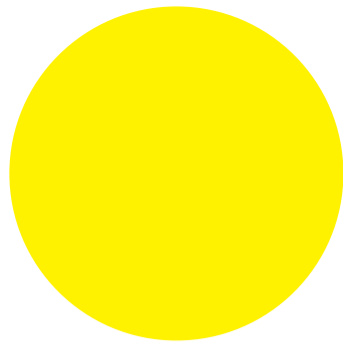




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# All Hezbollah rockets hit Israeli military bases: *Nasrallah*

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## Araghchi's reality check about JCPOA revival



By Reza Ghobeishavi

Iranian journalist

### OPINION

Iran's New Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has laid it on the line about the tattered 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, saying that "resuming negotiations [for the revival of the accord] is no longer as easy as it used to be, and we should all be aware of this" as the global situation has shifted. "Some of the deadlines in the JCPOA have also passed, so the JCPOA cannot be revived in its current form. In other words, this document needs to be re-opened, and certain parts of it need to be reworked, which will not be an easy task. As you know, once a document is re-opened, pulling it back together is very difficult."

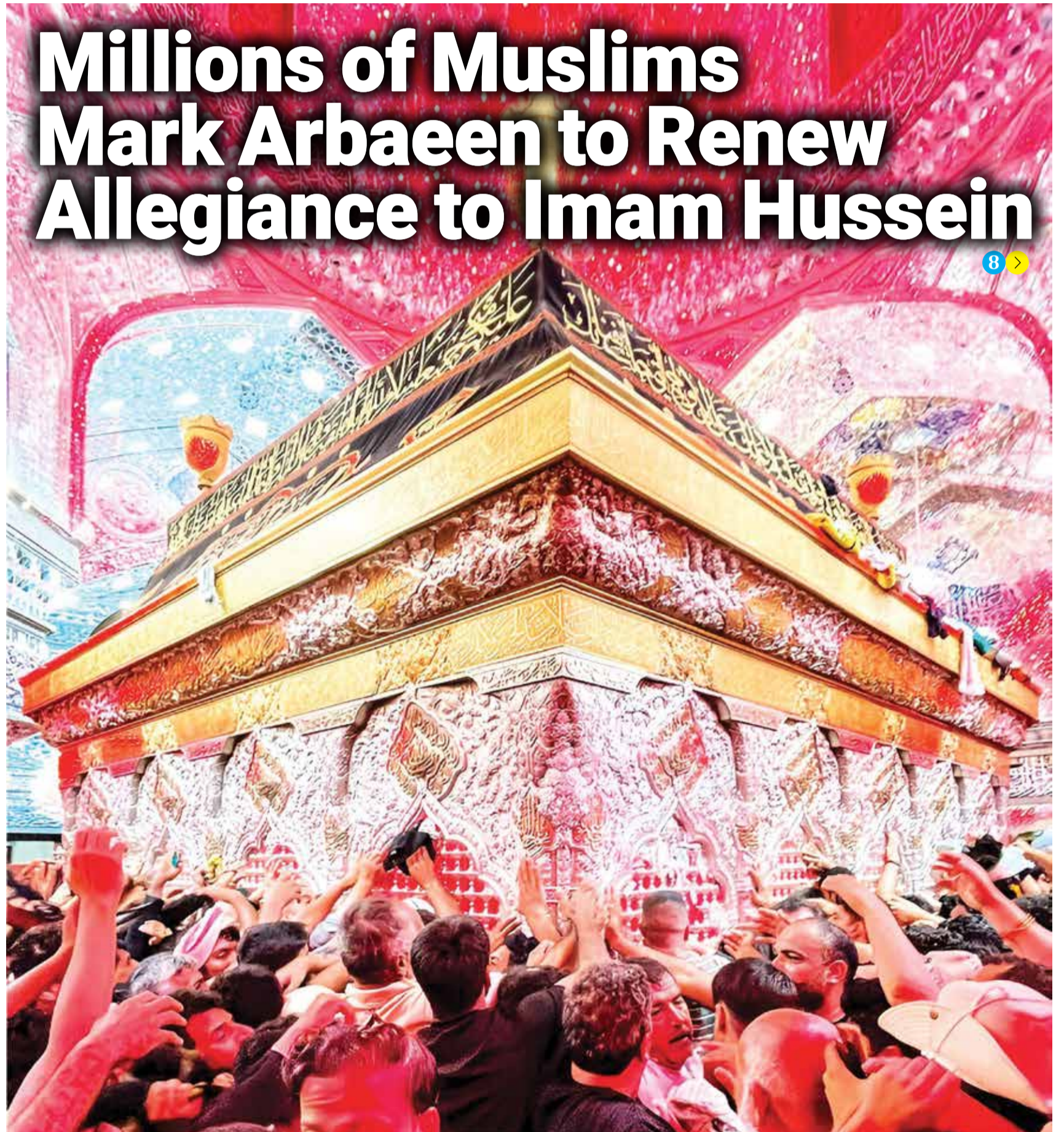
When asked if his comments could be taken to mean the JCPOA was a lost cause, Araghchi replied: "That is not what I said, but the deal cannot be brought back in its original form. But there will definitely be other avenues to an agreement, which we will pursue."

Araghchi's take on the current state of the JCPOA and the odds of its resurrection is realistic and free from fantasy and wishful thinking. He has been part of the Iranian negotiating team for most of the nuclear talks and knows the ins and outs of the discussions and the JCPOA like the back of his hand. From 2013 to 2015, during the negotiations that culminated in the JCPOA, and later during the attempts to revive it under Hassan Rouhani's administration, with the goal of bringing the US back into the deal, lifting US sanctions against Iran, and getting Iran back to nuclear restrictions, Araghchi was effectively calling the shots in the negotiations.

But Araghchi is not the only one who has come to the understanding that the JCPOA's restoration is almost impossible. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the foreign minister, and Ali Bagheri, the nuclear negotiator - the two lead diplomats of Ebrahim Raisi's administration - had also landed at the same conclusion. And that's why the nuclear talks hit a brick wall and were more or less abandoned.

Attempts to bring the JCPOA back to life were supplanted by parallel negotiations with the US. The upshot of these indirect talks with the US was an undeclared, informal verbal deal, by which Iran agreed to hold off on advancing its sensitive nuclear activities, and in exchange, the US agreed to turn a blind eye to Iran's oil exports to China, leading to a rise in Iran's oil production and exports. So, even before Araghchi's comments, Raisi's administration had also wised up to the futility and impossibility of bringing the JCPOA back from the dead.

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Iran says it has a right to retaliate against Israel for the assassination of Hamas's leader in Tehran, stressing that "punishing the aggressor is Iran's right."

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## Iran seeks to gain observer status at Eurasian Economic Union



Iran submitted a request to gain the status of an observer state at the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Kazinform News Agency quoted the EAEU's press service. Iran's request to gain observer status at the Eurasian Economic Union was considered at the EAEU headquarters, the statement read.

The consultations were held on August 19 via videoconferencing under the chairmanship of EEC Minister in Charge for Integration and Macroeconomics Sergey Glazyev.

Deputy foreign ministers represented the EAEU member states. The Iranian delegation was led by the Director General for Multilateral Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Jalaleddin Alavi Sabzevari.

Those present noted the progressive development of trade and economic cooperation between the EAEU member states and Iran and hailed the country's initiative to get observer status at the EAEU by the Resolution on the Observer State.

The decision on granting the observer status is taken by the EAEU Heads of State at the meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council. The council convenes at least once a year. The last meeting took place on May 8, 2024.

A free trade agreement between the EAEU member states and Iran was signed last year on the sidelines of the meeting of the council in Saint Petersburg.

Moldova, Uzbekistan and Cuba were granted observer status at the EAEU.



## Iran's steel output rises despite global fall

Iran's steel output rose in the seven months to July despite a global fall in production and despite power cuts imposed on steel producers in the country this summer. Figures released by the World Steel Association ([worldsteel](http://worldsteel.org)) showed that Iran had produced 18.4 million metric tons (mt) of raw steel in January-July, up 2.9% from the same period last year,

Press TV reported.

Iran remained the 10th largest steel supplier in the world in the seven months to July, the figures showed, which also indicated that total steel output by seven major steel producing nations of the world had dropped by 0.7% over the same period.

The increased Iranian steel output comes despite the fact that in-

dustries in the country have been grappling with reduced electricity supplies in recent months.

The Iranian Energy Ministry cut power supplies to major steel mills in mid-summer as it was facing rising demand for cooling in the country's household sector. That has caused concerns across an industry which has thrived in recent years by increasing its ex-

ports and creating more jobs.

Worldsteel figures, which partly relies on data supplied by Iran's state metals and mining company IMIDRO, showed that Iran's steel output had dropped by 18.7% year on year in July to reach 1.8 million mt.

However, the output accounted for nearly a half or 48.6% of the total steel production in the West

Asia region which includes Iran and seven Arab steel producing countries.

The fall in Iran's steel output in July was the largest recorded among 71 steel producing countries, according to the worldsteel data which showed that Brazil had reported a 11.6% rise in production in the same month, the largest among all producers.

## Araghchi's reality check ...

This brings to light, more than ever, the prediction **Page 1** made by former foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who, in the final days of his term in 2021, told reporters: "If these gentlemen can get two pages of an agreement down on paper, I will bow to them and kiss their hands."

Now, one can say with more conviction that it would have been for the best if the JCPOA had been resuscitated during the final months of Rouhani's administration through talks with Joe Biden's administration, and if the interactions between Iran and the US under Donald Trump's presidency had borne fruit, Trump would not pull the plug on the

JCPOA in 2018.

It is also important to note that the Conservatives and Raisi's administration, during their three years at the helm (2021-2024), not only did not cast the JCPOA aside but also tried to bring it back from the dead, albeit to no avail, and they could not even come up with a replacement. While the Conservatives were successful in doing damage to the JCPOA, they fell short of coming up with a bare-minimum alternative plan.

Araghchi's straight talk about the "impossibility of reviving the JCPOA" will have the following implications and takeaways:

Knowing the real deal and what the future holds for the JCPOA is, in and of itself,

an achievement, especially in Iranian society, where people are often kept in the dark about the simplest and most obvious issues, let alone complex foreign policy matters that are shrouded in ambiguity and subject to various and conflicting information, making it unlikely even for those involved in foreign policy to have a clear picture of the situation.

Giving people the straight scoop about the country's crucial and destiny-making issues is the first step in the right direction toward deciding on the next steps.

Being aware of the reality of the JCPOA stops people from beating a dead horse and opens the way for seeking other solutions.

Getting the issue of key sanc-

tions against Iran off the ground hinges on resolving the nuclear issue. The nuclear issue, in turn, can be resolved through negotiations, which have proven successful in the past but were ultimately thrown a spanner in the works. Now, with the knowledge of the JCPOA's fate, new and up-to-date negotiations should be resumed. However, given the fate of the JCPOA, any new agreement with the US is expected to run into strange challenges and difficulties. Nonetheless, the prospect of entering into new negotiations for a new agreement is a step in the right direction. Developments in Iran, such as drawing various red lines and blocking the path to reviving the JCPOA through the parliament's nuclear law, along with external developments, including Trump's withdrawal from

the JCPOA and his pressure, the Ukraine and Gaza conflicts, and the US election, have pushed the issue of resolving Iran's nuclear program down the list of priorities for global powers. These developments have also brought the revival and functionality of the JCPOA to a grinding halt.

The JCPOA, in its current bare-minimum form, has three upsides for Iran. First off, it stops current EU sanctions dead in their tracks and keeps any new sanctions by the EU against Iran from kicking in. Secondly, it does the same for UN Security Council sanctions against Iran. And thirdly, during the Biden administration, it established a relative ceasefire between Iran and the US on certain issues. For example, the US held off on fully enforcing oil sanctions against Iran to let Iran's oil

exports to China go ahead. On top of that, many unilateral sanctions imposed by other countries against Iran in connection with Tehran's nuclear program were suspended following the JCPOA and are still suspended. Any new nuclear agreement between Iran and the US should tick these three boxes, at the very least.

Nevertheless, Iran is facing severe sanctions, and getting these sanctions lifted is one of Iran's top priorities, even if it is not a priority for the region, Europe, or the US. Araghchi has said, "If we can get the sanctions lifted, we will not put it off for even an hour."

Getting new negotiations off the ground based on a new plan for a new agreement, with the aim of resolving the nuclear issue and lifting related sanctions, is a priority that needs to be addressed today rather than tomorrow.

## Iran registers major increase in agricultural exports

Iran's customs office (IRICA) figures show the country's agricultural exports rose significantly in the five months to late August compared to the same period last year.

IRICA figures published on Saturday showed that Iran had exported \$1.453 billion worth of agricultural products in the five months to August 21, up by 33% from the same period in 2023, Press TV wrote.

The figures showed that shipments had increased by 22% in volume terms to reach 2.657 million metric tons (mt) over the April-August period. Pistachio topped the list of main Iranian agricultural products exports with some \$352 million worth of shipments, followed by tomatoes at \$177 million and apples at \$111 million, showed the figures.

The IRICA said that greenhouse-grown pepper, orange, pistachio, apple and lettuce ship-

ments had shown the highest rise in exports in April-August compared to the same period last year. That came against a 53% drop in the exports of saffron from Iran, it said, adding that exports of various types of peach and watermelon had also declined by around 15%. Iran has seen a significant increase in its agricultural exports in recent years thanks to a more generous government support for the sector and the difference between prices of crops in local and regional markets.

Higher exports have led to increased activity and more jobs in Iran's agriculture sector while it has also led to better development for the country's rural regions.

Government figures released in July showed that Iran's agricultural output had reached 131 million mt by the end of the calendar year to March 20, up from 110 million mt reported in the previous year. According to statistics, agricul-

tural products account for 32% of overall Iranian exports. Almost 80% of the country's rural population makes a living through agriculture. This means Iran enjoys a very suitable capacity for the production and export of agricultural products.

Exporting agricultural and livestock items is one of the most profitable types of business with a high profit margin.

Last year, Iran exported \$6.2 billion worth of agricultural products, 31.5% of which went to Iraq, 11.9% to the United Arab Emirates and 8.3% to Russia. Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, China, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan ranked next, where more than 83% of Iran's export goods headed to these 10 countries.

According to the Research Institute for Planning, Agricultural Economy and Rural Development, the average value of each kilo of agricultural export goods rose by

10.3% from 67 cents in 2022 to 74 cents in 2023, while the figure for imported goods fell by 4.5% from 73 cents to 70 cents during the same period.

Watermelons, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, garlic and onions were the five main export items in terms of weight and pistachios, apples, dates, tomatoes and milk powder were the five main export items in terms of value last year. Agricultural products, along with oil, caviar, hand-woven carpets, were once key Iranian export items. But a multilayered sanctions regime imposed over years has taken a toll on long-distance exports mostly destined for the US and Europe.

As a result, the export of traditional Persian rugs from Iran, a market which once exceeded \$2 billion, has plummeted, so has the sales of pistachios, the popular nibble which was once Iran's main export commodity outside the oil

sector, earning it more than \$1 billion once and providing many people with jobs in an arid area such as the southeastern province of Kerman. The delicacy had even its customers in the United States where it was allowed along with Iranian caviar, saffron and carpets for limited business. But in what was characterized as a pistachio war, the US government settled for a 300 percent tariff on Iranian pistachio imports back in 1986, which helped American growers dominate the local market and then turn their attention to Iran's clients elsewhere.

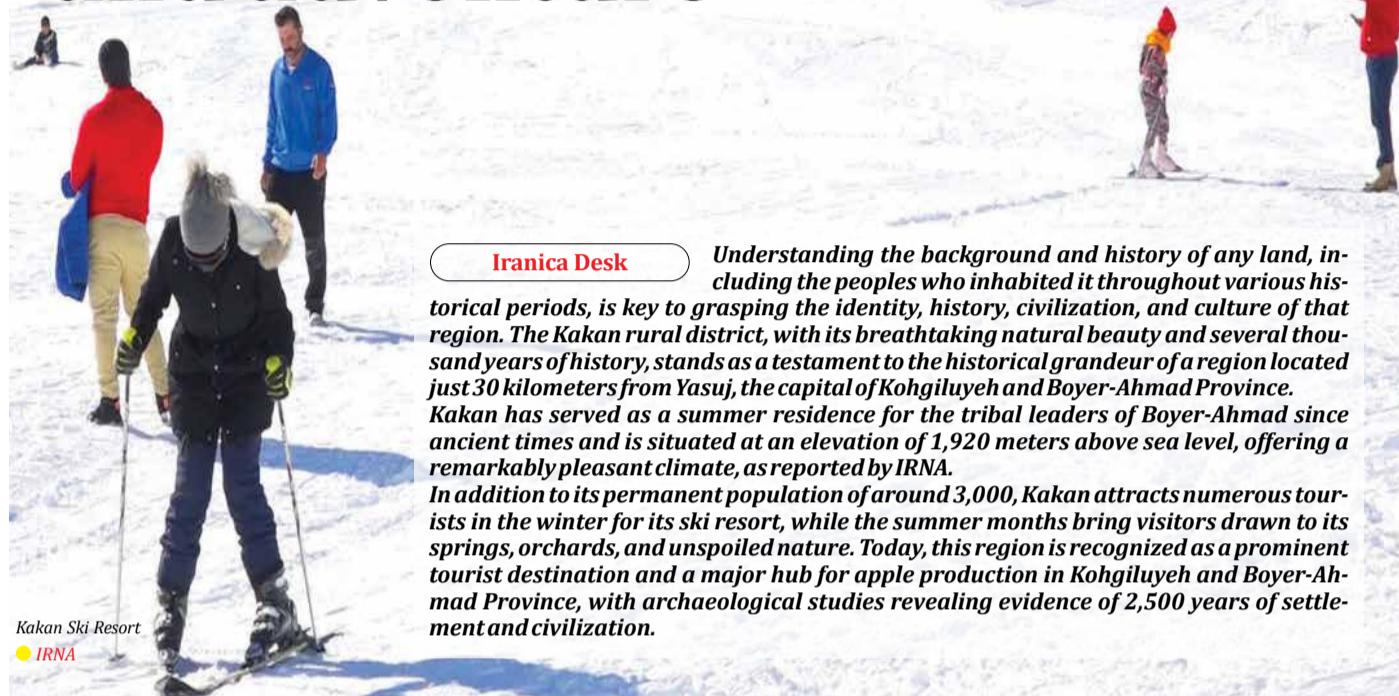
The situation has left Iran to chart out its presence in the neighboring markets. Some of the most important agricultural and horticultural products of Iran for export to neighboring markets are oranges, raisin, citrus fruits and vegetables, high-quality kiwifruit, potatoes, peanuts, rice, dates and grapes. Iranian honey, pomegranates,

carrots, cucumbers and olives have also a legion of customers in neighboring countries and beyond. Iran's climatic conditions and geographical location allow it to produce a variety of high-quality agricultural products, which in addition to providing for foreign exchange earnings enable the country to improve its food security and economic resilience limits. What is needed now is to move towards the specialization of all selected products with relative export advantage. In other words, Iran has to set out long-term plans for promotion of its exports in the world market.

Given the export capacities of Iran's agriculture sector, the country is best advised to initiate long-term contracts for continuous production and export policies and their implementation in the target markets in order to increase the export share of its selected agricultural products.



# Kakan rural district, a blend of history, nature, and adventure



Kakan Ski Resort  
● IRNA

## Iranica Desk

*Understanding the background and history of any land, including the peoples who inhabited it throughout various historical periods, is key to grasping the identity, history, civilization, and culture of that region. The Kakan rural district, with its breathtaking natural beauty and several thousand years of history, stands as a testament to the historical grandeur of a region located just 30 kilometers from Yasuj, the capital of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province. Kakan has served as a summer residence for the tribal leaders of Boyer-Ahmad since ancient times and is situated at an elevation of 1,920 meters above sea level, offering a remarkably pleasant climate, as reported by IRNA. In addition to its permanent population of around 3,000, Kakan attracts numerous tourists in the winter for its ski resort, while the summer months bring visitors drawn to its springs, orchards, and unspoiled nature. Today, this region is recognized as a prominent tourist destination and a major hub for apple production in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, with archaeological studies revealing evidence of 2,500 years of settlement and civilization.*

## Kakan Ski Resort

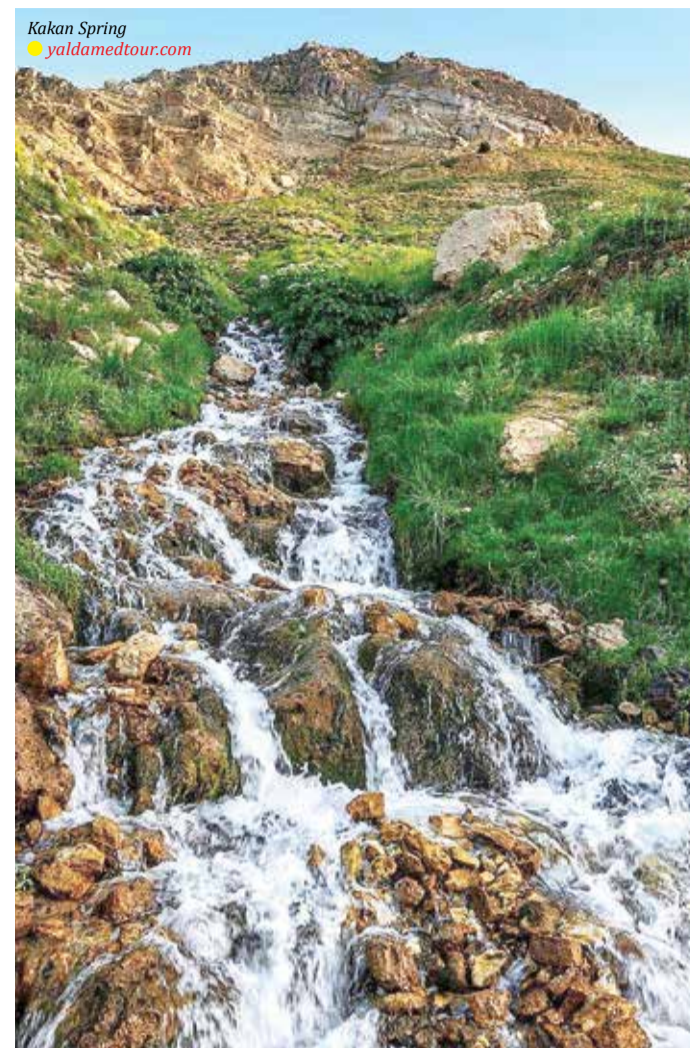
The Kakan Ski Resort is situated 18 kilometers from Yasuj, near a village of the same name, at an elevation of 2,600 meters. Its proximity to cities in central and southern Iran, along with its location on the route to the Margoon Waterfall in Ardakan, Fars Province, has made it a popular destination for visitors from various provinces seeking tubing and skiing in the winter, as well as sightseeing in the summer. This picturesque region is surrounded by apple and walnut trees, and Kakan's position between two seasonal rivers enhances the vitality of life in the area. The Kakan rural district lies 30 kilometers southeast of Yasuj, the capital of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, and is bordered by the towering heights of Mount Dena.

## Tourist attractions

One of the most stunning summer attractions in the Kakan area is the Kakan Spring, which originates from the heart of a towering mountain. Two mineral water factories have been established near this spring, and pipelines have been laid to supply some districts of Yasuj with its refreshing water. Another remarkable feature of this vibrant area is the Salam Spring, which consists of several interconnected large springs surrounded by a two-hectare field lush with apple trees. Additionally, the Bid Kafteh area, a verdant expanse nestled among four mountains, further adds to the beauty and allure of this enchanting region. The Deputy Head of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism,

and Handicraft Organization, Asghar Atashafaraz, stated that studies have revealed traces of life and habitation by Iranian ancestors in the Tal Khali region, which is part of the Kakan rural district, dating back 2,500 years. He emphasized that the Tal Khali Mound was likely inhabited during the Parthian period. Atashafaraz mentioned that a dossier has been prepared for the national registration of two historical sites, including Tal Khali and the Kakan archaeological site. He stressed that the architectural style in the historical area of Tal Khali supports experts' views regarding its significance in prehistory. He pointed out that if cultural heritage is not properly attended to and protected over time, it can

be damaged by various factors, particularly wind and rain. He emphasized that the national registration of historical heritage sites is a prerequisite for obtaining protection funds, serving as an effective measure for preserving these valuable treasures. Kazem Rahmani, the head of the province's Cultural Heritage Organization, announced that a tourist complex has recently been constructed and is now ready for operation. He added that the construction of this roadside complex, designed for the accommodation and hospitality of tourists, began three years ago, and the project will officially commence operations during the upcoming Government Week. Rahmani announced that the



Kakan Spring  
● yaldamedtour.com



Tal Khali  
● hordnews

Kakan tourist complex has been built on a land area of 6,000 square meters and features various components, including accommodation units, a traditional restaurant, a fuel station, and restrooms. He emphasized that when tourists visit recreational sites steeped in history,

they naturally become curious about the paths they are tracing. They often inquire about how their ancestors lived in that region and the lifestyle they led. This curiosity underscores the importance of promoting historical areas as integral parts of Iran's ancient civilization.



## Sohrab Sepehri, a master of poetry and art

Sohrab Sepehri, born in Kashan in 1928, is one of Iran's most celebrated poets and widely recognized as a leading contemporary voice in Persian poetry. In addition to his poetic talent, Sepehri was also an accomplished painter and prose writer. Tragically, he succumbed to leukemia at Pars Hospital in Tehran in 1980, at the age of 51. His grave, located in the village of Mashhad-e Ardahal near Kashan, remains a significant attraction for visitors. Sepehri was laid to rest in Mashhad-e Ardahal, situated near the highlands of the Ardahal district, approximately 42 kilometers west of Kashan, and commonly referred to by locals as Mashhad Qali. Each year, on the second Friday of the Iranian month of Mehr (October), the village hosts a ceremony called Qalishooyan (carpet washing). This unique event, linked to the Hijri calendar and the agricultural cycle, draws many attendees, as noted by Destination Iran. In Mashhad-e Ardahal, the historical shrine of Imamzadeh Sultan Ali bin Muhammad Baqer, dating back to the 13th century CE, also stands. Sepehri's grave lies in the courtyard of this site. Unfortun-

nately, the original tombstone was damaged during restoration work in 2005. A new white tombstone was then designed to replicate the original, and in 2008, it was again replaced with a large black stone over the grave. Born on October 7, 1928, Sepehri came from a family of poets and artists; his paternal grandfather was the first head of the Kashan Telegraphkhane (Telegraph Station). He attended Khayam School for his elementary and middle school education before completing his secondary education at Pahlavi High School. After a two-year teaching program, he worked for the Kashan Culture Department and earned his high school diploma through a literary examination in September 1948. Afterward, Sepehri enrolled in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Tehran University, where he continued his studies. While pursuing his degree, he briefly worked at the Tehran Office of the Oil Company but resigned after eight months. He graduated in 1953 with the highest honors, and during his final university years, he published his first poetry collection, Marg Rang (Death of

Color), influenced by the modernist style of Nima Yoshij. Following his graduation, he participated in various painting exhibitions in Tehran and published his second poetry collection, "The Life of Dreams," in the same year. Over the course of his life, Sepehri produced several other notable works. In 1976, he compiled his complete works into the collection "Eight Books," which documents the spiritual journey of this profound poet and is regarded as one of the most influential anthologies in modern Iranian poetry. In addition to his poetry, Sepehri left behind significant prose works, illustrations, and paintings. His writings have been translated into multiple languages, including English, French, Spanish, and Italian. An avid traveler, he explored numerous countries, including India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Japan, and China, spending some time living in Japan, where he learned the art of wood carving. Sepehri's deep appreciation for Eastern culture profoundly influenced his artistic and literary endeavors.



Image Courtesy of IranCulture



# What US withdrawal from Western Pacific mean for China?



By Fuad Shahbazov  
Policy analyst

## OPINION

On August 11, US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin ordered the deployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72) and its escorts from the West Pacific to the Middle East in light of flaring tensions between Israel and Iran along with pro-Iranian armed forces.

Although the move is aimed at bolstering the US presence in the Middle East and protecting Israel against the potential massive attack of Iran and its backed forces, the withdrawal from another strategically important Western Pacific region left a significant security gap as China's influence rose significantly.

The US-China confrontation peaked over the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea in the last few years. Beijing has long considered the South China Sea as its internal waters, triggering conflict with neighboring Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia. As such, several incidents occurred between Chinese and Philippines border guards in the sea while the US issued warnings to Beijing. Nevertheless, the US and China prefer to maintain a lower profile in this dispute, avoiding confrontation.

The US's recent decision to re-deploy to the Middle East came less than two months after Austin directed the Roosevelt, also on a Pacific deployment, to replace the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group in the Red Sea. Indeed, their arrival will add to the recent surge in US forces in the Middle East and further strengthen the American force's posture there. Nonetheless, the US Navy's absence from the region reinforces China to bolster its influence in the region.

The US ship's partial removal from the Western Pacific region does not represent a particular significance as the balance of naval power in the Western Pacific has been altered in favor of the Chinese Navy. For instance, the US Navy went from having a 76-warship advantage over China in 2005 to having a 39-combatant deficiency in 2023, based on similar ship and submarine comparisons. In this sense, in early 2024, the US deployed five aircraft carriers and their escort ships in the Western Pacific Ocean to cover the disputed East China Sea and South China Sea. Indeed, Chinese navy ships have regularly sailed through the tension-filled seas and



An F/A-18F Super Hornet prepares to make an arrested landing on the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) on August 10, 2024.  
● US NAVY

intermittently conducted maritime provocations and intimidations to those of other Asian countries, which are among the US treaty allies in the Indo-Pacific region.

China's global ambitions, particularly in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea, are evident. Hence, since 2019, Beijing has boosted the production of ships, including submarines and aircraft carriers, to quell potential threats in its close vicinity. In 2024, Beijing confirmed that it is testing its third aircraft carrier, the Fujian, which, when fully operational, will be the world's largest conventional aircraft carrier. Unlike its predecessors, the Fujian is equipped with advanced technologies such as electromagnetic catapults and arresting gear, allowing it to launch a variety of aircraft more efficiently.

Unlike the US and other regional states, Japan nervously watches Beijing's rising ambitions and naval exercises in its immediate border, particularly following the US retreat from the region. It is unlikely that China will downgrade its naval exercises and efforts to alleviate neighbors' concerns while obtaining harsh rhetoric against Taiwan and other states. On the other hand, China will further strengthen ties with Russia, particularly between the navies, as the two held joint naval drills in 2024, forcing the US to focus more on protecting its own borders rather than projecting power abroad. This shift could diminish the United States' ability to counter China's strategic moves in Asia-Pacific and beyond.

The full article first appeared on Caliber.Az.



## Philippines Washington's new front line against China



By Nick Aspinwall  
Journalist

## OPINION

When the US and Philippine militaries concluded their largest-ever joint military exercises on May 8, they cemented a surprisingly robust security alliance that is crucial to containing China — both in the South China Sea and beyond.

Under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the Philippines has re-embraced its historic security ties with the United States. Washington has been happy to increase arms transfers and make new infrastructure promises that bring the Philippine government in Manila closer to Washington and its regional allies, including Tokyo. It's a stark contrast with Marcos Jr.'s predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, who favored closer ties with Beijing and in 2020 temporarily withdrew the Philippines from an agreement allowing US forces to visit and train in the country.

China has responded to Marcos Jr.'s turn toward the United States by firing water cannons at and ramming Philippine vessels multiple times in the South China Sea, where Beijing has competing territorial claims with several countries including the Philippines. In June, a Philippine navy sailor on a resupply mission to the disputed Second Thomas Shoal lost his thumb in a confrontation with armed members of the Chinese Coast Guard. It's the most consistent pressure Beijing has applied since an international court of arbitration ruled in favor of Manila's maritime claims in 2016.

So far, Washington has been eager to help Manila, with whom it's had a mutual defense treaty since the Philippines gained independence from the United States in 1946. Filipinos overwhelmingly opposed the turn toward China made by the otherwise popular Duterte administration and mostly viewed the United States as a valued partner in maintaining the

country's territorial sovereignty.

There have been hints towards wider potential alliances. This year's Balikatan, or "shoulder-to-shoulder," joint military exercises took place primarily off the Philippine coasts and in maritime areas facing China, from the southern tip of Palawan, a western island, to the remote northern islands of Batanes province, which lie fewer than 125 miles from Taiwan.

In Ilocos Norte, the closest mainland Philippine province to China, the United States and the Philippines recently simulated repelling a coastal invasion using howitzer guns and Javelin missiles, then followed it with a maritime strike exercise days later.

During Balikatan, troops conducted maritime exercises in the waters around Batanes, which the Philippines is fortifying with US help in case of a conflict in Taiwan or the Luzon Strait, which separates the two countries. China respond-



US troops take part in joint US and Philippine army drills in Laur, Philippines, on August 9, 2024.  
● EZRA ACAYAN/GETTY IMAGES

ed by sending a warship and two other vessels close to an island where troops were conducting war games, according to the Philippine Coast Guard.

Balikatan's expansion into the South China Sea and the Luzon Strait served as "a clear message" on the scope of US-Philippine security," said Aaron-Matthew Lariosa, a defense analyst and journalist focused on Philippine-US military ties. This year's exercises were the first time the United States and the Philippines had conducted exercises directly in disputed areas of the South China Sea and marked the largest presence the US military has staked out in Batanes.

The United States also briefly deployed its Typhon mid-range missile launcher for the first time in the Asia-Pacific. The launcher can reach targets in Taiwan and mainland China along with Chinese military bases in the South China Sea — a considerable increase in range over existing missile systems.



It's the first time the United States has deployed such a system in Asia since it withdrew in 2019 from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which banned ground-launched missiles with ranges between 500 and 2,500 kilometers.

The Typhon was not fired during Balikatan, but "its presence in Northern Luzon demonstrates the reach of its missiles and its intended purpose to lock down key maritime terrain," Lariosa said.

US and Philippine military leaders have repeatedly harped on the need to shift Manila's military goals to external maritime defense, away from an internal focus such as counterinsurgency operations targeting Islamic State-backed extremists and armed rebels from the communist New People's Army. The Philippine government's campaign against the latter group, in particular, has been associated with ongoing accusations of human-rights violations; but some politicians and military members are wary of ignoring the domestic counterinsurgency.

Manila has an ongoing effort to modernize its military, which relies on outdated equipment that keeps it several steps behind China. But its modernization

program is "progressing at a slow rate," Lariosa said.

"The Philippine military won't reap the fruits of modernization until the later part of the decade to the mid-2030s," Lariosa said. "Until then, Manila has to rely on the [United States] for support in a conflict."

For now, the United States is making unprecedented commitments to the Philippines that stretch beyond military aid. During an April trilateral summit between Marcos Jr., US President Joe Biden, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, the parties announced an economic corridor on the main Philippine island of Luzon, the first project in Washington's Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment — its counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative.

The corridor will serve Luzon by linking infrastructure projects such as ports, railways, clean energy, and semiconductor supply chains throughout the island, said Don McLain Gill, a geopolitical analyst and lecturer at the Department of International Studies at Manila's De La Salle University.

It will stretch from economic zones north of Manila at Subic Bay and Clark —



A US Army Mid-Range Capability (MRC) Launcher arrives as part of the capability's first deployment into theater on Northern Luzon, Philippines, on April 8, 2024.  
● JESSE JOHNS/US ARMY PACIFIC

both former US military bases — to major ports in Manila and Batangas, a city two hours south of the capital.

The project could alleviate the Philippines' reliance on Chinese imports and allow Manila to open its critical minerals market to Japan and the United States,

Gill said. At present, more than 90 percent of such mineral exports go to East Asian countries, and the bulk of the country's nickel is exported to China.

The corridor will also serve as a major test of Washington's ability to provide an alternative to Chinese promises of

loans and lavish infrastructure projects through the Belt and Road Initiative. Chinese companies pledged billions in railways, airports, renewable energy projects and smart cities throughout the Philippines during the Duterte presidency. However, very few of these projects came to fruition, and a majority of Filipinos polled last year expressed disapproval of China. Marcos has expressed optimism over the new economic initiative's potential, telling reporters that "within the year," the Philippines would start "to see the wisdom of having that trilateral agreement".

While the relationship between Manila and Washington appears strong now, it could be vulnerable to changing political winds. Duterte and his family remain popular — his daughter, Sara Duterte, is the Philippine vice president. The election of US presidential candidate Donald Trump could also see Washington pull back from or otherwise shift its defense commitments in the Asia-Pacific.

"While the current administration seeks to address China's expansionist ambitions," Gill said, "there is a possibility that this trend may change yet again."

The article first appeared on Foreign Policy.

## Chinese-funded port reawakens Thailand's colonial ghosts

By Hadley Spadaccini & Marc Makornwattana  
Scholars

### OPINION

In 1907, the then-Siamese government signed over the provinces of Battambang, Siem-reap, and Sisophon to French Cambodia. The treaty outlined the new land and sea borders between French Cambodia and Siam — now Cambodia and Thailand, respectively — whose interpretation became a point of contention between the two countries in 1972. Since then, relations between the Thai and Cambodian governments over the disputed maritime territories have been amicable, but Thai nationalist group pressure has stymied recent attempts to resolve the issue.

With the establishment of the Chinese-funded Ream port in Cambodia, there is increasing concern that the port could be converted to military use to strengthen Chinese naval power projection or be a competitor to Thailand's Eastern Economic Corridor. The port and secrecy around its actual use are reigniting concerns first established in the 1907 treaty and inflaming Thai worries about what the port means for its maritime territories, the stability of the Gulf of Thailand, and relations with China and the United States.

### Sovereignty, anti-colonialism in Thailand

Thailand was the only Southeast Asian country to retain its independence in the face of Franco-English great power competition in the 19th and 20th centuries. Until the late 1800s, Siam had expanded its control over Laos, Cambodia, and the Malayan states as tributaries, with parts of those regions being under varying legal and administrative control of Siam.

Siamese territorial borders were unclear to the French and English, and the extent to which each tributary could exercise its own autonomy varied widely. When the French and English began colonizing areas over which Siam had suzerainty, this increased pressure on Siam to define its borders and adopt the Western concept of sovereignty, eventually conceding territories and enacting unfair trade policies to maintain independence.

A major sore point of colonization was the 1855 Bowring Treaty with Great Britain, which granted significant, and arguably inequitable, trade privileges to the British in Siam. This was followed by the 1856 Franco-Siamese trade agreement, which closely mirrored the terms of the Bowring Treaty. Such trade agreements and other conciliatory policies were seen as necessary by then King Mongkut to maintain Siamese in-

dependence from great powers.

These factors contributed to the 1893 Franco-Siam Crisis, which ended Siam's empire-building attempts and laid the groundwork for the loss of Laos, Cambodia, and the Malayan states. The last of these treaties was the Franco-Siamese Treaty of 1907, which established land and sea boundaries between Cambodia and Siam that have yet to be firmly determined by either country.

Once the absolute monarchy was abolished in 1932, a new national identity was formed on the basis of Thailand's ability to maintain sovereignty and adherence to anti-colonialist concepts. Great power competition led to nearly a century of national humiliation for Thailand and has entrenched deep mistrust against overbearing foreign powers. With the secrecy around the Ream port and the potential for Chinese interference, Thailand is becoming apprehensive about the project and its potential to bring great power competition back into the Gulf of Thailand.

### Implications of Ream naval base on Thai sovereignty

Cambodia interpreted the maritime borders between Thailand and Cambodia in 1972 to include a greater chunk of territory for the Cambodians,

creating an overlapping claims area of roughly 26,000 square kilometers that contains billions of dollars' worth of untapped natural resources. If extracted, they would provide greater energy independence to either nation. Many experts consider these claims unique, even radical, in the field of international law. The Thai government rebutted the claims a year later, citing the original 1907 treaty.

In 2001, following regime changes and political upheaval in both Thailand and Cambodia, the two nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding that created a commitment to resolving the maritime disputes while creating a Joint Development Area in some parts of the disputed territory. Yet, political roadblocks within both nations prevented a lasting agreement. In 2024, the governments of both nations continue to discuss the best path forward, although they have been recently affected by Thai nationalist backlash.

The historically friendly and compromising relationship between Thailand and Cambodia makes the Ream port a troublesome wedge between the two countries. China and Cambodia vehemently deny that the Chinese-funded port is operating covertly as an overseas base for the Chinese navy. Yet, satellite imagery shows the continued presence of Chinese warships while Cambodia continues to boost its military cooperation with China. Experts in the West and in Thailand have expressed concern over the potential for China to use this base to project its naval power in the crucial trade routes through Southeast Asia, possibly connecting it to the militarized Chinese ports scattered across the South China Sea.

For Thailand, the move is an unwelcome reminder of the country's history with Franco-British great power competition over a century ago. With Cambodia modernizing its navy and receiving the backing of China, the overlapping claims area in the Gulf of Thailand could become a flashpoint between the two historically friendly countries. The Thai government



Chinese naval vessels at the Ram Sea Port are preparing to train the Cambodian navy on December 3, 2023.  
● FACEBOOK

is further concerned about the port because the areas immediately surrounding Ream have historically been strategically important. The French first constructed the nearby Port of Kampong Saom in 1955, choosing the location for primarily strategic means, including the solidification of French control over strategic waters between Thailand and Vietnam. During the Vietnam War, the Vietnamese communists leveraged the port to stockpile and transport military supplies along the Ho Chi Minh trail. Furthermore, the region around the port does not lie on major traditional maritime trading routes, making Thailand even more dubious about its purpose given the secrecy around its construction. Thailand's economy has already been negatively affected by the US-China trade war, as approximately 25% of all Thai imports come from China, while around 15% of all Thai exports go to the US. Thailand has started to see China as a more reliable partner than the US, being geographically closer and more embroiled in the Thai economy, but still seeks to strengthen trade and military relations with the US as a counterbalance. This is despite skepticism that the US has an interest in Thailand beyond maintaining US hegemony in East Asia. The construction of the Ream

port, regardless if it were to serve as a military base or trading hub, may tip the scales further in favor of the Chinese regardless of Thailand's desire to remain neutral.

Thai government officials have expressed that the increasing influence of US-China competition in the Indo-Pacific could pose a serious security threat if ignored. Many Thais, feeling the growing pressure of the rivalry, believe the best chance of maintaining true independence is through stronger relations with the middle powers, including Japan, Australia, and India.

As in the past, countries with superior military and economic might, countries with which Thailand has long sought to maintain good relations, are putting pressure on the nation to make a choice. Unfortunately, the echoes of Thailand's past dealings with great power competition are becoming louder, originating with the 1907 Franco-Siam treaty and reverberating through to the Ream port. Thailand understands that it takes little time for great power competition to ignite greater conflicts, and the Ream port has the potential to be the spark that sets it off.

The article first appeared on Responsible Statecraft.



Tea Banh (2nd-R), former Cambodian Defense Minister, reviews Chinese naval officers on board a Chinese corvette at the Ream Naval Base.  
● CAMBODIA DEFENSE MINISTER



## Wrestling U17 World Championships:

# Afshar grabs gold as Iran wins three freestyle medals

**Sports Desk**

Reza Afshar walked away with the ultimate prize of the 80kg contests as Iran collected three freestyle medals across five weight classes at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Amman, Jordan.

The Iranian prodigy claimed emphatic victories over opponents from Macedonia, Armenia, Romania, and the United States before rounding off his campaign with a win against Georgian Nikoloz Maisuradze.

Both wrestlers were put on the activity clock in a cagy showdown with Afshar taking the criteria lead in the second period before he held off the Georgian as it finished 1-1. This was a second final showpiece featuring an Iranian on Saturday after Amirabbas Alizadeh fell short against Uzbekistan's Ulugbek Rashidov in the 48kg event. Alizadeh enjoyed a decent run toward the final, defeating wrestlers from Peru, Ukraine, and the US, but Rashidov proved to be in a league of his own as he capped the decider in a minute and 47 seconds with technical superiority.

Abolfazl Mohammadnejad won a third freestyle medal for the country in Amman – a consolation bronze in the 110kg contests. The Iranian began his cam-



Reza Afshar celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the freestyle 80kg gold medal at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Amman, Jordan, on August 24, 2024.

UWW

**Greco-Roman crown**

Saturday's results came after the Iranian Greco-Roman squad had lifted a third successive team trophy at the U17 Worlds.

Iranians won three golds and bronzes apiece to finish atop the table with 140 points, with Uzbekistan (113pts) and Azerbaijan (105pts) in the following spots.

Armin Shamsipour dominated the 48kg contests, outscoring his opponents 37-1 in four bouts – including a 10-1 triumph over Uzbekistan's Khuniddin Abdugarimov in the final.

Amir-Mahdi Saeidinava clinched a second Greco-Roman gold for Iran, thanks to a 6-2 win against Ukrainian Vladyslav Pokotylo in the 65kg showdown, while Danial Izadi defeated German Ole Ayke Stening 4-0 for the 92kg title.

Abolfazl Karami (51kg), Emadrezta Mohsennejad (80kg), and Ali-Asghar Dadbakhsh were the Irania bronze medalist in the Greco-Roman competitions.

paign with a 6-4 win against Russian Ali Bairamukov, participating as a neutral athlete, and then came out victorious against Canada's Jagroop Dhinsa (11-0)

before suffering a 4-3 loss to Yedige Kassimbek of Kazakhstan in the semifinals. Mohammadnejad managed to bounce back for a 2-1 win against India's Singh Jas-

pooran and share the third podium with Azerbaijan's Mukhamed Gantemirov. Meanwhile, American Michael Mocco introduced himself as a rising super-

heavyweight star when he cruised to the gold with four superiority wins – including a 10-0 hammering of Kassimbek in the final. Elsewhere, Iranians Ary-

an Mehralizadeh and Yasin Tayyebi finished the world championships empty-handed after defeats in the 55kg and 65kg events respectively.



IKF

## Iranian karatekas runner-up in Asian Cadet, Junior Championships

**Sports Desk**

A total of 12 medals, including four golds, saw Iran's cadet and junior teams finish second to Japan at the Asian Championships in Manila, Philippines. Japan dominated the medal table with a remarkable 14 gold medals, as well as one silver and six bronzes, while Kazakhstan collected double golds, five silvers, and four bronze medals to finish third.

Iranian girls took credit for three of the country's four golds in the kumite competitions, as Parmis Alipour (cadet -47kg), Saghar Jandaghi (cadet -61kg), and Mahla Sedaghat (junior +66kg) walked away with the ultimate prize in their respective events.

Amir-Ali Taymouri was the sole Iranian male gold medalist in Manila, thanks to an 8-0 triumph over Jordanian Ahmed Alsauod in the cadet -63kg fi-

nal. Meanwhile, male junior participants Abolfazl Hamdamjoo (-61kg) and Vahab Shahmir (-76kg) added two kumite silvers to Iran's medal haul, with Elina Safajoo settling for a runner-up finish in the girls' junior -59kg contests after a final defeat against Nao Inada of Japan. Maryam Gorzin (female +61kg) and Mohammad Abdollahi (male -52kg) took a couple bronzes in the cadet competitions, with

Abolfazl Sadeghiseresht (kata male), and Ghazal Fat'hi Cheshmeh (female -48kg) also finishing on the third podium in the junior events.

A second kata bronze for Iran came in the boys' cadet and junior team contest, where the trio of Sina Nouri, Amirreza Mosalman, and Armin Javani recovered from a last-four defeat against Saudi Arabia to beat Hong Kong 39.3-37.3 and share the third podium with Vietnam.

## Dorostkar retakes helm as Iran FS head coach

**Sports Desk**

Pejman Dorostkar was reappointed as the head coach of the Iranian freestyle wrestling team on Saturday, replacing Mohsen Kaveh.

In his previous spell in charge, Dorostkar, 48, steered the country to the third place behind the Russian Wrestling Federation and Team USA at the 2021 World Championships in Oslo, before successive runner-up finishes in the next two editions in Belgrade, though the Russians were absent in the 2022 event and then their results were

deemed null and void in the team table the following year. Iranian wrestlers collected a combined 18 world medals – including six golds – during Dorostkar's 28-month stint. Former coach Kaveh, who took over from Dorostkar last December, left the job by the end of his contract last week after his five-man squad had mixed results and performances at the recently-finished Olympic Games in Paris.

Iranians left the French capital with four medals, though a first freestyle gold since Hassan Yazdani's triumph in

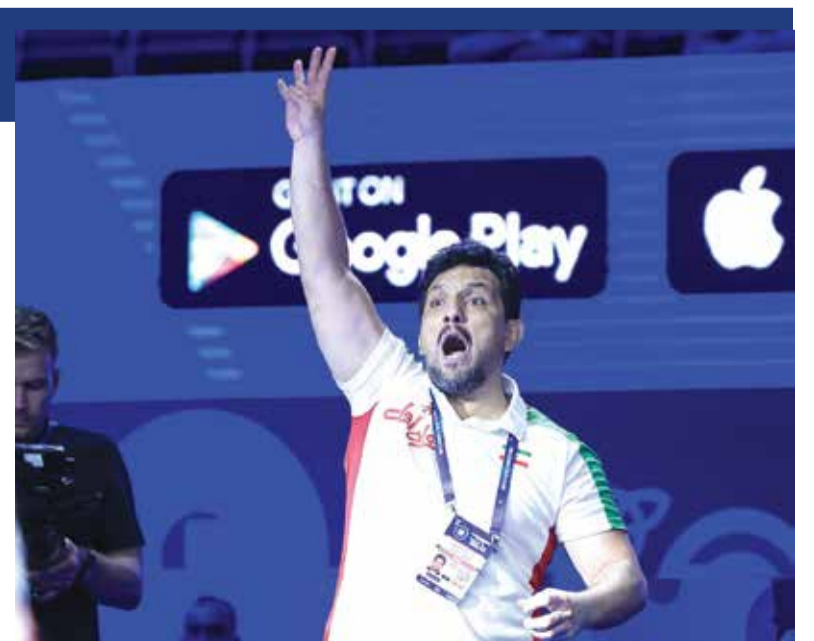
Rio 2016 proved to be elusive for the country.

Yazdani's quest for a second Olympic gold ended in vain following a 7-1 loss to Bulgaria's Magomed Ramazanov in the 86kg final – during which the Iranian sensation struggled with a recurring shoulder injury from the get-go and had to call for treatment on several occasions.

Despite an emphatic run to the 65kg final, Rahman Amouzad also settled for a runner-up finish after a 10-3 defeat against Japanese newcomer Kotaro Kiyooka. Reigning world champion

Amirhossein Zare', meanwhile, was the clear favorite to grab the superheavyweight gold in Paris but finished second to Georgian Geno Petriashvili, suffering a 10-9 loss in a thrilling 125kg final.

Young Iranian Amir-Ali Azarpira enjoyed a decent 97kg campaign as he recovered from a first-round defeat against Bahrain's Akhmed Tazhudinov to beat American great Kyle Snyder for a joint bronze, while Younes Emami left the Games empty-handed following a fall defeat against Kyle Dake of the United States in the 74kg quarterfinals.



UWW



# All Hezbollah rockets hit Israeli military bases: *Nasrallah*



The photo shows a Hezbollah UAV over northern occupied territories on August 25, 2024. **JALAA MAREY/AFP**

**International Desk**

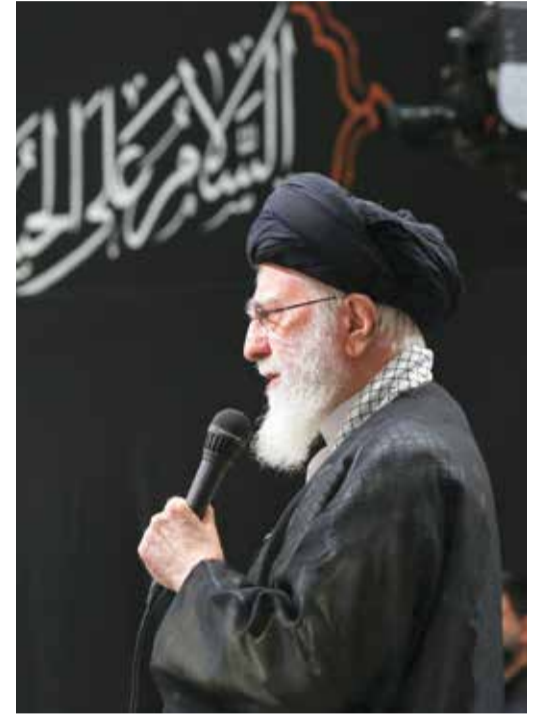
Lebanon's Hezbollah carried out a large-scale attack on Israeli positions on Sunday in a response to the regime's assassination of its top commander Fuad Shukur, with the resistance movement's leader saying, "All Hezbollah's rockets targeted Israeli military sites." Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said the main targets were the spy bases and the air defense bases that were hit. He underlined that the movement did not target civilians in the retaliatory operations, saying Israel had crossed "all redlines" in its aggression against southern Beirut. The Lebanese resistance move-

ment said it had fired 320 Katyusha rockets towards Israel and hit 11 military targets during its operation. Israel's military claimed to have foiled a much larger attack with pre-emptive airstrikes after assessing that Hezbollah was preparing to launch the barrage, using 100 jets to strike more than 40 Hezbollah launch sites in southern Lebanon. However, Nasrallah noted that Israel failed to hit any of Hezbollah's strategic or ballistic missiles. The regime's strikes had no impact on Hezbollah's retaliatory operations, he said. Nasrallah also said Israel is covering up losses inflicted as a result of

Hezbollah's retaliatory operation. Earlier on the day, the resistance group said in a statement, "Our military operation today is completed and accomplished." The Lebanese resistance group also dismissed Israel's claim that the group's attack had been foiled with pre-emptive strikes, saying it had been able to launch its drones as planned and that the rest of its response to Shukur's killing would take "some time." Three deaths were confirmed in Lebanon and one in Israel, where damage appeared to be limited. Hezbollah indicated it was not planning further strikes yet and Israel's foreign minister said the regime did not seek a full-scale war.

Meanwhile, the US, Israel's main supporter in its war on Gaza, said President Joe Biden was closely following the events. "At his direction, senior US officials have been communicating continuously with their Israeli counterparts. We will keep supporting Israel's right to defend itself, and we will keep working for regional stability," National Security Council spokesperson Sean Savett said. The UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon and the UN's special coordinator's office in the country called on all sides to cease fire, calling the developments "worrying." Egypt also warned against the dangers of a new war front opening in Lebanon. However, Palestinian resistance movement Hamas hailed strikes by Hezbollah as a "strong and focused response." "We emphasize that this strong and focused response, which struck deep inside the Zionist entity, is a slap in the face" for the Israeli regime, Hamas said in a statement. Yemen's Ansarullah group also congratulated its Lebanese ally on a "great and brave" attack on Israel. The Lebanese movement has been exchanging fire with Israel in support of its ally Hamas since the beginning of the regime's war on Gaza in October. The cross-border violence has killed more than 600 people in Lebanon, according to an AFP tally. On the Israeli side, authorities have announced the deaths of at least 23 soldiers and 26 civilians.

## Fight against injustice, oppression proceeding: *Leader*



**khamenei.ir**

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the fight against oppression has been going on since before the era of Imam Hussein (AS), adding that the battle has taken different forms in different eras. He made the remarks during a Sunday ceremony attended by students mourning Arba'een, the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Shia Imam, Press TV reported. Ayatollah Khamenei said that the battle has been "ongoing" between the Hussein front, which is fighting against oppression, and the front of injustice and oppression. "The fight between the Hosseini front and the Yazidi front is not terminable," he added. The Leader also noted that these two fronts had existed before the era of Imam Hussien (PBUH) until today and it will remain the case. "This war has different forms. In the era of sword and spear, it has one form. In the era of atom and artificial intelligence, it has another. But it exists," he asserted.

# Iran reiterates right to avenge Israeli killing of Haniyeh

**International Desk**

Iran says it has a right to retaliate against Israel for the assassination of Hamas's leader in Tehran, stressing that "punishing the aggressor is Iran's right." During the past days, several top diplomats from regional and European countries have spoken over the phone with Iran's newly-appointed Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi to discuss developments in the region, especially Iran's decision to avenge the assassination of the Hamas chief in Tehran on July 31. Ismail Haniyeh was killed while he was in Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian. Iran and the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas have blamed the Israeli regime for the assassination of Haniyeh. During a phone conversation with French Foreign Minister Stephane Sejourne, Araghchi said the Islamic Republic considers the assassination as "an unforgivable violation of Iran's security and sovereignty," adding that



Abbas Araghchi

"Punishing the aggressor is Iran's right." Sejourne called on Iran "to do everything to avoid a regional conflagration" that he said would be "in nobody's interest," a ministry statement from Paris said on Friday. In his conversation with David Lammy, the UK's foreign secretary, Araghchi said Iran is against the spread of war in the region. However, he said that Tehran reserves the right to retaliate against any aggression. "The Islamic Republic does not want to extend the war or raise regional tensions, but it will not deviate from its absolute right to respond to the terrorist act by the Zionist regime," a foreign

ministry statement quoted Araghchi as telling Lammy. Lammy, for his part, called on Iran to play a role in easing tensions in the region. The British foreign minister posted on X that he reiterated to Araghchi that, "We must avoid any escalation in the Middle East." Iran's top diplomat also spoke by the phone with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, reiterating Tehran's legitimate right to respond to Israel. Araghchi also told his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan that Muslim countries, particularly Iran and Turkey, should hold more consultations to counter the Israeli regime's destabilizing moves in the region. Araghchi said West Asia faces intensification of crises and the Israeli regime's moves to cause more tension and spread instability across the region. Iranian political and military leadership, including Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, and President Pezeshkian, have vowed to avenge Haniyeh's blood.

**Notice of tender for export sale No. Z/1403/16**

**Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company**

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 140,000 metric tons of Iron Ore Concentrate (%Fe:66.5) on basis of F.O.B at Rajaei Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: [www.geg.ir](http://www.geg.ir) All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 09:00 A.M. on 10. Sep.2024 to Golgohar complex in sirjan (50 km in shiraz road). Bidders are invited to the transactions commission department of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 09:00 A.M. on 10.Sep.2024 at the office of the Seller.

Analysis %		
Fe%	66.50	Ave.
FeO%	24	Min
	28	Max
P%	0.05	Max
S%	1	Max
SiO2%	3.0	Max
Al2O3%	0.7	Max
CaO%	0.9	Max
MgO%	3.0	Max
Moisture%	3	Max
Size Ave.	98%<3 mm	
	80%<0.45 mm	

**GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.**

**Notice of tender for export sale No Z/1403/15**

**Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company**

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70,000 metric tons of Pellet (%Fe:65.00) on basis of F.O.B at Barco Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: [www.geg.ir](http://www.geg.ir) All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 09:00 A.M. on 10. Sep.2024 to Golgohar complex in sirjan (50 km in shiraz road). Bidders are invited to the transactions commission department of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 09:00 A.M. on 10.Sep.2024 at the office of the Seller.

Analysis %		
Fe	65.00	Min
FeO	1.0	Ave
P	0.05	Max
S	0.01	Max
SiO2	3.5	Max
Al2O3	0.7	Max
CaO	0.9	Max
MgO	2.5	Max
CCS (kg/p)	Ave 250	
8-16 mm%	Min 90	
-6 mm%	Ave 5	
A.I%	Max 3.8	
T.I%	Min 95	
Prosity%	19-24	
Reducibility%	Min 90	

**Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company**



# Millions of Muslims mark Arbaeen to renew allegiance to Imam Hussein



Millions of Muslims across the world mark Arbaeen, the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Shia Imam and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad

(PBUH). Each year, pilgrims from different countries traveled on foot to get to Imam Hussein's holy shrine, in the Iraqi city of Karbala, to commemorate the event, which falls

on Sunday this year. The Arbaeen march is one of the largest annual religious congregations in the world, where the participants pay tribute to Imam Hussein (PBUH), who is the all-

time icon of fighting injustice, oppression, and despotism, Press TV reported. The third Shia Imam and his 72 companions were martyred in the Battle of Karbala in southern

Iraq in 680 AD while resisting the much larger army of the despot Umayyad ruler of the time, Yazid. People in the Iranian capital of Tehran, under the banner of "Those left behind from Arbaeen," take part in a symbolic march to the holy shrine of Shah Abdol-Azim Hasani in the southern town of Rey. Some of the participants at Tehran's march wore the keffiyeh and carried Palestinian flags in a show of support for the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, who have been enduring a genocidal Israeli war since October 2023. In an X post on Sunday, Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani said, "The great lesson of Arbaeen is to move on the path of truth, support the oppressed, and practically disavow of the Yazidis of today's world, whose killing machine has martyred more than 40,000 innocent Palestinian citizens, mostly women and children, in Gaza for about eleven months." "The blood of the oppressed Palestinians will win over the Yazidis' sword of oppres-

sion, God willing," he added. In Istanbul, thousands gathered to mark Arbaeen, with a ceremony that wrapped up a week of commemorations. The 19th Universal Arbaeen Mourning Ceremony kicked off in the Bağcılar district, organized by the Ahl al-Bayt Scholars Association and the Ahl al-Bayt Youth Association. This year's event zeroed in on the theme "From Karbala to Gaza," with speakers weighing in on the tragedies in both cities. Attendees roundly condemned the Israeli occupation's genocide in Palestinian territories, calling for an end to the violence. The ceremony drew to a close with a show of solidarity with the Palestinian people. Lebanese Muslims gather near the Sayyida Khawla shrine in Baalbek, eastern Lebanon, for the Arbaeen commemorations, as tensions rise following Hezbollah's announcement of a large-scale attack on Israel and Israeli forces' strikes on Lebanon. One devotee said the attack came during "sacred days."

## Iranian sound designer Yousefi awarded at Venezuela film festival

Iranian sound designer Benia Yousefi has won the Best Sound Design Award at the Valencia International Film Festival in Venezuela for his work on the short film 'Don't Open the Door' directed by Bahador Roshan. Yousefi received the Sound Cue Award for his sound design on the film, which was chosen for its outstanding sound and editing. This is not Yousefi's first award, as he had previously won the best sound design award at the 40th Tehran International Short Film Festival, IRAN wrote. The Valencia festival celebrates films that touch the hearts of audiences and inspire them in new ways. The festival welcomes cre-



ative ideas, innovative plans, and unique images that bring the magic of cinema to life. The festival aims to provide a platform for every film, director, and artist to shine and share

their love with the audience. Valencia looks forward to films that will move, amaze, and inspire audiences, leaving a lasting impression on every viewer.

## Calligraphers pays tribute to Indian independence



An exhibition showcasing the art of Persian calligraphy is underway in Tehran, celebrating

the 78th anniversary of India's independence. The show, titled 'Panegyrics to India in Persian Poetry', is featuring over 30 works of calligraphy created by more than 30 contemporary Iranian calligraphers. The pieces are inspired by Persian poems written in praise of India over the past millennium. The exhibition is being held at the Mir Emad Museum in Tehran's Saadabad Cultural-Historical Complex, and will run for three weeks starting from August 27, 2024. The event is organized by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center of the Indian Embassy in Tehran. Calligraphy and poetry are highly revered art forms in Iran, and have a rich and vibrant history in India as well. The exhibition aims to highlight the cultural ties between the two countries through the intersection of these two art forms.

 **Mohammad Ali Rajabi**  
 Cartoonist



## Iran's actress Zohreh Hamidi dies at 67

Iranian actress Zohreh Hamidi passed away on August 25 after a battle with cancer. She was 67. The actress had been undergoing treatment for cancer and had previously spoken about her struggles with the disease. In a recent interview with ISNA, Hamidi had said she was feeling better after undergoing chemotherapy, but was still taking medication that was affecting her health. She had also spoken about how the support of her fans had helped her during her illness.

Her debut movie was 'The Heroes of Delgosha Alley' (1992), directed by Hassan Hedayet. Hamidi had a long career in Iranian cinema and television, appearing in films such as 'An Umbrella for Two', 'The Hostage', 'Traveler of Rey', and 'The Devil's Eye'. She had also worked on several TV series, including 'Born Again', 'Let's Not Turn Around' and 'Passion to Fly'. The actress had begun her career in the 1970s and had worked with several prominent Iranian directors.

