», extending representation on condition of stronger fiscal discipline, on a funds-statute amendment.

ANALYST NOTE Shargh does on the transit file what Ta'adol did on the mediation file on 21 October: it declines the maximalist frame by reporting the cost rather than the posture. The border story matters beyond its politics because it is checkable, and because three other surfaces in this same cycle touch it from different directions, Jam-e Jam attacking the Iraqi prime minister by name, the Jam-e Jam channel carrying Baghdad's statement that the Al-Shib crossing is halted for technical upgrades, and Kayhan printing a governor's assurance that traffic at the Mehran crossing is flowing. A reformist paper naming the squeeze and a hardline paper denying it on the same morning is the clearest available evidence that the file is live.

Jam-e Jam

Daily of the state broadcaster IRIB

MODERATE-HIGH: mass mobilisation framed as deterrence, and a neighbouring prime minister named as an American instrument

"The continued deterrent presence of the commissioned nation at field gatherings" «استمرار حضور بازدارنده ملت مبعوث در تجمعات میدانی»



- Main, over a photograph of the office holder: «در دیدار رهبر معظم انقلاب با رئیس مجلس تأکید شد», emphasised in the Supreme Leader's meeting with the Speaker of parliament. The term ملت مبعوث, the commissioned nation, borrows the vocabulary of the Prophet's commissioning and converts street turnout into a religious duty with a deterrent function.
- Right rail: «رئیس‌جمهور کشورمان اقدام همزمان آمریکا در افزایش فشارها و دم زدن از مذاکره را غیرقابل قبول دانست: گفت‌وگو با زبان تهدید معنا ندارد», our president deemed unacceptable America's simultaneous raising of pressure and talk of negotiation: dialogue in the language of threat is meaningless.
- Right rail: «فرار سرمایه از سعودی / با تعطیلی فرودگاه‌های عربستان، ثروتمندان و اتباع خارجی برای خروج اضطراری از کشور به تکاپو افتادند», capital flight from Saudi Arabia: with Saudi airports closed, the wealthy and foreign nationals have scrambled for an emergency exit.
- Right rail: «بازی الزیدی در زمین آمریکا», al-Zaidi's game on America's pitch, strapped «از تعلیق پروازها تا انسداد گذرگاه‌ها», from the suspension of flights to the closure of crossings. Ali al-Zaidi has been Iraq's prime minister since 14 May 2026; this is the state broadcaster's paper attacking a sitting neighbouring head of government by name over transit.
- Main photograph: «روز ۲۰ مدالی ایران در ناگویا», Iran's twenty-medal day at the Asian Para Games in Nagoya.
- Sub-item: «استکبارستیزی، ریشه در تاریخ و فرهنگ ایران دارد», anti-arrogance is rooted in Iran's history and culture; and on the civilian ledger «میلیون نفر از افزایش کالابرگ جاماندند ۱۰», ten million people were left out of the food-coupon increase.
- The paper's own channel the same evening carries the US Embassy in Riyadh issuing a security alert over threats to Saudi infrastructure and airports, flight-radar data showing repeated halts at Dammam's King Fahd airport, Yahya Saree claiming 62 Saudi air raids on civilian targets in 24 hours, and the Iraqi government spokesman saying «اجازه نمی‌دهیم از خاک کشور برای تهدید همسایگان استفاده شود», we will not allow our soil to be used to threaten neighbours.

ANALYST NOTE Two things on this page belong together. The lead converts the Leader's meeting into a standing instruction for mass street presence, and the rail opens a named political front against Baghdad over crossings and airspace. Read with Shargh's border-embargo lead and the paper's own channel carrying Baghdad's technical explanation, the state broadcaster is preparing an Iranian public to read neighbouring states, not only the United States, as the agents of the squeeze. Tracking cue: whether any

Iranian surface names a second neighbouring government in the same register, which would move this from a Baghdad grievance to a regional frame.

Hamshahri

High-circulation centrist daily of the Tehran municipality

LOW-MODERATE: domestic morale management, with the Leader's readout reduced to livelihood and cohesion

"The good, the bad and the ugly" «خوب، بد، زشت»



- Main: a whiteboard graphic with three photographs labelled ایران, فرانسه and آذربایجان, strapped «یک نسل و سه سرنوشت در تهران و پاریس و باکو», one generation and three fates in Tehran, Paris and Baku.
- Main strap: «دانش‌آموزان ایرانی در میانه جنگ ده‌ها مدال علمی گرفتند اما همسالانشان در فرانسه سرکوب شدند و در آذربایجان با محدودیت حجاب روبه‌رو هستند», Iranian schoolchildren won dozens of academic medals in the middle of the war while their peers in France were suppressed and in Azerbaijan face hijab restrictions.
- Lower lead: «برای ایران ۲۰», twenty for Iran, on the Nagoya medal count, with a photograph of a judoka saluting.
- Boxed: «دیدار قالیباف با رهبر انقلاب / حفظ انسجام ملی و استمرار حضور مردم در میدان و همکاری دولت و مجلس برای حل مشکلات معیشتی از محورهای اصلی این دیدار بود», Qalibaf's meeting with the Leader of the Revolution: preserving national cohesion, the continued presence of the people in the field, and cooperation between government and parliament to solve livelihood problems were the main axes of this meeting. This is the only readout in the batch that puts livelihood at the centre of the meeting.
- Op-ed: «دانش‌آموزان در ۳ قاب؛ ایران، فرانسه و آذربایجان», schoolchildren in three frames.
- Sub-item: «تهران ۱۰۰ سال پیش به روایت آقای بیک», Tehran a hundred years ago as told by Mr Beik, a local-history interview.

ANALYST NOTE This is the second consecutive Hamshahri front page built as a comparison between Iranian and French young people, after «اعتراض بدون کلاش!» on 21 October, and the comparison has widened to include Azerbaijan. The method has not changed: concede the adversary's grievance in order to convert it into a domestic credit. A municipal daily with the batch's largest civilian readership returning to the same argument on two consecutive mornings indicates that the cost-of-living and protest frame is expected to be legible at home, which is a statement about Iranian editorial anxiety rather than a prediction about Iranian streets.

Vatan-e Emrooz

Hardline principlist daily

HIGH: a nuclear-threshold accusation and post-election strike planning relayed under a front page arguing the war is spent

"The contest against Trump" «رقابت علیه ترامپ»



- Main kicker: «مخالفت با جنگ علیه ایران به یکی از محوری‌ترین موضوعات کمپین‌های انتخاباتی آمریکا تبدیل شده است به گونه‌ای که حتی کاندیداهای جمهوری‌خواه نیز صراحتا با جنگ مرزبندی می‌کنند», opposition to the war on Iran has become one of the most central themes of American election campaigns, to the point that even Republican candidates are explicitly distancing themselves from it. The image is Trump drawn as a clown holding a burning American flag.
- Top right: «بررسی آخرین تحولات جنگ نظامی، اقتصادی و شناختی دشمن و تأکید بر تقویت مؤلفه‌های قدرت کشور / دیدار رئیس مجلس با رهبر انقلاب», reviewing the latest developments of the enemy's military, economic and cognitive war and emphasising the strengthening of the country's components of power: the Speaker's meeting with the Leader of the Revolution. The term جنگ شناختی, cognitive war, is this paper's addition to the shared readout.
- Top left: «تاوان اتحاد با واشنگتن», the price of alliance with Washington, on Japan caught between the Hormuz crisis and its American alignment.
- Right rail: «از باتلاق یمن و تنگنای باب‌المندب تا تردید واشنگتن، بن‌سلمان در جست‌وجوی راه خروج از بن‌بست راهبردی / سعودی در بحران», from the Yemen quagmire and the Bab al-Mandab bottleneck to Washington's hesitation, bin Salman is looking for a way out of a strategic deadlock: Saudi in crisis. Bab al-Mandab is named alongside Hormuz, which puts two chokepoints on one front page.
- Right rail: «آتش جنگ در خیابان‌های اروپا», the fire of war on Europe's streets; and a signed note «معجزه فاطمیه» by Reza Rafiei.
- Bottom: «پشت فرمان شکاف طبقاتی», behind the wheel of the class divide, a strategic analysis of distributional effects and balance-of-payments constraints under the sanctions architecture.
- The paper's own channel the same cycle carries the IRGC Navy statement on four struck tankers and three mined ships with the line «این یک اخطار جدی است»; Netanyahu accusing Iran of seeking a bomb and claiming Mojtaba Khamenei has decided to lift the prohibition on building one, with «یا ما وجود خواهیم داشت یا آن‌ها»; a New York Times report, attributed to American officials, that Washington and Tel Aviv hold detailed plans for new strikes on Iran after the 3 November midterms; Trump saying «ما با ایرانی‌ها مذاکره نمی‌کنیم» and referring to the waterway as the Trump Strait; and Mokhber, described as an adviser to the Leader, asking «اگر تنگه باز است، چرا قیمت نفت بالا می‌رود».

ANALYST NOTE The front page argues that the war has become an American electoral liability, and the channel beneath it publishes the three items that would most complicate that argument: a Navy claim of

> seven vessels struck, an Israeli prime minister asserting that Iran's nuclear restraint has been lifted, and American planning for strikes after 3 November. The division of labour is the finding. Significance: the printed page is being used to tell Iranians that time is on their side, while the channel carries the material that says the opposite, and only one of the two is a committed editorial position. Every item in the channel cluster is an Iranian rendering of a foreign or official claim and none is verified against its original.

Javan

Hardline daily affiliated with the IRGC

SEVERE: the Guard's own daily prints a severed submarine cable as its lead image and declares the cut settled

"The cutting of the cables is now certain" «قطعی کابل‌ها قطعی شد»



- Main: the headline turns on a pun, قطعی meaning both a cut and a settled certainty, over a full-width illustration of a severed submarine fibre-optic cable glowing red at the break. The accompanying text returns to the IRGC political deputy's warning that internet cables in the Strait of Hormuz will be struck if Iranian infrastructure is attacked, and asserts that cable cutting was among the concerns raised at the Witkoff-Putin meeting.
- Banner over the illustration: «بحران هرمز کف خیابان‌های اروپا / اعتراضات معیشتی همچنان خیابان‌های اروپا را شلوغ می‌کند», the Hormuz crisis on the floor of Europe's streets: cost-of-living protests keep filling Europe's streets.
- Top: «پزشکیان: امریکا تعهد ندارد مثل همان برجام!», Pezeshkian: America keeps no commitment, exactly as with the JCPOA. The body text, as printed, has the president tying the JCPOA breach to America's signature on an Islamabad accord, and quoting him that less than a month had passed before Washington said it did not accept its own signature. The accord is named only in this rendering among the scanned pages; the Kayhan channel refers to the same thing as the Islamabad understanding.
- Right rail: «رئیس مجلس با رهبر معظم انقلاب دیدار کرد / تأکید رهبر انقلاب بر استمرار حضور آگاهانه و بازدارنده ملت مبعوث», the Speaker met the Supreme Leader: the Leader's emphasis on the continued conscious and deterrent presence of the commissioned nation. The body names the office holder as printed, حضرت آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای, and sources the readout to the Leader's office information site.
- Sub-item: «عراقچی: امریکا تمایلی به تفاهم ندارد», Araghchi: America has no inclination toward an understanding. The same minister is quoted on four Iranian channels the same cycle saying Iran is ready to give diplomacy another chance if Washington shows sincere intent.
- Sub-items: «خانه فروشی! از مانور تا نفت مسیر», a housing-market piece; and the paper's own medal coverage from Nagoya.

ANALYST NOTE Javan takes the cable file the whole way in one headline. On 20 October it was a spokesman's warning, on 21 October a signed column naming seven cables under the Strait, and today the Guard's own paper prints a severed cable as its front-page image and declares the cut settled. Nothing in the monitored set establishes that any cable has been cut, and the word قطعی is doing deliberate double duty, which is how a capability is advertised without an act being claimed. Significance: the page is the strongest single indicator in this cycle that cable interdiction is being prepared as the next rung, and it is the Guard's own masthead that printed it. Filed with the caveat that the headline is a pun and not a claim of an accomplished act.

Appendix A - The Leader's readout of the meeting with the Speaker of parliament

Front pages of Iran (government daily, IRNA) and Javan (IRGC-affiliated), Thursday 30 Mehr 1405 / 22 October 2026, both sourcing the text to the Leader's office information site. Reconstructed from the two scans; no primary text from khamenei.ir was retrievable at the time of compilation, so this is a partial reconstruction and not a verified transcript.

Original, as printed: «محمدباقر قالیباف رئیس مجلس شورای اسلامی با آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای رهبر انقلاب اسلامی دیدار و گفت‌وگو کرد.»

Translation: Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, met and held talks with Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Original, as printed: «به گزارش رسانه رهبر انقلاب اسلامی، در این دیدار آخرین تحولات جنگ تحمیلی، اقدامات و دشمنی‌های رژیم صهیونیستی، آمریکا و برخی دول اروپایی بررسی شد.»

Translation: According to the media outlet of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the meeting reviewed the latest developments of the imposed war and the actions and hostilities of the Zionist regime, America and certain European states. Javan's rendering of the same readout describes the enemy's war as «نظامی، اقتصادی و شناختی», military, economic and cognitive, which is the formulation Vatan-e Emrooz also prints and which Farhikhtegan renders as «نبرد ترکیبی», the combined battle.

Original, as printed: «و بر ضرورت تقویت مؤلفه‌های قدرت کشور، نقش مؤثر نمایندگان مجلس شورای اسلامی در حفظ و تحکیم انسجام اجتماعی و وحدت ملی، استمرار حضور آگاهانه و بازدارنده ملت مبعوث در اجتماعات میدانی، و اهتمام دولت و مجلس به همکاری در جهت گره‌گشایی از مشکلات اقتصادی و معیشتی مردم تأکید شد.»

Translation: And emphasis was placed on the necessity of strengthening the components of the country's power; on the effective role of the members of the Islamic Consultative Assembly in preserving and consolidating social cohesion and national unity; on the continuation of the conscious and deterrent presence of the commissioned nation («ملت مبعوث», a phrase that borrows the vocabulary of prophetic commissioning, بعثت, to describe the population) at field gatherings; and on the commitment of the government and the parliament to cooperate in untying the people's economic and livelihood problems.

Original, as printed: «رئیس مجلس شورای اسلامی نیز در این دیدار گزارش‌هایی از فعالیت نمایندگان مجلس از شروع جنگ تحمیلی سوم تاکنون و برنامه‌ها و سازوکارهای مجلس برای حل مسائل و مشکلات کشور ارائه کرد.»

Translation: The Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, for his part, presented reports on the activity of members of parliament from the start of the third imposed war until now, and on the parliament's plans and mechanisms for solving the country's problems.

Analyst flag: three things in this short text are findings in their own right. First, the office holder is printed by name, سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای, on the government daily and on the Guard's daily on the same morning, and the state broadcaster's paper runs a photograph of a sayyid cleric above it; the identification here rests on the printed name and not on the face. Second, the readout's operative instruction is turnout, not escalation: the 'deterrent presence' of the population at gatherings, which the Kayhan page then illustrates with a 50,000-strong exercise in Arak. Third, the phrase «جنگ تحمیلی سوم», the third imposed war, formally numbers the present conflict in the sequence that begins with the war with Iraq. That phrase was read at the limit of the available scan resolution and should be treated as a single-source reading pending a cleaner copy.

Verification note: this monitor could not retrieve the primary text from the Leader's office site at the time of compilation. The Persian above is a reconstruction from two newspaper renderings that agree in substance and differ slightly in wording, and it should not be quoted as the official text.

Appendix B - The day's flagged editorial: 'De-escalation, the calculation error of foreign policy'

Asr-e Iranian, front-page editorial («سرمقاله»), Thursday 30 Mehr 1405 / 22 October 2026, signed by Masoud Barati as printed on the page. The piece continues on page 4; only the front-page portion was legible on the available scan, so this translation is partial and is flagged as such.

Title, as printed: «تنش‌زدایی خطای محاسباتی سیاست خارجی» - De-escalation, the calculation error of foreign policy.

Original: «دولت چهاردهم با رویکرد تنش‌زدایی در سیاست خارجی تشکیل شد.»

Translation: The fourteenth government was formed around a policy of de-escalation («تنش‌زدایی») in foreign affairs.

Original: «آقای پزشکیان با اعتقاد به اینکه می‌توان با مذاکره و تنش‌زدایی با آمریکا به توافقی برای رفع تحریم رسید، سید عباس عراقچی را به عنوان وزیر امور خارجه انتخاب کرد.»

Translation: Mr Pezeshkian, believing that negotiation and de-escalation with America could produce an agreement to lift sanctions, chose Seyyed Abbas Araghchi as foreign minister.

Original: «عراقچی از چهره‌های شناخته‌شده در سیاست خارجی و معتقد به رویکرد تنش‌زدایی و اصالت مذاکره برای حصول منافع ملی است. عراقچی معاون ظریف در دو دولت یازدهم و دوازدهم بود.»

Translation: Araghchi is one of the known figures of Iranian foreign policy and a believer in the de-escalation approach and in the primacy of negotiation («اصالت مذاکره») as the way to secure the national interest. Araghchi was Zarif's deputy in the eleventh and twelfth governments.

Analyst flag: the significance of this piece is its method, not its conclusion. It does not argue against a particular set of terms; it reconstructs the appointment of the foreign minister as the consequence of a mistaken premise, which makes the negotiating track itself the object of criticism rather than any deal that might come out of it. Published on the morning the president is on three front pages refusing talks under pressure, it is an attack from the same direction as the official line and on the same day, which is how a hardline paper supports a refusal while reserving the right to reject any acceptance. This continues the thread this monitor opened on 21 October, when the hardline press began turning on the mediation track rather than on the terms.

Verification note: the byline «مسعود براتی» is read directly from the printed page. The portion of the editorial that runs on page 4 was not available to this monitor, and nothing is asserted here about what it contains.

Appendix C - Methodology and sourcing notes

iran-press-digest pipeline, edition of 22 October 2026

Scan provenance. Ten Persian front-page scans were taken from the NewspaperTasnim kiosk album of Thursday 30 Mehr 1405 (t.me/NewspaperTasnim/45348, captioned for 30 Mehr and posted at 03:36 UTC on 22 October). The stale-batch guard compared the album's own printed Jalali date with the target date and passed on the first attempt; no fallback sources were needed. All ten mastheads were identified from the printed nameplate and all ten carry the printed date 30 Mehr 1405 / 11 Jumada al-Awwal 1448 / 22 October 2026.

English-language coverage is incomplete and is marked as such throughout. The English kiosk batch available to this monitor carried the Iran Daily issue of Tuesday 20 October, two days old; it is read for continuity only and no part of it is presented as a front page of the day. Tehran Times was not available at the time of compilation. No Iranian English-language front page of 22 October reached this edition.

Text channels. Nine Telegram channels were read through the public web preview: six newspaper channels (Kayhan, Vatan-e Emrooz, Jam-e Jam, Etemad, Iran, Sobh-e No) and three agency wires (Defa Press, Fars News, Nour News). Agency material is used for corroboration and for the threat register, and is labelled as claims; it is not treated as front-page content. The web preview shows clock times but not calendar dates for most posts, so the assignment of a post to 29 or 30 Mehr rests on the dated front-page roundups that anchor each channel's morning block. Where that assignment is uncertain it is not relied upon.

The cycle's principal claim and its corroboration. The IRGC Navy statement that four 'violating' tankers were struck and set on fire during ship-to-ship oil transfers in the north-central Persian Gulf, and that three further vessels struck mines west of the Strait of Hormuz the previous night, appears on five independent Iranian surfaces within roughly ninety minutes: Defa Press, Fars News, Nour News, the Vatan-e Emrooz channel and the Iran newspaper channel, with the Kayhan channel adding that the four were American or carrying cargo for an American company. The convergence establishes that the claim was centrally issued, not that it is true. No flag, name, tonnage, date or operator is given for any of the seven vessels, no independent maritime source was available to this monitor, and the whole cluster is filed as an Iranian claim.

Second-hand foreign reporting. Several of the cycle's most consequential items reach this monitor only as Iranian renderings of foreign publications: the Financial Times on an Israeli strike plan halted by Trump (Qods front page), the New York Times on American and Israeli plans for strikes after 3 November (Vatan-e Emrooz channel), Goldman Sachs on a sevenfold rise in oil freight costs (Kayhan front page, where the paper's own channel text gives thirty-fold instead), and a Reuters and Ipsos approval figure of 32 percent (Sobh-e No editorial). None has been verified against its original and none should be reproduced as authentic without primary-source confirmation. The Kayhan freight discrepancy is noted as an internal inconsistency within a single outlet in a single cycle.

Quotations attributed to foreign principals. The Netanyahu remarks relayed by the Vatan-e Emrooz channel, including the claim that the Leader has decided to lift the prohibition on building a nuclear weapon, and the Trump remarks relayed by the Etemad, Vatan-e Emrooz and Nour News channels, are Iranian renderings of foreign-language statements and are reported here as such. They are evidence of what the Iranian press chose to publish, not of what was said.

Named figures and identification. The office holder's name was read directly from the printed body text on the Iran and Javan front pages («آیت‌الله سیدمجتبی حسینی خامنه‌ای») and is independently given in the same form on the Sobh-e No channel. The photographs on the Iran and Jam-e Jam pages show a sayyid cleric in a black turban; the identification rests on the printed name and not on the face. Ali al-Zaidi was verified by web search as Iraq's prime minister since 14 May 2026 before the Jam-e Jam headline was read as naming a sitting head of government. The Asr-e Iranian cartoon's two figures are read from the podium seals and the caricature, which is a visual inference and is flagged in the entry. The deputy IRGC commander quoted by Kayhan and Defa Press is given only as Izadi on both surfaces and no fuller identification is asserted. The Shargh front-page editorial byline was not legible at the available resolution and is therefore not named.

Day numbering. This edition is Day 233 on this product's fixed calendar count from the 29 June 2026 epoch. Kayhan's own front page labels the same morning as the report of the two hundred and thirty-sixth day of the war. The two counters are not reconciled, and Kayhan's number is recorded as an outlet datum rather than as a correction to ours.

Scan resolution. The kiosk preview images run between roughly 510 and 800 pixels on the long edge. Headlines, standfirsts and bylines are reliably legible at that size; continuous body text often is not. Where a reading sits at the limit of the resolution, including the phrase «جنگ تحمیلی سوم» in the Leader's readout and the Islamabad accord reference in Javan's Pezeshkian item, that is stated at the point of use.

Handling. This product documents and analyses hostile foreign-press rhetoric for defensive assessment only. Nothing in it endorses, amplifies or operationalises that rhetoric.

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.