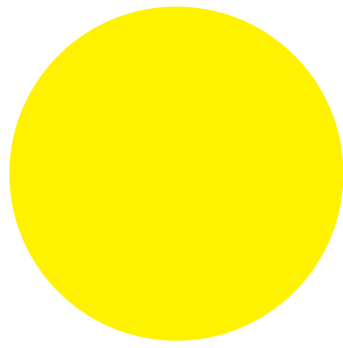


Regional states back Syria after militants resurgence

Arab League stresses need to respect Syria's territorial integrity

7 >



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IRAN 2025 Strategic Opportunities in Post-Western World

SPECIAL ISSUE

4 >



Parliament, government resolved to cooperate

By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

OPINION

Despite some criticism from supporters, the government of President Masoud Pezeshkian remains committed to national unity and cooperation. The Iranian president, accompanied by his cabinet members, paid a visit to the parliament yesterday. In a three-hour joint session, with some parts held behind closed doors, lawmakers and government officials shared their views on various issues. What stood out in the remarks of Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and President Pezeshkian was the need for continued cooperation between the government and parliament to address the issues of the people.

The session took place amid controversy surrounding a bill ratified by the parliament on women's dress code, which has sparked opposition from many of Pezeshkian's supporters. According to the parliament speaker, the so-called "Chastity and Hijab Act" is set to be implemented on December 13. Many of the president's fans have called on him not to enforce the law. [Page 8 >](#)



Japan allocates finances to promote Iran's wetland management

7 >



League of Historical Cities accepts Iran's Mashhad as member

8 >



Daily gasoline output up by 8m liters in 100 days: NIORDC

2 >

Europeans seeking either to reinstate sanctions or extend JCPOA

National interests may require Iran to engage in talks with US

By Ebrahim Behnam
Staff writer

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE

Representatives from Iran and the European troika – France, the UK, and Germany – launched a new round of talks in Geneva on Friday, following several years of strained relations. With both sides agreeing to continue the talks, the question now is whether we can be optimistic about a breakthrough and the US, under Donald Trump's presidency, will eventually join the negotiations. Iran Daily spoke with Sasan Karimi, a scholar and researcher on international issues, to explore these issues.

IRAN DAILY: The first round of new talks between Iran and Europe took place on Friday, attended by deputy foreign ministers from Iran, the UK, France, and Germany. According to official statements, both sides have agreed to continue the talks. Given the strained relations between Iran and Europe over the past three years, can we regard the decision to continue talks as a positive sign?

KARIMI: Yes, we can be optimistic that the continuation of talks will enable both sides to reach agreements on contentious issues and existing challenges. [Page 7 >](#)

1.5m fiber optic connections to be established across Iran in a year

Economy Desk

Managing Director of Telecommunication Company of Iran Mohammad Jafarpour announced a plan to establish 1.5 million fiber optic connections across the country over the next year. Speaking on Sunday at the unveiling of the "Hezartar" project, a major fiber optic expansion initiative, Jafarpour highlighted the company's focus on delivering high-speed internet to homes and businesses nationwide, IRNA reported.

The official went on to explain that the goal includes 1.5 million fiber optic ports, with 560,000 of those connections being planned within Tehran.

"We are committed to providing fiber optic service wherever there is demand in Tehran, and the models implemented in the capital will be extended to other provinces," he noted.

Customer satisfaction and responsive service structures will be critical components of the project, Jafarpour emphasized. He also stressed the importance of oversight, saying that careful monitoring of implementation will help ensure high-quality service.

Jafarpour added that Tehran could serve as a model for fiber optic deployment nationwide.

He urged regional telecommunications teams to adhere to established standards, noting the significance of maintaining consistent quality across different areas.

Foreign producers obliged to activate 5G on mobiles imported to Iran

A senior official at Iran's Communication Regulatory Authority (CRA) has said that foreign manufacturers have been obliged to activate 5G technology on the cell phones imported to the country.

Mohammad Hassam Javvadzadeh, the deputy head of the CRA, said on Sunday that although Iranian customers have paid for 5G on some mobile phones, the technology has not been activated on their devices, IRNA reported.

To resolve that issue, the CRA has held negotiations with the manufacturers of well-known brands, who have promised to enable 5G technology on the phones imported to Iran by the start of 2025, he added.

If they fail to fulfill their obligations, the import and registration of their mobile phones will stop, he noted.

President upbeat about resolving shortages via Parliament's collaboration

Economy Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian, speaking at a joint session of Iran's Parliament and government held Sunday in marking the Parliament Day, expressed hope for resolving national issues, particularly energy sector shortages, through cooperation between the government and Parliament.

"I hope we can join hands to solve these shortages and problems. Addressing these challenges is only possible with your help and the support of the people," Pezeshkian said, reported president.ir. He highlighted a three-hour closed session between the government and Parliament to discuss national issues, noting, "We

will work to overcome the challenges we face through solidarity, cooperation, and consultation."

The president also provided details from the meeting, stating, "I presented a report on the first 120 days of the 14th administration's activities to the Parliament's speaker and members. We have endeavored to form a cabinet that reflects unity and have sought to utilize diverse perspectives."

He addressed the government's urgent measures at the start of his term, noting, "We were initially confronted with issues such as nurses' demands, debts to wheat farmers, retirees' concerns, and other matters, which we tried to resolve as much as possible." Pezeshkian went on to say

that despite these challenges, we prepared the draft of budget bill on time and submitted it to Parliament. I thank the MPs for approving the general outlines of the budget. We will work to address its shortcomings through legislative approvals and implement the budget effectively."

During the session, Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf said that people and investors experience the benefits of reduced inflation and economic stability, particularly in investment security. "We need synergy, and the ultimate beneficiaries of this cooperation must be the people," Qalibaf stated. The Parliament speaker added that the joint session with the government



focused on economic issues, particularly improving living standards.

He also pointed out two key aspects of the energy sector, saying, "First, we are consuming too much

energy and must address this. Second, we are wasting energy, which must be stopped through collaboration between the government, Parliament, and the people."

Following the joint session on Sunday, the public meeting of the Parliament started with the agenda of reviewing the budget bill for the next Iranian year (to start March 21, 2025).

Gov't sets strategy to attract foreign investment



Economy Desk

Foreign investment is a key driver of economic development for all countries as it plays a crucial role in technology transfer, job creation, infrastructure development, trade and export growth, international relations, reducing dependence on domestic resources, and attracting skilled talent. However, foreign investment also presents challenges, such as over-reliance on foreign companies, inadequate control over strategic resources, and capital outflows.

According to IRNA, the administration of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian is addressing these challenges by formulating policies to attract and manage foreign investments.

This includes enhancing legal transparency, safeguarding investor rights, and creating a secure and stable investment environment. Efforts are also underway to strengthen ties with neighboring countries, which have always been strategically important to Iran.

In this context, Abdolnaser Hemmati, the economy minister, recently visited Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to participate in the 28th Global Investment Conference. His trip, at the invitation of Saudi Arabia's Minister of Investment, aimed to explore new avenues for foreign investment.

Hemmati met with key figures such as the President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the OPEC Fund President, and the heads of global investment promotion agencies.

Hemmati's diplomatic efforts reflect the broader strategy of expanding Iran's economic diplomacy with neighbors and East Asian powers.

Earlier, he had traveled to Uzbekistan to attend the 9th Annual Meeting of the

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), demonstrating Iran's commitment to engaging with both Western and Eastern partners.

The annual meeting of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), served as a key platform during Hemmati's trip to Saudi Arabia. He discussed international best practices in foreign investment and proposed hosting the 30th WAIPA conference in Tehran in 2026.

Hemmati also secured agreements to hold specialized workshops on foreign financing, international marketing, and innovative funding methods for public and private sectors in Iran.

Meetings in Riyadh with 18 ministers from other countries and leaders of financial and development institutions further underscored Iran's proactive approach. The discussions aimed at enhancing bilateral investment opportunities and facilitating economic interactions between Iranian entrepreneurs and foreign markets.

Hemmati's visit to Saudi Arabia marks a continuation of efforts to address shared challenges and expand economic ties based on a win-win approach. As Iran strengthens its economic diplomacy, it seeks to revitalize international financial relations and improve the livelihood of its people.

The Iranian government's focus on economic priorities in foreign policy is expected to create significant opportunities for growth.

Enhanced cooperation with Saudi Arabia and other neighboring countries, particularly in tourism, trade, and cultural exchange, could have a profound impact on Iran's economic development, signaling a new chapter in regional collaboration and national prosperity.

Daily gasoline output up by 8m liters in 100 days: NIORDC



Economy Desk

The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) announced an increase in gasoline production by 8 million liters and diesel by 7 million liters within the first 100 days of the 14th administration.

According to IRNA, Mohammad-Sadeq Azimifar highlighted NIORDC's performance during the initial months of the new administration, noting that the company faced challenges such as fuel shortages, particularly in gasoline and diesel production, fuel quality concerns, and the incomplete value chain from fuel to downstream products.

Azimifar explained that NIORDC developed six main strategies based on

the Seventh Development Plan to address these issues as the first strategy focuses on increasing production, with emphasis on enhancing quality and completing the value chain to reduce the production-consumption gap.

Since the start of the new administration (July 31), fuel reserves, especially gasoline and diesel, have failed to be at optimal levels, Azimifar said. "To address this, NIORDC prioritized improving efficiency at existing refineries as commissioning new refinery projects is a complex process."

In the first 100 days, NIORDC increased the country's average daily gasoline production from 97 million liters to about 105 million liters. Diesel production rose from 111 million liters to 118 million liters.

EAG supports Tehran's efforts to exit FATF high-risk list

Economy Desk

The Eurasian group on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism (EAG) issued a statement welcoming Iran's efforts to strengthen its national anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CTF) systems. The group reaffirmed its commitment to providing technical assistance to help Iran exit the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) high-risk countries list, according to a report by IRNA on Sunday.

Iran's representatives presented detailed updates on the country's AML and CTF measures, particularly over the past two years, during EAG meetings.

Key EAG members, including Russia, Belarus, India, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, along with observer members such as Japan, which chairs the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on money

laundering, expressed their support for Iran's actions.

They pledged to offer technical assistance to facilitate Iran's removal from FATF's high-risk category.

The statement from the EAG's plenary session, held Friday, emphasized the commitment to technical support. This statement was officially published on the EAG's website.

"The plenary session recognized Iran's efforts to enhance its AML and CTF frameworks and decided to provide technical assistance to support Iran's progress reporting to the FATF's International Cooperation Review Group (ICRG) and aid in its removal from the high-risk list," the statement said.

This decision was made in the presence of other observers, including the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, UN committees, FATF, Asian Development Bank, the United States, Japan, the UAE, and others.

Scenic and cultural highlights of Larestan in Fars Province

Larestan, situated in Fars Province, is one of Iran's captivating southern cities, distinguished by its unique charm and character. The city attracts numerous visitors, both Iranians and international travelers, drawn by its rich tourist attractions. With a warm and dry climate, Larestan is adorned with lush palm groves and an intricate network of water reservoirs, which not only enhance its beauty but also contribute to its culinary culture.

Larestan is a city where history, culture, and natural beauty converge, making it a fascinating destination for those eager to explore the southern charm of Iran.

Geographically, Larestan shares borders with Darab and Jahrom to the north, Firuzabad and Kangan in Bushehr Province to the west, and Lamerd and Gerash, as well as Hormozgan Province, to the south. Located 806 meters above sea level, Larestan enjoys an average annual temperature of 23°C and receives approximately 203mm of rainfall each year. The climate is characterized as warm and dry, with mild winters and very dry summers, making the best seasons for visiting the city fall, late winter, and early spring, destinationiran.com wrote.



Tomb of Nader Shah's Mother

A must-visit landmark, the Tomb of Nader Shah's Mother is one of Iran's national heritage sites, dating back to Islamic times. Perched on a high mound, this monument is visible from all entry and exit points

of the city and is located near the historic Ejdeha Peykar Castle. Its construction features stone elements from the Timurid and Safavid periods, adding to its historical significance.

Historical significance

Larestan's historical significance dates back to the Sassanid period when it served as a vital center for the construction of fire temples. By the late 14th century, it became a hub of mintage, with its coin widely circulated across the Persian Gulf and Indian coasts. During the Safavid era, Larestan emerged as an important city in southern Fars Province, with roots tracing back to the time of Gorgan, an Iranian hero. The ancient roads that connected Firuzabad and Estakhr to Siraf Port and the south reflect the rich cultural and civilizational heritage of the region from the pre-Islamic era.

Today, the town of Lar, the center of Larestan, is divided into two sections: the old town and a newer area built after the earthquake of 1960, connected by a highway and situated just six kilometers apart.

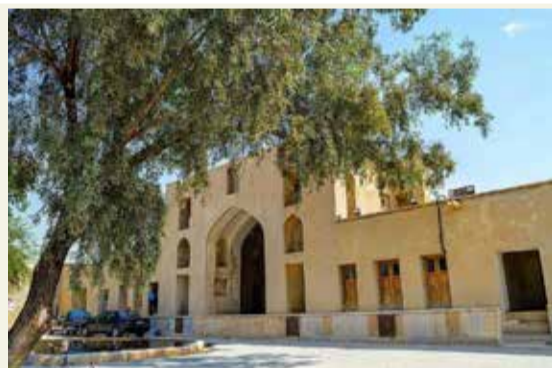


Qeysarieh Bazaar

The Qeysarieh Bazaar in Lar is a vibrant hub that showcases the architectural brilliance of ancient Iranian design. Dating back 1300 years, this bazaar reflects a diverse array of architectural styles from the pre-Safavid to the Qajar periods. Its chaharsuq design is particularly noteworthy. Cultural heritage experts suggest that the architects of the Vakil Bazaar in Shiraz and the Qeysarieh Bazaar in Isfahan drew inspiration from this historical marketplace.

Caravanserais

In the old town of Lar, remnants of caravanserais from various periods, particularly the Safavid era, can be found. Among these, Golshan and Motamed caravanserais stand out, situated within the historic complex of Lar and its old neighborhoods.



Neshat Garden

Dating back to the Afsharid era, Neshat Garden occupies one hectare in the old town of Lar. This garden has served as a significant headquarters since the Safavid era, offering a glimpse into the region's historical landscape.

Cisterns

Larestan is also known for its ingenious cisterns, such as Dahan Shir — an architectural marvel resembling a lion's mouth — and a network of qanats. These structures, built to combat the region's intense summer heat, are not only functional but also serve as beautiful monuments. The traditional architecture of Larestan is exemplified in over 1500 unique water reservoirs, designed to collect and transfer rainwater.

Museums

To provide deeper insights into the culture and customs of Larestan's inhabitants, several museums have been established. Notable among them are the Anthropology Museum, located in Neshat Garden, as well as the Anthropology Museum of Evaz and the Anthropology Museum of Karishki village in Beyram district. These museums are invaluable resources for visitors looking to enrich their understanding of the city's heritage.

Pir-e Sorkh Tomb

Located southwest of the old town of Lar, the Pir-e Sorkh Tomb is a Safavid-era monument adorned with intricate paintings and ancient stonework, adding to its historical tapestry.

Azar Faranbagh Fire Temple

Standing at an impressive height of approximately 20 meters, the Azar Faranbagh Fire Temple is situated en route to Kariyan village, from Harm village in the Juyom District. This significant monument lies 42 kilometers southwest of Juyom, at the midpoint between Siraf Port and Darabgerd. Recognized as one of the largest and most prominent temples in Iran during the Sassanid era, the Azar Faranbagh Fire Temple was a crucial site. For followers of Zoroastrianism, this temple holds profound historical and spiritual significance, making it a must-visit attraction for those interested in ancient Persian beliefs and heritage.



Hormoud Protected Area

The Hormoud Protected Area is another important attraction that draws many visitors to the region. Nestled between Fars and Hormozgan provinces, this protected area encompasses a vast expanse of 201,625 hectares. It is recognized for its unique habitat conditions, making it a significant site for research and exploration of diverse plant and animal species, particularly the mouflon, which thrives in the tropical ecosystems. The richness of biodiversity and the opportunity for ecological study make Hormoud a captivating destination for nature enthusiasts and researchers alike.

Shah Abbasi Bridge

Another striking landmark near Lar is the Shah Abbasi Bridge, a remarkable example of historical architecture that remains in relatively good condition. Though some attractions are located outside the city, the journey to this bridge is well worth the drive. Dating back to the era of Shah Abbas I, the bridge measures about 20 meters in length and stands five meters high. It gracefully spans the Shur River, showcasing the ingenuity of Persian engineering. Unfortunately, remnants of the original bridge were largely destroyed during the construction of a new concrete bridge, highlighting the challenges of preserving historical structures in the face of modernization.



Salt domes

The remarkable salt domes in the region are yet another geological wonder, formed by the accumulation of salt deposits over millions of years. These impressive structures have risen to the earth's surface and continue to grow over time. The salt domes are enriched with a variety of mineral deposits, including sulfur, uranium, iron, sulfate, and granite, reflecting the geological diversity of the area. These formations not only contribute to the striking landscape but also present opportunities for scientific study regarding the earth's historical climate and geochemical processes.

Iran 2025

Strategic opportunities in post-Western world



By Navid Kamali
Foreign affairs
expert

**OPINION
EXCLUSIVE**

As the world approaches 2025, it faces a series of fundamental changes and complex challenges that Iranian policymakers and decision-makers must understand promptly and accurately. The liberal international order established after World War II is now on the verge of collapse, and the world has entered a period of uncertainty followed by rapid and sometimes shocking developments, such as the wars in Gaza and Lebanon. Clearly, these new conditions present both threats and opportunities for our country, requiring intelligent analysis of the upcoming situation and appropriate strategic planning. In these circumstances, correctly identifying emerging geopolitical trends and adopting smart approaches to preserve and enhance national interests has become more crucial than ever. Below, I will highlight some of these trends.

One of the most important trends that should be considered by Iranian policymakers is the phenomenon of irrational responses in the international arena. This phenomenon refers to a situation where political and social actors, including governments, political groups, and even influential individuals, exhibit reactions that seemingly contradict their rational and long-term interests.

This trend, rooted in the increasing polarization of societies and the spread of misinformation, has significantly reduced the predictability of international actors' behavior. For example, we can point to the decisions of the first Trump administration to withdraw from international treaties, adopt protectionist economic policies in the age of globalization, or show unconventional reactions to international crises. This phenomenon may result from domestic pressures, the influence of social media, or rapid changes in public opinion. For our country, which has always faced numerous challenges in the international arena, understanding these complexities and adapting its diplomatic strategies accordingly is of particular importance. This is especially crucial in conditions where unilateral sanctions and international pressures continue as it can provide new opportunities for creative and multilateral diplomacy for our country. Policymakers must consider this new reality, set aside old and ineffective methods, and design strategies that offer greater flexibility in dealing with sudden changes in international politics.

Another trend that should be carefully considered and analyzed is the growing inconsistency in the external commitments of countries. This phenomenon refers to a situation where countries adopt different and sometimes contradictory approaches when facing similar international issues. This inconsistency may be rooted in specific political, economic, and even geopolitical issues and challenges of each country. For example, we can refer to the difference in countries' reactions to various international crises, such as the Palestinian issue and the Ukraine war. While some countries react strongly in one case, they may remain silent in a similar case.

This situation, which indicates the increasing influence of domestic and geographical factors on countries' foreign policies, can create various opportunities and challenges for our country, Iran. On the one hand, this inconsistency can make it difficult to predict the behavior of our international partners and pose challenges for planning our long-term interaction with them. On the other hand, this situation can provide an opportunity to strengthen strategic relations with emerging powers and like-minded countries. Our policymakers must design strategies that offer greater flexibility in dealing with changes in other countries' policies by understanding this complexity. Moreover, strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations with countries that share common interests with our country can help reduce the vulnerability caused by this inconsistency.

Alongside these developments, the emergence of new influential voices in the international arena presents a new perspective for our country's foreign policy. This phenomenon refers to the entry of non-governmental and non-traditional actors into international politics, which can influence global decision-making. These new actors include famous entrepreneurs (like Elon Musk), social media influencers with millions of followers on Instagram and other social networks, international NGOs, and even famous artistic celebrities who can shape and guide global public opinion. It is evident that in the coming months and years, our country should seek to increase its constructive communication and interaction with such individuals and organizations to secure its desirable image and interests in the mediated world.

This transformation, accompanied by the gradual decline of Western hegemony, could pave the way for the formation of a new multipolar order in which independent countries like our dear Iran play a more important role. In this regard, strengthening effective relations with emerging Asian powers, especially China and India, and active and non-passive participation in new regional and international cooperation structures, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS group, can secure our country's strategic interests. Moreover, our policymakers should provide strategies for more effective engagement with the global community, including strengthening

digital diplomacy, cooperation with international NGOs, and creating mechanisms to increase our country's communication and dialogue with global intellectual and business leaders.

Questions to consider

Given what has been stated, in these complex conditions, five fundamental questions should be posed to our policymakers, as answering them can determine the future path of our country's foreign policy:

1. How can we ensure our country's security in a collapsing world order? This issue is particularly important for our country, which has always emphasized independence and self-reliance, as traditional international institutions like the United Nations have become largely ineffective. Therefore, our country must quickly design new strategies to ensure its security and interests. This may include strengthening regional alliances, developing deterrent defense capabilities, and participating in multilateral security initiatives.
2. How can we understand and exercise the concept of sovereignty in the contemporary world? Given external pressures and efforts to limit our country's power in various hard and soft areas, this issue requires a realistic approach while remaining committed to revolutionary ideals. In fact, our policymakers must find a wise way to preserve and strengthen national independence and sovereignty while actively participating in international structures.
3. How can we participate in re-viving and redesigning the glob-

al trade system? For years, economic sanctions have become a serious challenge for Iran and have provided the ground for the erosion of some valuable resources and capacities of the country. While striving to lift sanctions, our country must find ways to increase its role in the global economy, despite existing limitations. This could include strengthening economic cooperation with like-minded countries, participating in regional economic initiatives such as economic corridors, or even focusing some of the country's existing resources on developing high-value-added industries.

4. How can we maintain our country's innovative and technological capabilities under international restrictions? Maintaining and enhancing the country's technological capabilities is vital to preserving our country's competitive power in the coming years. Therefore, our country must design strategies for developing advanced technologies, especially in areas such as artificial intelligence, renewable energies, and biotechnologies. This may include revising the country's educational policies and guiding elites to technological fields, increasing investment in research and development, strengthening international scientific collaborations, and creating innovation centers in various industrial and economic fields.

5. Given that climate issues have become a global concern for public opinion, how can we participate in global initiatives to combat these changes and thus present a positive image of our country's constructive role on the global stage? It is evident that greater attention from our policymakers to the issue of climate change can be an opportunity to increase international cooperation and attract foreign investment to our country's industries. Fortunately, our country has high potential in this area due to its geographical location and natural resources, and international participation can help rapidly develop infrastructure for utilizing renewable energies and maintaining and securing sustainable water resources for our country. Moreover, participation in this area can act as a lever to reduce international pressures and improve relations with other countries. Given the increasing importance of environmental issues in global politics, Iran can strengthen its position in international negotiations by adopting pioneering positions in this field.

In general, and considering what has been stated, securing our country's national interests in 2025 requires an accurate understanding of global developments, intelligent strategic planning, and coherent implementation of developed policies. On this path, maintaining national cohesion, strengthening domestic capacities, expanding international cooperation, and maintaining flexibility in the face of unexpected domestic and foreign developments will be the keys to success.



President of Iran Masoud Pezeshkian (l) and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian arrives in Basra, Iraq, on September 12, 2024, as part of a three-day visit to the country. [president.ir](https://www.president.ir)

Republic of



The ongoing political transformation of the world, accompanied by the gradual decline of Western hegemony, could pave the way for the formation of a new multipolar order in which independent countries like our dear Iran play a more important role.



Has anyone noticed what BRICS+ is telling us about new world order?



By Jean-Daniel Ruch
Former Swiss diplomat

OPINION

In the beginning, there were four: Brazil, China, India, and Russia. Following their first summit in 2009, they expanded to become BRICS with the accession of South Africa in 2011 and then nine in January 2024.

At the 16th BRICS summit this October in Kazan, Russia, two African countries, Egypt and Ethiopia, and two Middle Eastern countries, the United Arab Emirates and Iran, made up what people now refer to as BRICS+.

Thirteen among the more than 30 countries that have formally expressed their interest in membership are now associated with BRICS+: four Southeast Asian countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam), two Latin American countries (Cuba and Bolivia), three African countries (Algeria, Nigeria, Uganda), two Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) and two European countries (Belarus and NATO member Turkey). They were given the status of "partner states" in Kazan. To say that the Americans are not enthusiastic about the appeal of this new global club would be an understatement. Should the success of the summit in Kazan be interpreted as a sign of the failure of their strategy to isolate Russia? Worse still, are we witnessing the beginning of the end of the American century?

In addition to the nine member states and 13 partners, the summit was also attended by some representatives of countries whose presence was rather unexpected, such as the Serbian Deputy Prime Minister, the very Russophilic Alexander Vulin. However, it was the presence of UN Secretary-General Antonio Gutierrez that caused outraged reactions, especially in Ukraine. "The UN Secretary-General declined Ukraine's invitation to the first global peace summit in Switzerland. However, he has accepted the invitation of the war criminal Putin to Kazan," hammered the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry. This juicy skewer of participants is notable for its heterogeneity. There are dictatorships and democracies, Muslim, Christian and secular countries, economic superpowers and failed nations, some have characterized as rogue states. Are what we are witnessing merely an updated reiteration of that elastic non-aligned movement launched in the 1960s by Yugoslavia's Prime Minister Josip Tito and Indian Jawaharlal Nehru, which encompassed two-thirds of the world but never achieved any real global influence? No, something else is happening here. In the space of 60 years, the balance of global power has clearly changed.

(Almost) global group with growing influence

Antonio Gutierrez is a realist. He understands how historically significant the bubbling events within the BRICS states are. He was in Kazan because it was important. To underline that point, consider a few figures. The nine countries now called BRICS+

account for more than half of the world's population. Their combined gross national product is already greater than that of their rivals in the G7, the Western directorate comprising the US, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, and the UK. The gap is likely to widen in the coming years since the BRICS+ growth rate is around 5%, while Western economies are stagnating at 1-2% — and some, like Germany's, are officially in a recession. Despite these new geo-economic realities, the international order established by the West after World War II has been resistant to change. The UN Security Council will remain secure in the hands of its five permanent members — three Western states plus China and Russia — for a long time to come. However, the BRICS states are not seeking to change the United Nations Charter or create a parallel system to the United Nations. Rather, they are focusing on the economic and financial governance of the world.

Parallel to the founding of the United Nations, the victorious Western powers, at the Bretton Woods conference in 1945, created institutions designed to regulate world finance. The dollar became the world's reserve currency, making every country vulnerable to US sanctions. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which provide financial assistance to countries in difficulty, are run like shareholder meetings, in which the US holds a decisive vote. Together with the other Western nations, they possess an absolute majority. It is these two pillars of Western power in the world that the BRICS states hope to compete with. But how?

It would be literally impossible to reform the international financial institutions in such a way as to reduce Western influence in them. However, they cannot prevent the creation of parallel systems of payment. The BRICS countries are thus working on three main tasks:

A mechanism for processing international payments independent of SWIFT — from which Russia was excluded after its attack on Ukraine in 2022.

An intensification of trade that is invoiced in local currencies instead of dollars, in order to accelerate the "de-dollarization of the world".

A development bank that competes with the World Bank and finances infrastructure projects. There are currently 96 projects underway with a total volume of \$32 billion.

Critics of the BRICS states doubt that they are able to really compete with the dollar. Despite a steady erosion, the greenback still accounts for 55% of the reserves of the national banks. And when it is replaced by other currencies, these tend to be Western currencies, with the notable exception of the Chinese renminbi. Nevertheless, the trend is clear and the potential of BRICS+ is there. The formation of alternative transportation corridors

is part of the same strategy to break free from Western, i.e., American dependency.

Land routes vs. sea routes

In a globalized and interdependent world, the transport of goods represents a strategic dimension. From cars to cell phones, hardly any industrial activity exists that does not include and depend on an accumulation of natural resources and semi-finished products from all corners of the world. Over the last hundred years, goods have primarily been transported by sea. Today, sea freight accounts for 70% of world trade. You only have to look at a map of the 128 US naval bases around the world to realize how important the sea lanes are to Washington's power strategy. From the Sea of Japan to Malacca, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Panama, Rotterdam, and New York, Washington's ambition — sometimes supported by its British ally — to dominate the seas is obvious. With its "Belt and Road" initiative, China has been trying for several years to develop land routes to, compete or at least complement the existing sea routes. It is therefore very revealing that one of the flagship projects highlighted in Kazan was the North-South Corridor, which will ultimately connect St. Petersburg with India, without passing through any Western-controlled areas. Is it worth remembering that India has become the largest importer of Russian oil products, despite the very audible gnashing of teeth in Washington?

The full article first appeared on Fair Observer.



Exterior of the New Development Bank headquarters in Shanghai, China
NEW DEVELOPMENT BANK



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian (front row, 4th-L), leaders and representatives of other BRICS+ countries and guest countries, and heads of international organizations pose for a group photo during the BRICS Plus leaders' dialogue in Kazan, Russia, on October 24, 2024.
XINHUA

Azmoun relishing fresh start in Asian football

Sports Desk

When Sardar Azmoun joined UAE Pro League club Shabab Al Ahli in July, his move was deemed by many as the beginning of the end for the Iranian striker.

Three months on, the 29-year-old has been quick to silence those critical of his decision by bagging 12 goals and double assists in 14 appearances across all competitions.

Azmoun was a rare product of the Iranian youth system to kickstart his senior career in European club football, when he joined Rubin Kazan in the Russian Premier Liga from Sepahan under-19 side back in 2013.

Azmoun then went on to take the Russian league by storm for the best part of nine years, scoring 85 goals in 208 outings for three teams – as well as memorable strikes against Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid in the UEFA Champions League.

His 52 strikes and 20 assists in 79 league games helped Zenit St. Petersburg lift the top-flight trophy on four occasions, while the Iranian won the top scorer prize in the 2019/20 season before being named the Player of the Season the following campaign.

Time came for Azmoun to embark on a new chapter by joining one of the major European leagues as he signed for Bayer

Leverkusen in January 2022.

Azmoun struggled to make an impact at Bayer Leverkusen, scoring five goals and providing teammates with five assists in 44 matches, leading the club to loan him to Serie A side AS Roma for the start of the 2023/24 season.

His season-long spell in the Giallorossi colors was similarly underwhelming, with three goals in 29 appearances – most of which came as a substitute – under Jose Mourinho and Daniele De Rossi as he battled a couple of injury setbacks, while committed to international duty for the AFC Asian Cup earlier this year.

On his return from the loan spell in the Italian capital, Azmoun failed to report for Leverkusen's first preseason training session in July, indicating he would have no part to play in head coach Xabi Alonso's plans for their Bundesliga title defense.

All the downward trajectory in his career, regarding goals and game time, led the Iranian fans and pundits to believe the Team Melli talisman's best years were behind him, and his move to the Emirati league, despite reported interest from La Liga side Sevilla, only reinforced this notion.

Azmoun, however, has had other ideas.

He marked his Asian club debut with a goal in his home country, as Shabab Al Ahli hammered



Sepahan 4-1 in the AFC Champions League Elite playoffs, though Shabab Al Ahli failed to progress to the league phase of the competition after the defeat against Al Gharafa in the final

round of the preliminaries. Azmoun's tally of six goals in as many games has seen the Iranian sit third in the domestic league's leading marksmen chart, while Shabab Al Ahli

trails Sharjah on top the table by one point with a game in hand. His latest contribution came in an AFC Champions League Two visit to Al Hussein of Jordan in Group D, where

his superb volley strike from behind the box inspired the Emirati side to a comeback 3-2 victory and a knockout place in the continent's second-tier club competition.



Djokovic eager to beat Sinner, Alcaraz at Grand Slams

CORINNE DUBREUIL/ATP TOUR

REUTERS – Novak Djokovic is ready to challenge Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz at the Grand Slam stage when he returns to action at the Australian Open after an underwhelming campaign this year, the 24-times champion said.

After winning three of the four Grand Slams last year, the 37-year-old has endured a dry spell in 2024, failing to win any majors for the first time since his injury-plagued 2017 campaign.

World No. 1 Sinner dethroned Djokovic at Melbourne Park en route to his maiden Grand Slam win and the 23-year-old Italian also beat the Serb in the Shanghai Masters final in October.

Reigning U.S. Open champion Sinner added the ATP Finals title to his tally, while Djokovic pulled out from the season-ending event with injury.

Djokovic withdrew from the French Open quarter-finals due to a knee injury, while 14-times champion Rafa Nadal lost to Alexander Zverev in the first round, allowing Alcaraz to dominate Roland Garros.

The 21-year-old Spaniard Alcaraz also retained his Wimbledon title. However, Djokovic clinched his maiden Olympic gold in Paris, defeating Alcaraz three weeks after their Wimbledon final—proving his resilience.

"I feel I can still play at the highest level. Sinner and

Alcaraz have established themselves as the two best players in the world, not to forget (Alexander) Zverev," Djokovic said in an interview with Gazzetta dello Sport on Saturday.

"All of them will be the main candidates to win the Slams and other titles. However, physically and mentally I am ready to play my tennis again and I have the feeling that I can challenge these guys, my experience can come in handy," Djokovic, who slipped to seventh in the ATP rankings, said 2024 was perhaps his least profitable season in the last 10 years. "So next year I will play more tournaments and the Grand Slams will be my priority. I will give my best to win, of course if

my body allows me to," he said.

Asked what advice he would give Sinner, Djokovic said: "It seems to me that he is doing well even without my advice. But winning your first two Slams and becoming No. 1 is one thing, staying at that level for years is another." Following the retirements of Roger Federer, Andy Murray and Rafael Nadal, Djokovic remains the last man from his generation still pushing for the crown. Former Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion Murray has joined Djokovic's coaching team as the latter bids to win a record-extending 11th Australian Open when the season's first major starts on Jan. 12.

Kyrgyz striker Kojo set to join Esteghlal

Sports Desk

Kyrgyzstan international Joel Kojo is nearing a deal with Persian Gulf Pro League club Esteghlal.

The Ghana-born striker bid an emotional farewell with Dinamo Samarqand fans on Saturday, after scoring the winner in a 1-0 victory over Sogdiana in the final round of fixtures of the Uzbekistan Super League.

Dinamo head coach Vadim Abramov confirmed Esteghlal's interest in Kojo after the game, saying the clubs have had an "oral agreement" on the move, according to Varzesh3.

"Kojo is looking for a new challenge in his career, and we don't want to force him to stay. He has one year left on his contract, but he will be released if his \$300,000 asking price is met," Varzesh3 quoted the Uzbekistani coach as saying.

Kojo, 26, netted 10 goals and provided his teammates with four assists in 26 domestic appearances to help Dinamo finish



championAsia

eighth in the Uzbekistan top-flight table. Capped 23 times for Kyrgyzstan, Kojo has 10 goals under his belt since making his international debut in June last year – including a double in the 3-2 home defeat against Iran in November's World Cup qualifier.

Esteghlal struggles in the 10th place of the Iranian league standing with 11 points after 10 games, while sitting seventh in the West Zone's 12-team table in the AFC Champions League Elite ahead of today's game against Al Ahli Saudi in Jeddah.

Antetokounmpo's triple-double lifts Bucks to sixth straight win



REUTERS – Giannis Antetokounmpo recorded his third triple-double of the season with 42 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists as the Milwaukee Bucks extended their winning streak in NBA to six games, beating

the visiting Washington Wizards 124-114 on Saturday night.

Damian Lillard had 25 points and 10 assists, Brook Lopez scored 18 points, AJ Green added 13 off the bench and Taurean Prince had 11 for Milwaukee, which won for the eighth time in its past nine games. Antetokounmpo registered his first career 40-point triple-double and went 15-for-24 from the field.

Washington lost its 14th straight game and is two setbacks away from matching its franchise-record losing streak of 16. The Wizards were 9-for-32 (28.1 percent) from 3-point range.

Jordan Poole led Washington with 31 points. Former Bucks point guard Malcolm Brogdon tallied season highs of 29 points and 11 rebounds, and Jonas Valanciunas and Corey Kispert had 16 points apiece.

Regional states back Syria after militants resurgence

Arab League stresses need to respect Syria's territorial integrity

International Desk

Many countries in the region threw their support behind the Syrian government and its territorial integrity amid a surprise offensive by foreign-backed militants.

Jordan's King Abdullah II on Sunday in a phone call with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said Jordan "stands by the brothers in Syria and its territorial integrity, sovereignty and stability."

Iraqi prime minister also told Syrian President Bashar al-Assad that his country's security was key to the stability of the whole region.

"Shia al-Sudani emphasized that Syria's security and stability are closely linked to Iraq's national security and play a crucial role in regional security and efforts to establish stability in the Middle East," his office said.

Meanwhile, the Arab League in a statement stressed the need to respect the unity, sovereignty

and territorial integrity of Syria. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian also reacted to the developments in Syria, calling on the Muslim countries to intervene in the Syrian crisis and not allow the US and Israel to exploit the internal conflict in the Islamic Arab country. Stressing that the aggression by militants is supported by the United States and European countries, Pezeshkian said, "These actions are being carried out with American and European weapons."

Araghchi in Damascus

Meanwhile, Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi reiterated Iran's firm support for Syria's government and its armed forces before leaving Tehran for Damascus to meet Syrian officials. Araghchi called the surprise attack a plot by the US and Israel. "The Syrian army will once again win over these terrorist groups as in the past," the foreign minister added.

Foreign-backed insurgents

broke through government defense lines in Syria's second largest city Aleppo on Friday and entered the city's western neighborhood. The insurgents launched their shock offensive in Aleppo and Idlib countryside on Wednesday and wrested control of dozens of villages and towns along the way, including a strategic town south of Aleppo.

Nearly 1K militants killed in northwestern Syria

According to Syrian media outlets, nearly a thousand militants have been killed in Syria's northwestern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib in the past days, as Syrian forces are pressing ahead with their counteroffensive operations.

The terrorists have reportedly been killed by Syrian troops with Russian air support.

Syrian president in a phone call with an official from the breakaway Georgian republic of Abkhazia said, "Terrorism only understands the language of force,



Militants are seen outside a mosque in Maaret al-Numan in Syria's northwestern Idlib Province on November 30, 2024.
● ABDULAZIZ KETAZ/AFP

and that is the language which we will break it and eliminate it with, whoever its supporters and sponsors are."

In a separate phone call with his Emirati counterpart, the Syrian president said his country could defeat "all terrorists and their backers."

"Syria continues to defend its

stability and territorial integrity in the face of all terrorists and their backers, and it is capable, with the help of its allies and friends, of defeating and eliminating them, no matter how intense their terrorist attacks are," his office quoted him as saying during a call with the President of the United Arab

Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

In recent years, Syria has been breathing a sigh of relief after years of confronting a foreign-backed insurgency which began in 2011 after demonstrations against Syrian government turned into a full-scale war in the country.

Putin signs off record Russian defense spending

Russian President Vladimir Putin approved budget plans, raising 2025 military spending to record levels as Moscow seeks to prevail in the war in Ukraine.

Around 32.5% of the budget posted on a government website Sunday has been allocated for national defense, amounting to 13.5 trillion rubles (over

\$145 billion), up from a reported 28.3% this year, AP reported.

Lawmakers in both houses of the Russian parliament, the State Duma and Federation Council, had already approved the plans in the past 10 days.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine since February 2022 is Eu-

rope's biggest conflict since World War II and has drained the resources of both sides. Kiev has been getting billions of dollars in help from its Western allies, but Russia's forces are bigger and better equipped, and in recent months the Russian army has gradually been pushing Ukrainian troops backward in eastern areas.

Europeans seeking either...

However, this is contingent on the Europeans not resorting to excuses and genuinely seeking to resolve the challenges. The European approach is currently not constructive, but the talks must continue. After all, all agreements have started from this path of dialogue. At present, the resumption of talks can be a promising development.

What do you think the main challenge will be between the two sides? Is the nuclear issue still the central point of contention and disagreement?

Currently, Europe's top priority is the Ukraine war, which has also been a major factor in driving a wedge between Europe and Iran. The Europeans have taken a tough stance against Tehran, accusing it of providing military aid to Russia, and have even imposed sanctions on Iran. Nevertheless, it appears that the nuclear issue remains the top priority for Europe regarding Iran.

What has kept the nuclear issue at the top of the agenda is the approaching deadline for the expiration of the nuclear deal, or the "sunset" of the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) in October 2025. The Europeans are worried that if they fail to reach an agreement with Tehran on the nuclear issue by then, they will lose their leverage, namely the "snapback" mechanism, which could reinstate all sanctions and UN Security Council

resolutions against Iran. Of course, they will also raise their positions and demands on the Ukraine issue during the talks, but their overall strategy is to coordinate with the new US president, Donald Trump, to either trigger the snapback or extend the nuclear deal. This round of negotiations has been in the "brainstorming" phase and is still far from formal negotiations to reach agreements.

You mentioned that Europeans are looking to reinstate sanctions or extend the nuclear deal. Is there a possibility of exploring a new agreement? Do you think Europe and the US under Trump's presidency will be on the same page regarding Iran?

It's possible that they will put a new agreement on the table that covers various topics of interest to them, including nuclear, defense, and regional policies of Iran. However, Iran's position on non-nuclear issues, namely defense and regional policies, is clear, just as the negotiations leading to the JCPOA only focused on nuclear issues and did not directly address other topics. More time needs to pass to see in which direction the talks will go. I think neither Trump is the same as the previous Trump, nor is Europe, nor even Iran. The differences between Europe and Trump's America on issues like NATO and Ukraine are serious, but it's possible that they may see the Iran issue as a common ground to prevent their differences from deepening.



How likely do you think it is that the US will join the talks between Iran and Europe?

I highly doubt that the US will join the talks for now, as the new administration has not yet taken office. What's happening in the US right now is that other countries are lobbying with Trump or candidates for various positions.

Is it possible that Iran might also begin lobbying with the new US administration before it officially takes office?

It depends on whether Iran's national interests dictate it and whether decision-makers have made an assessment to that effect. If national interests call for it, officials won't hesitate, whether through direct or indirect lobbying, in secret or in public. In fact, fundamental differences are no barrier to holding talks to resolve disputes or reduce tensions. Therefore, it depends on Iranian decision-makers whether they engage in such lobbying efforts now or wait for the US administration to start work and see what policy they adopt towards Iran.

Japan allocates finances to promote Iran's wetland management

International Desk

Japan has provided the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iran with financial aid to enhance wetland management and strengthen climate resilience in Iranian wetlands.

Japan and UNDP on Sunday signed an exchange of notes to implement the "the Project for Developing Conservation System of Wetlands in Lake Urmia and Other Wetlands including their Surrounding Communities."

The project will develop irrigation systems that respond appropriately to climate change and install water management systems. It would also create sustainable industries such as ecotourism for environmental protection and economic development in the areas surrounding these wetlands.

The UNDP in a statement said it is pleased to announce a generous contribution of JPY 690,000,000 from the government of Japan to enhance wetland management and strengthen climate resilience in Lake Urmia, Shadegan, Parishan and Anzali wetlands.

"Over the past ten years, the unwavering support from the people and the government of Japan has positively impacted agricultural productivity and



Japanese Ambassador to Tehran Tsukada Tamaki (R) and UNDP Iran Deputy Resident Representative Gulbahar Nematova sign an exchange of notes at Japan's Embassy in Tehran, Iran, on December 1, 2024.
● undp.org

enhanced livelihoods in target communities. In the next four years, we will continue promoting innovative, water-efficient agricultural practices, while emphasizing scaling up for a better future for all," said Gulbahar Nematova, UNDP Iran Deputy Resident Representative.

Speaking at the ceremony, Japanese Ambassador to Tehran Tsukada Tamaki said that Iran has 26 valuable wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention, including Lake Urmia, adding that these wetlands, which are home to diverse species and migratory birds, must be conserved in cooperation with the international community.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



League of Historical Cities accepts Iran's Mashhad as member

Mashhad, Iran's second-largest city, joined the League of Historical Cities as its newest member. Mashhad's mayor, Mohammad Reza Ghalandar, said on Saturday that the city had become the League's 129th member and the 12th Iranian city to join the Japan-based organization, Press TV reported. Mashhad, located in northeast Iran, has a population of nearly four million. It hosts the holy shrine of Imam Reza (PBUH), the eighth Shia imam. It is a regional hub of tourism that receives

nearly 30 million pilgrims per year from Iran and other countries. The city and its surrounding towns are home to some of the most important historical places of the Islamic and pre-Islamic periods. Ghalandar said that joining the League of Historical Cities will allow Mashhad to expand and promote its religious tourism infrastructure further, especially for pilgrims visiting the city from nine countries in the region, ranging from India to

Turkey. "This will create sustainable revenues for the city of Mashhad," he said. The League of Historical Cities was established in 1987 in Japan's Kyoto. Its manifest says the organization seeks to strengthen cooperation between historical cities around the world to enable them to exchange their experiences on how to preserve and use historical places and monuments. A total of 129 cities from 65 countries have joined the organization.



'Another View' painting exhibition offers fresh focus



Arts & Culture Desk

The exhibition 'Another View', featuring 20 of his paintings by Alireza Esmaeili, is underway at the Laleh Art Gallery. Esmaeili believes that his use of pure forms and colors in his works aims to invite the audience to experience beauty from a different perspective. At the opening ceremony, Esmaeili stated, "David Martin believes that 'no other art can affect the audience as much as music.'" He added, "Some art thinkers believe that all forms of artistic expression strive to approach music in their most elevated forms. Unity, rhythm, harmony, and the

organic connection between elements are features that bring music closer to human nature, evoking emotions, and inspiring the audience." Esmaeili emphasized that if a painter follows this approach, they will become closer to the essence of existence, nature, and human beauty. He said, "I have tried to achieve this harmony in my works, presenting a part of this fluid and floating harmony in existence through pure forms and colors, and inviting the audience to experience beauty from another perspective." Mohammadali Saeedi, the manager of Laleh Art Gallery and cur-

ator of 'Another View,' noted that Esmaeili's abstract expressionist paintings demonstrate that a painting does not necessarily need to have a narrative or meaning. He explained, "The musical meaning of his colorful forms is created through the same expectation that a music listener experiences. In these works, the painter revives tendencies in the audience that may not have been realized before, evoking visual and aesthetic inspirations that are ultimately resolved by the audience's internal interpretations." Esmaeili is a graduate of the University of Soreh's painting department and has over 20 years of experience in the visual arts. He is also a member of the Institute for the Development of Visual Arts and an artistic advisor to the Research Institute of Islamic Culture and Art. The exhibition 'Another View', opened on November 29 and will be open from Saturday to Wednesday, until December 7, at the Laleh Art Gallery, except for holidays.

Shiraz, Dushanbe ink tourism cooperation agreement

Arts & Culture Desk

Shiraz, Iran and Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to boost tourism cooperation between the two cities. The agreement was signed on Sunday in the presence of the head of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Department in Fars Province Mohammad Sabet-Eghlidi, officials from the Shiraz municipality, the First Secretary of the Embassy of Tajikistan in Iran Hokimiddin Rahmonov, and representatives from the private sector active in the tourism industry of both countries, IRNA reported. According to Sabet-Eghlidi, Iran and Tajikistan share a common cultural heritage, which has made it easy for tourists and tourism industry advocates from Tajikistan to feel at home in Shiraz. "Iran and Tajikistan have a common cultural background, and Iran has been the capital of a civilization that has been home to 33 nations in the past, as depicted in the Persepolis," he said. Eghlidi added that the shared cultural heritage and common language have made it possible for Iranian citizens who love their history and civilization to travel to Tajikistan and become familiar with its geography and attractions.

He also highlighted some of Shiraz's tourist attractions, including Persepolis, the tomb of famous poets Hafez and Saadi, and the city's reputation as a global center for handicrafts. The Iranian official also mentioned that Fars Province is rich in natural attractions and can cater to fans of mountaineering and off-roading. Plus, he pointed out that Shiraz has become a hub for health tourism in Iran, attracting many tourists from the Persian Gulf region for medical treatment. Eghlidi emphasized the importance of organizing cultural weeks and tourism events to introduce the attractions of both countries and provide an opportunity for mutual tourism cooperation.



IRNA

Ancient Chinese metalworking techniques shared in Iran

Arts & Culture Desk

The specialized seminar titled 'Iron Smelting and Casting in Ancient China' was held on November 30, at the National Museum of Iran. The lecture was delivered by Linheng Mo from the Hunan Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, China. The presentation was divided into two parts. The first part focused on metalworking methods, introducing various iron smelting furnaces discovered in archaeological excavations in China. The second part presented the achievements of the Guantian site excavation in Sangzhi County, Hunan Province, which primarily involved iron metallurgy. The Guantian excavation revealed diverse iron smelting furnaces and a stockpile of iron bars ready for use, indicating advanced technology at the site. In addition, various iron alloys, including steel from periods contemporaneous with late Sassanian and early Islamic Iran (Han Dynasty China), were found.

Jebrael Nokandeh, Director of the National Museum of Iran, noted that contemporary to the Bronze and Iron Ages in Iran, metalworking in China had made significant advancements, producing large and impressive bronze figures and objects. He further mentioned that given Mr. Mo and his colleagues' research background in ancient Chinese metalworking sites, their recent studies with Iranian colleagues in the cultural landscape of Masouleh, Gilan, could provide new insights into Islamic and historic metalworking. He expressed hope that this team of archaeometallurgy specialists could initiate focused research in Masouleh.



Parliament, government resolved..

It appears that the law, like some headline parliamentarians' insistence on dismissing Mohammad Javad Zarif from the government based on law, may lay the groundwork for new disputes between the government and parliament. According to the law, officials with dual nationality or family members with dual nationality cannot hold key positions. Opposition lawmakers in the parliament claim that Vice President Zarif falls under this law and should step down. Just days ago, MPs rejected the government's bill to amend this law. Comments from Qalibaf, who advised Zarif to resign as vice president, did not sit well with government supporters and reformists. Now, the hijab law is set to become another contentious issue between the government and parliament. However, Pezeshkian, who has himself served as a lawmaker for

several terms, has not reacted strongly to these issues, opting not to fuel the controversy. It seems he remains committed to national unity and cooperation, hoping to resolve these differences through dialogue and negotiations with high-ranking officials, away from media hype. As Sakineh-Sadat Pad, a legal expert and head of the Presidential Office's Social Freedoms and Rights Department, has suggested, the implementation or non-implementation of the hijab law could be discussed and reviewed in a meeting of the heads of the three branches of power. In any case, yesterday's joint session between the parliament and government, particularly the stances of the president and parliament speaker, indicates that the two bodies are committed to continuing cooperation and synergy to address the country's problems, and that some differences will not hinder this path.

Qalibaf and Pezeshkian, more than anyone else, know that there is no way to stabilize the country's situation except by strengthening cooperation between various bodies. Regional and international circumstances have also underscored the need for internal unity. Thus, the joint session of the government and parliament sent a clear message about the executive and legislative branches' determination to work together to synergize the country's national power to overcome challenges. In the shadow of this unity and cooperation, it is possible to overcome some differences or find solutions. As Presidential Deputy for Communications and Information Mehdi Tabatabaei has written: "There are logical paths to amend flawed laws. Good governance will prevent the implementation of laws that go against the country's overall interests and create tension and division."