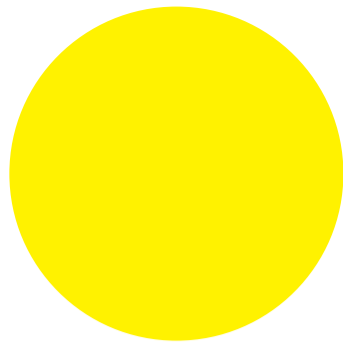


**Iran: Gaza cease-fire result of Palestinians' resistance**



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# Iran Daily

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## Iran, Russia Ink Strategic Partnership Agreement

Pezeshkian calls treaty 'new chapter' in relations

**Putin:** Long-term deal adds momentum to ties



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin after signing a strategic partnership treaty during a ceremony at the Kremlin in Moscow on January 17, 2025. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

### Tehran, Moscow usher in new era of relations

**PERSPECTIVE**

International Desk

The long-awaited "comprehensive strategic partnership" treaty between Iran and Russia was inked yesterday in Moscow by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin. Several officials from both sides have regarded the signing of the comprehensive joint cooperation document as the most critical achievement of Pezeshkian's visit to the Russian capital, highlighting specific sections of its provisions. According to Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei, the joint accord is essentially an updated

version of an agreement that Tehran established with Moscow in the late 1990s. This agreement has formed the basis for mutual relations and principles of cooperation between Tehran and Moscow since 2002 and remains binding on both parties. Therefore, it was necessary to draft a new agreement with greater detail and specificity, considering the developments and the expansion of bilateral relations. The spokesman indicated that the new document had received approval from both countries since early summer 2024, and the parties were awaiting the right moment for its signing.

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# Tehran, Dushanbe ink 23 cooperation agreements

Pezeshkian, Rahmon reaffirm centuries-old history of friendship

## Economy Desk

High-ranking officials from Iran and Tajikistan signed 22 cooperation agreements and one memorandum of understanding on Thursday in the presence of the two countries' presidents as a joint statement was issued following the signing ceremony in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe. The agreements cover a wide range of areas, including diplomatic cooperation, transportation development, joint efforts to combat administrative corruption, customs education, standardization, food security, women and family affairs, statistics, archival management, digital technology, religious studies, social services, genetic engineering, agriculture, industrial innovation, exhibitions, and communications, according to president.ir.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized that the ground is paved to surpass the \$500 million trade threshold between Iran and Tajikistan and noted that both countries have significant potential to meet each other's needs for essential goods.

Speaking at a joint press conference with his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon, Pezeshkian expressed gratitude for the

warm hospitality and highlighted the recent momentum in bilateral relations.

He expressed hope that the implementation of the signed agreements would lead to considerable progress in cooperation between the two nations. Pezeshkian underscored the shared economic interests of Iran and Tajikistan, stating that new initiatives would positively impact employment and public welfare in both countries.

He called for the removal of customs barriers, improved entry and exit facilities, and a secure environment for private sector activities.

The Iranian president also announced that a joint economic commission meeting would soon be held to address key bilateral issues in political, economic, trade, cultural, and environmental fields.

Pezeshkian addressed regional developments, including the situation in Afghanistan, emphasizing the importance of stability and security in the neighboring country and stressed the need to protect border security, aligning it with the interests of both Iran and Tajikistan.

## Strengthening parliamentary ties

Later in the day, Pezeshkian met

with Muhammadtoir Zokirzoda, the speaker of Tajikistan's National Assembly. He highlighted the historical, cultural, and linguistic ties between the two nations, stating that he felt at home during his visit to Tajikistan.

Pezeshkian expressed hope that the signed agreements would be implemented promptly and that cooperation between the two countries would continue to grow.

He called for closer parliamentary collaboration to facilitate trade and investment laws and remove obstacles to economic and commercial interactions.

Zokirzoda reaffirmed Tajikistan's readiness to expand relations with Iran across all sectors, particularly in parliamentary cooperation.

He noted the shared historical and cultural roots of the two nations, which he said provide a strong foundation for deeper ties.

## Boosting trade, tourism

At a joint business, investment, and tourism forum, Pezeshkian reiterated Iran's commitment to removing barriers to trade and investment with Tajikistan.

He emphasized that Iran has no restrictions on expanding cooperation in scientific, commercial,



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) and his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon sign a memorandum of understanding in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on January 16, 2025. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

industrial, technological and agricultural fields.

The president highlighted the centuries-old history of friendship between Iran and Tajikistan, stating that the two nations share a deep cultural and historical bond.

He called for the simplification of travel regulations to boost tourism, economic activities, and cultural exchanges.

He expressed hope that the joint

economic commission would facilitate closer cooperation and mutual benefits for both nations.

## Shared vision for future

Pezeshkian urged citizens of both countries to view each other's homelands as their own, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual growth.

He expressed confidence that such an approach would lead to shared prosperity and progress

in security, health, and development.

The Iranian president also praised Tajikistan's constructive role in international forums and reaffirmed Iran's commitment to mutual support on the global stage.

He expressed hope that the agreements signed during his visit would pave the way for stronger bilateral relations and increased trade and cooperation.

## Iran, Ethiopia aim to remove cooperation barriers for private sector



## Economy Desk

The speakers of Iran's Parliament and Ethiopia's House of People's Representatives emphasized enhancing economic, political, and parliamentary cooperation during a bilateral meeting on Friday as they agreed to address obstacles facing private sector activities and revive a joint economic commission after a decade-long hiatus.

Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, Iran's Parliament speaker, met with Tadesse Chafo, his Ethiopian counterpart, during an official visit to Ethiopia aimed at strengthening bilateral relations, IRNA reported.

Qalibaf highlighted the importance of establishing an Ethiopian embassy in Tehran, calling it a crucial step toward deepening economic and political relations.

He noted that global and regional developments have significant and rapid impacts on international relations, making closer ties essential. The Iranian official also men-

tioned the recent release of four Ethiopian sailors from Iranian prisons, attributing it to internal efforts within Iran. He suggested that the presence of an Ethiopian embassy in Tehran could expedite such resolutions in the future.

Qalibaf praised Ethiopia's strategic role in East Africa, particularly in ensuring regional security and stability and reiterated Iran's commitment to expanding relations with African nations, especially Ethiopia, given their shared cultural and historical ties.

## Reviving joint economic commission

Qalibaf pointed out that Ethiopia's recent economic growth and progress toward sustainable development make it a promising partner for Iran. However, he criticized that the joint economic commission between the two countries has not convened in over a decade, hindering economic collaboration. One of the key goals of his

visit, Qalibaf said, is to revive this commission. He noted that Iran's Vice Presidency for Science and Technology will oversee the commission's activities.

The Iranian Parliament speaker also highlighted potential areas of cooperation, including technology-based industries, healthcare, artificial intelligence, and medical equipment. He proposed establishing direct flights between Tehran and Addis Ababa to facilitate trade and tourism.

## Addressing economic challenges

Qalibaf acknowledged challenges faced by Iranian businesses in East Africa, including tax issues, currency exchange, banking communications, and transportation. He called for resolving these barriers to create a more favorable environment for economic cooperation.

The official also suggested leveraging the BRICS alliance to address banking challenges and strengthen financial ties between the two countries.

## Ethiopia's perspective

Tadesse Chafo welcomed Qalibaf and his delegation, emphasizing the potential for parliamentary relations to boost trade and economic ties.

He described Ethiopia as a growing economy with ample opportunities for Iranian

investors and businesses. Chafo expressed Ethiopia's interest in reviving the joint economic commission and pledged to pursue the matter seriously.

He noted that Qalibaf's visit marks the first high-level Iranian delegation to Ethiopia in four decades, calling it a significant milestone in bilateral relations.

The Ethiopian official also thanked Iran for releasing the four sailors and expressed hope for the swift resolution of similar cases.

He praised Iran's foreign policy, which emphasizes mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs, and expressed readiness to collaborate with Iran in international organizations such as BRICS and the Human Rights Commission.

## Symbolic gestures of friendship

Following their meeting, Qalibaf and Chafo signed a guestbook at the Ethiopian Parliament, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening friendly relations.

The two officials also planted two pine trees in the parliament courtyard, symbolizing the enduring friendship and cooperation between Iran and Ethiopia.

The visit underscores both nations' efforts to deepen ties and explore new avenues for collaboration in economic, political, and international arenas.

## Iran, IRENA discuss expanding renewable energy cooperation

## Economy Desk

Officials from Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) met on the sidelines of the IRENA Assembly to review past collaborations and plan future joint initiatives.

The meeting, attended by Mohsen Tarzatab, head of SATBA; Binu Partahan, IRENA's director of country partnerships and cooperation; and Tarek Ahmed, IRENA's regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, focused on advancing renewable energy development in Iran, IRNA reported.

The officials reviewed the progress of Iran's Renewables Readiness Assessment (RRA), a comprehensive report on the country's renewable energy transition.

The assessment, set to begin in mid-2025, will involve consultations with stakeholders and is expected to be completed within a year.

The meeting also highlighted the successful implementation of a joint workshop on developing a national green hydrogen strategy.

Other collaborative programs discussed included raising awareness about the benefits of renewable energy, preparing the power grid for large-scale renewable integration, and long-term energy planning.

IRENA representatives expressed hope for enhanced cooperation with Iranian non-governmental organizations and associations, in coordination with SATBA as Iran's focal point for IRENA.

The 15th IRENA Assembly kicked off in Abu Dhabi on Monday, with 500 representatives from 170 member countries in attendance.

Iran's delegation, led by SATBA officials and accompanied by the

Iranian ambassador to the UAE, participated in the event.

## Mega solar farm in the making

The construction of a large solar power plant, with a capacity of 135 megawatts, began Thursday in a ceremony attended by Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni and local officials.

The project, located near the Shahid Mofteh Power Plant in Kabudarahang of Hamedan Province, represents an investment of 50 trillion rials (approximately \$62.5 million). It will be built on a 240-hectare site and is expected to generate 318 gigawatt-hours of electricity annually once operational.

## Environmental, economic benefits

The solar plant is projected to save 100 million cubic meters of fossil fuels annually, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 190,000 tons per year.

The project will also support regional industries by providing clean energy and contribute to environmental preservation.

During the ceremony, officials, including the governor of Hamedan and local parliamentary representatives, emphasized the importance of renewable energy in Iran's sustainable development strategy.

## Visit to existing solar facility

Following the groundbreaking ceremony, Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni visited the 8-megawatt Shohadaye Kabudarahang Solar Power Plant, highlighting the government's commitment to expanding renewable energy infrastructure.

The new solar plant marks a significant step in Iran's efforts to diversify its energy sources and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

# Role of heritage in Qom's economic development

Iranica Desk

*In the narrow alleys of old Qom, where mud-brick walls and ornate windows whisper stories of forgotten times, one can truly hear the heartbeat of history. This city is not merely a collection of buildings; it serves as a mirror reflecting the identity and culture of a people who have thrived for centuries beneath the shadows of turquoise domes.*

*The historical fabric of Qom, akin to a gem nestled in the heart of the city, is regarded not only as an essential part of national heritage but also as a valuable investment for a brighter future. Each brick of these ancient walls has borne witness to the laughter and tears, hopes and disappointments of generations who have traversed these alleys.*

## Architectural heritage and its economic potential

As one of the oldest cities in Iran, Qom boasts unique historical textures that embody authentic Iranian-Islamic architecture. These textures encompass old houses, caravanserais, traditional baths, and covered bazaars, each showcasing the artistry and creativity of our ancestors. However, these structures are not just silent edifices; each house carries a narrative of love, struggle, and life within its walls.

Experts believe that the historical fabrics of Qom have the potential to attract both domestic and international tourists, positioning the area as a major tourist destination. The presence of significant religious sites, such as the shrine of Hazrat Masoumeh (PBUH), combined with these historical textures, presents a unique opportunity for cultural tourism development. This not only bolsters the local economy but also creates valuable job opportunities, according to IRNA.

Moreover, the historical texture can serve as educational and research platforms for students and researchers in architecture and urban planning. These spaces are living resources for studying traditional construction methods, indigenous techniques, and concepts of sustainable architecture. By preserving and revitalizing these structures, we can establish a model for sustainable urban development. The use of local materials, designs adapted to the climate, and an emphasis on social spaces in these areas provide exemplary practices for other urban regions.

## Challenges facing heritage preservation

Despite these potentials, experts warn that the historical fabrics of Qom face serious threats. Deterioration and destruction, driven by climate change, earthquakes, and illegal demolitions, jeopardize the future of these treasures. Uncontrolled urban development and new constructions, often disregarding historical values, have led to a loss of harmony and authenticity in these buildings. The neglect and destruction stem from a lack of public awareness and insufficient cooperation among various institutions. These issues not only threaten the historical identity of Qom but also adversely affect the quality of life and the sense of belonging of its citizens.

## Strategies for preservation and revitalization

Experts assert that a comprehensive and coordinated plan is essential for the preservation and effective utilization of Qom's historical district. Establishing clear laws to protect these areas and prevent illegal demolitions should be a top priority. Attracting both private and public investment for the restoration and reconstruction of these constructions can significantly contribute to their revival. Additionally, offering



financial incentives and tax exemptions to investors can further motivate revitalization efforts.

Organizing workshops and exhibitions to enhance public awareness about the historical significance of these buildings and to encourage public participation are also crucial steps. Furthermore, stakeholders emphasize that creating special tourism routes within the historical texture of Qom could attract tourists and generate sustainable income for these areas. Collaborating with local communities in the preservation and revitalization process can foster a sense of responsibility and attachment to this heritage among the people.

The historical area of Qom represents an unparalleled treasure of the art, culture, and history of this land. Each brick in these walls holds a story from the past and a hope for the future. The preservation of this invaluable heritage is a collective duty that can only be fulfilled through the collaboration of the people, officials, and private institutions. By leveraging successful domestic and international experiences and implementing effective strategies, we can create a bright future for the historical structures of Qom. The 315-hectare historical fabric of Qom, approved in 2020 with regulations announced in 2021, continues to face multiple challenges. Among these are issues arising from disagreements between the municipality, cultural heritage organizations, and urban development authorities regarding the needs of residents in these areas. Conflicts over the implementation of regulations and



differing interpretations of the laws have further complicated the situation.

According to cultural heritage officials in Qom, there are over 100 registered historical sites within this area, each over a century old and contributing to the city's rich history. These officials have also suggested that the houses and historical buildings in the city be repurposed for various uses, such as galleries, handicraft shops, and other economic activities. Such initiatives could help revitalize these

areas and attract the attention of both locals and tourists, similar to successful implementations in Yazd.

Cultural heritage officials assert that the world views historical monuments as valuable opportunities rather than threats. This perspective is particularly relevant in Qom, which hosts over 20 million pilgrims annually and can play a key role in economic and social development. Qom's Deputy Mayor for Urban Planning and Architecture Majid Matinfar, emphasized the

current situation, noting that the urban area of Qom spans 13,000 hectares, of which 2,016 hectares are informal settlements, 1,600 hectares are dilapidated areas, and 315 hectares comprise the historical fabric, located within the dilapidated zone. He mentioned that it is possible to reduce the area of the historical texture to half its current size. However, the lack of attractiveness in these areas has led to residents showing little interest in living there, resulting in neighborhoods gradually becoming deserted or turning into residences for the immigrant majority.

Referring to actions taken, he added that there are approximately 400 registered valuable sites within the historical and dilapidated fabric of Qom. In recent years, the Qom Municipality has restored 17 out of 22 historical axes, which included façade and flooring renovations. Additionally, a specific boundary has been designated to protect historical houses from damage.

However, Matinfar emphasized that the current construction regulations in these areas, which only permit the construction of a single ground floor without any setbacks, do not offer economic incentives to property owners. Director General of the Roads and Urban Planning Department of Qom, Hossein Zanjirani, also addressed future plans for organizing these areas. He stated, "Due to opposition from cultural heritage authorities regarding the previous scheme for organizing the historical district, a new plan is currently under study. For this purpose, a new consul-

## A collective responsibility

tant has been selected, and the final studies and plans for organizing the dilapidated and historical buildings are expected to be approved within the next six months."

Ultimately, the preservation and revitalization of these structures represent not only a cultural and historical obligation but also an opportunity for sustainable economic and social development that can contribute to the identity and flourishing of this city in the future. Furthermore, the importance of cooperation among the people, officials, and public and private institutions in the preservation and revitalization of Qom's historical monuments becomes increasingly evident. With active citizen participation and a focus on public awareness, a sense of responsibility can be nurtured, encouraging individuals to value and protect this historical heritage. Additionally, creating special tourist routes within the historical fabrics of Qom could attract domestic and foreign tourists, generating employment opportunities and sustainable income for local residents. One of the main challenges facing the historical structures of Qom is the lack of proper organization and restoration, essential for preserving historical identity and enhancing the attractiveness of these areas for living and tourism. Implementing detailed plans for reconstruction and improving living conditions, alongside establishing necessary amenities and infrastructure, can transform neighborhoods and historical buildings into vibrant and appealing sites without compromising their historical identity and characteristics.

In summary, with strategic planning, effective use of existing resources, and comprehensive collaboration, it is possible to safeguard the historical fabrics of Qom from current threats and leverage them as advantages for the city's future. This invaluable heritage can preserve Qom's historical and cultural identity while serving as a driving force for sustainable social, economic, and tourism development.

# Syria's roadmap for tackling energy crisis

## Potential involvement of Saudi Arabia, other key players



By Hoda Yousefi  
Middle East  
affairs expert

**OPINION  
EXCLUSIVE**

*Prior to the onset of the war in Syria in 2011, the notion of an energy crisis was largely absent in Syria, a nation recognized for its production and export of oil. However, the decade-long conflict significantly affected the country's infrastructure, with the energy sector experiencing particularly severe challenges. As Syria looks towards revitalization, there may be valuable opportunities for collaboration with Saudi Arabia and other stakeholders to support the recovery and development of its energy resources.*

*The energy crisis intensified during wartime. Among the key issues, both at that time and today, were the international sanctions imposed on the Syrian government, which negatively affected the country's oil and gas production and export. These sanctions specifically target oil exports, the provision of technical expertise and spare parts, as well as investments aimed at the reconstruction and modernization of power plants.*

*In the years prior to the war, Syria's oil production was estimated to exceed 400,000 barrels per day. While this figure may seem modest compared to other oil-producing nations in the Middle East, oil revenues constituted roughly one-quarter of the Syrian government's income during that period.*

### Emergence of oil crisis

The civil war profoundly impacted oil production in Syria, primarily due to three interconnected factors. Firstly, some oil extraction and processing facilities faced attacks, leading to significant operational disruptions. Secondly, the implementation of international sanctions diminished domestic production capacity and constrained Syria's ability to engage in oil exports. Thirdly, the eastern oil fields were initially captured by Daesh (ISIS) and subsequently came under the control of Kurdish-led groups in northeastern Syria following the defeat of Daesh. Consequently, the Assad government found it necessary to procure oil from these groups, reportedly allocating approximately \$1.2 billion annually for these purchases. In addition to obtaining oil from eastern sources, Syria sought to supplement its needs through imports from Iran and Iraq. While comprehensive statistics on Syria's oil imports are not publicly available, reports suggest that Iran provided between 50,000 to 70,000 barrels of crude oil daily. Moreover, Iran and Russia signed an agreement to establish a new refinery in Homs with a capacity of 140,000 barrels per day, as well as plans to repair the Baniyas refinery. Without reliance on foreign oil imports, Syria was only able to produce between 20,000 to 40,000 barrels per day last year, while domestic consumption was estimated at around 160,000 barrels per day.

### Assad's downfall, intensified crisis

In the wake of significant advances by opposition forces



● MINTPRESS NEWS

— particularly Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) — the capture of Damascus and the subsequent removal of Bashar al-Assad marked a pivotal moment for Syria, including within the energy sector. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which had supplied over 90% of the country's crude oil requirements, suspended its oil exports to Syria. As a result, securing alternative energy suppliers has become an important priority for the current administration in Damascus. Furthermore, it is important to note that the various opposition groups, which had previously united primarily in their opposition to Assad, are now facing challenges in maintaining cohesion. With the regime change, internal divisions have emerged. For instance, shortly after HTS

assumed control of Damascus, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the northeast announced its decision to cease oil sales to the rulers, highlighting the complexities of the current political landscape. This decision appears to be influenced by several significant factors. Firstly, Turkey's support for Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) is well acknowledged, while understandably the Kurdish-led factions in northeastern Syria will diverge from any part that is aligned with Turkey. Secondly, in light of the prevailing uncertainty surrounding Syria's stability, the SDF seems to be focused on utilizing its control over oil fields as a potential bargaining chip for political negotiations. Given these circumstances, it is crucial for Abu Mohammad al-Ju-

lani to prioritize addressing the energy crisis. Effectively tackling this challenge is vital for facilitating the safe return of refugees, providing services for citizens, and fostering the progress of various initiatives.

### Energy crisis roadmap, Saudi Arabia's role

Addressing the current energy crisis in Syria is contingent upon achieving internal stability, attracting foreign investments, and the gradual lifting of international sanctions. In the immediate term, alleviating sanctions could facilitate oil imports, thereby aiding in the mitigation of the crisis's pressing effects. Subsequently, this could pave the way for the rehabilitation of Syria's energy infrastructure. In this context, various coun-

tries, including Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, have expressed a willingness to support Syria's energy needs. Notably, recent reports have indicated that a Saudi oil tanker was en route to Baniyas port in Syria, highlighting the country's engagement in this effort.

At this juncture, Saudi Arabia is positioned as a highly favorable economic partner for Syria. In recognition of this potential partnership, leaders of the ruling forces prioritized a visit to Riyadh over other destinations, including Ankara. This strategic approach reflects a desire to balance relationships in the region while acknowledging Turkey's current limitations in providing comprehensive financial support. Saudi Arabia itself is actively pursuing an enhanced role in the Levant region. In light of the Muslim Brotherhood affiliations of the HTS, Riyadh is strategically aiming to foster closer relationships with them to mitigate the potential establishment of a cabinet that may align more closely with Turkey and Qatar.

In a notable response to the cessation of Iranian oil shipments to Syria and the challenges faced by the Baniyas refinery, Saudi Arabia has expressed its commitment to supplying the necessary oil to support this crucial facility. The Baniyas refinery, Syria's largest, has a production capacity of 133,000 barrels per day, though this capacity has diminished significantly in recent years. By stepping in to supply oil to this vital refinery, Saudi Arabia not only bolsters its influence within Syria's energy sector but also

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At this juncture, Saudi Arabia is positioned as a highly favorable economic partner for Syria. In recognition of this potential partnership, leaders of the ruling forces prioritized a visit to Riyadh over other destinations, including Ankara. This strategic approach reflects a desire to balance relationships in the region while acknowledging Turkey's current limitations in providing comprehensive financial support.



⬆️ Syria's Baniyas refinery, located north of Baniyas, Syria, is still not operational.  
● GETTY IMAGES



⬆️ Leader of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) Abu Mohammad al-Jolani (front-R) receives a delegation from Bahrain led by Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullatif al-Zayani (front 2nd-R) in Damascus, Syria, on January 8, 2024.  
● SYRIA TIMES

reinforces its position as a key player in the region, contributing to broader regional stability. The ongoing energy crisis in Syria, a consequence of the earlier prolonged war, presents a significant challenge for the ruling group. In light of reduced access to Iranian oil and persistent domestic divisions, the future of Syria's energy supply will de-

pend on Damascus's ability to manage internal conflicts, build partnerships with regional and international actors, and redefine Syria's position within the changing geopolitical framework of the Middle East. One potential pathway involves fostering a closer relationship with Saudi Arabia as a key energy supplier. While this part-

nership may enhance Riyadh's influence in Syria's economic landscape, it is essential to consider the implications for Syria's autonomy and the potential for increased dependence on Saudi Arabia's regional strategies. Conversely, if Damascus can successfully engage with other capitals, such as Ankara or Doha, it may create new alliances that could

transform the balance of power in the Levant.

In the long run, the reconstruction of Syria's energy infrastructure and the pursuit of relative self-sufficiency are vital objectives. However, achieving these goals necessitates a foundation of political stability, a reduction in internal tensions, and the alleviation of international sanc-

tions. Ultimately, the ability of Damascus to devise a unified and coherent strategy — one that harmonizes regional relations while effectively mobilizing domestic resources — will be crucial. The future of Syria, not only in the energy sector but across various domains, hinges on the astute management of these interconnected challenges.

## A stable Lebanon serves as a stronger ally for Iran, region



By Mohammad Ali Sobhani  
Iran's former  
ambassador in Lebanon

O P I N I O N

*Lebanon possesses unique characteristics among the countries in the region, and the governance of this country is largely shaped by the various social groups and sects within it. When these forces reach a consensus and come together as a united front, they gain the initiative to achieve their desired outcomes and resolve their issues.*

For many years, disputes have arisen among Lebanon's diverse sects, particularly intensifying after the involvement in Syria and the subsequent support for the people of Gaza following the Hamas resistance group's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. The disagreements among the groups were so pronounced that they hindered any unified stance in Parliament regarding the election of a president. Consequently, Lebanon has been without a president for an extended period due to these conflicts. At that time, Iran maintained a tenuous relationship with the government and certain Lebanese factions, while it enjoyed a more extensive connection with the Hezbollah resistance group and the Shia community in Lebanon due to shared religious ties. This overall situation complicated the possibility of electing a president.

Following the escalation of conflicts with the Israeli regime and the fall of Bashar al-Assad's government in Syria, new conditions needed to emerge in Lebanon, which began with the implementation of [UN Security Council] Resolution 1701 [that was intended to resolve the 2006 Lebanon War], continued with a cease-fire, and ultimately led to the election of a new president. The current circumstances suggest that a genuine opportunity for unity has finally arisen for the Lebanese, allowing them to come together. This marks a preliminary step into a new phase, enabling the Lebanese to find their footing, unite, and pursue their objectives. Maintaining the existing cease-fire is one of Lebanon's most critical goals today. If this cease-fire collapses, the entire situation will unravel, leading to new conflicts and potentially jeopardizing the unity among the Lebanese once again.

### Second priority

Given that Syria geographically surrounds Lebanon, aside from the southern region under the oversight of UN forces, establishing a proper relationship with this neighbor will be the second priority.

Previously, Syria only had a good relationship with Hezbollah, while other groups faced challenges in their dealings with Syria. However, this is no longer the case, as a government opposing and distinct from Bashar al-Assad's government has come to power. Given the realities of the borders, Lebanon is compelled to establish relations with Syria to facilitate the movement of its sects and utilize the capacities of

both nations. This marks the second priority of a newly formed unity among the government, Parliament, and all groups to elect a president.

The groundwork for rebuilding Lebanon's relations with Syria is reportedly being laid. It appears that the group in power in Syria may be able to help restore this relationship through various segments of Lebanese society. Hezbollah can influence the broader Lebanese community's relationship by maintaining its position within the government and various Lebanese institutions. Moreover, if relations with Syria improve, it could also affect the dynamics between Iran and Syria.

### Iran's role in unity

Throughout the past years, Iran has significantly impacted the situation when the Lebanese felt that Iran was assisting all Lebanese in establishing peace, stability, and security in Lebanon. For instance, during Mohammad Khatami's presidency (1997-2005), such an atmosphere prevailed in Lebanon. Many believed that the idea of dialogue among civilizations seemed tailored for Lebanon, allowing them to leverage this concept for internal unity. One of the initial outcomes of this unity was the expulsion of Israel from southern Lebanon, which would not have been possible without a cohesive Lebanese front.

At certain points, while Hezbollah was engaged in warfare in the south against the Israeli regime, it did not enjoy the backing of the entire Lebanese populace. However, there were times when all segments of society, from the citizenry to the prime minister, president, and various sectarian parties, rallied behind the resistance. The foundation of this support rests on the unity that is being legally established, gradually bringing people closer together and fostering the understanding that the resistance, like other sectors, can play a positive role in Lebanon. Every country should act based on the will of its entire populace, rather than just a segment. This perspective highlights the emergence of new conditions and opportunities, allowing for the sidelining of internal disputes in Lebanon while also addressing the calculations of occupying forces.

### 'Lebanon for all Lebanese'

Lebanese have chosen the path of unity in light of the current circumstances, which is preferable to the previous



Lebanese lawmakers gather to elect a new president at the parliament building in downtown Beirut, Lebanon, on January 9, 2025.  
● HUSSEIN MALLA/AP

route that led to the martyrdom of Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, the terrorist agenda of the Pagars, and the deaths of commanders—an enormous loss.

Lebanon is most powerful when united, and this strength can enhance its internal and external successes. Only through this unity can they stand firm against external aggression. The rehabilitation of Hezbollah, alongside the government, will also be more effective in the context of unity. It is essential to view Lebanon as a state-nation that should uphold the motto, "Lebanon is for all Lebanese."

Tensions devastate the entire region, and reducing these tensions in Lebanon through unity and the establishment of a strong, united Lebanon is vital for the entire area, especially in light of the threat posed by Israeli aggression. Whenever the Lebanese unite, they stand firm against this aggression; con-

versely, when internal disputes intensify, they lose the initiative.

### Wisdom-based election

Another crucial point is that the election of the president of this country is based on collective wisdom. Joseph Aoun was unable to secure a majority in the first round of voting, but in the second round, thanks to behind-the-scenes consultations and discussions, he was able to win, which is promising. This indicates that nothing was imposed on anyone, and everything was based on consensus. These behind-the-scenes discussions have satisfied all relevant parties, resulting in solid support for the new president. This is a positive sign, suggesting that the president will have a national backing.

Ultimately, France, through the Maronites, Iran through Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia through the Sunni community, and the sig-

nificant role of the United States must collaborate in the initial stages to ensure that tensions are alleviated and this unity is successful. They could even gather to discuss this matter, potentially serving as a model for reducing tensions in the region. Concerning the coherent positioning of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is important to note that at times, non-diplomatic and even problematic perspectives have dominated foreign policy. There is now an urgent need for diplomatic perspectives in relations with neighboring countries, to organize foreign relations based on the state-nation system, prioritizing governments.

Iran requires a cohesive foreign policy grounded in legal responsibilities to engage more effectively and robustly with issues than in the past, utilizing all its legal capacities to fulfill its duties.



A man walks next to an installation with the flags of Iran, Hezbollah and Lebanon, in Tehran, Iran, on October 18, 2024.  
● REUTERS



Hezbollah can influence the broader Lebanese community's relationship by maintaining its position within the government and various Lebanese institutions. Moreover, if relations with Syria improve, it could also affect the dynamics between Iran and Syria.

## WTT Youth Contender Tunis 2025:

Iranian prodigies star  
with triple boys' singles golds

Iranian table tennis player Faraz Shakiba won the boys' singles under-15 title at the WTT Youth Contender Tunis.  
● IRNA

## Sports Desk

Iranian table tennis young guns stole the show at the WTT Youth Contender Tunis, bagging three singles gold medals across different boys' age classes.

On Thursday, Faraz Shakiba, having beaten opponents from Bulgaria, Sweden, and France en route to the final, capped off a glittering campaign for the country in the Tunisian capital by defeating Italian Francesco Trevisan 3-1 (11-6, 10-12, 11-6, 11-7) for the under-15 prize.

World No. 17 Benyamin Faraji, a world youth bronze medalist last November, got off to a slow start in the U17 final against Austrian Julian Rzihauschek, suffering a 11-3 loss in the first game, but fought hard to win 13-11 and restore parity before 11-6 and 11-7 wins in the third and fourth games secured yet another international medal for the Iranian.

Nikan Shirvani, the youngest of the Iranian trio, also had to come from behind to beat Andya Mohammed of Iraq – number seven in the latest ITTF World Ranking of the age category – 3-1 (11-5, 12-10, 11-6, 11-9) in the final showpiece of the under-11 contests at El Menzah Sport Palace.

## Australian Open:

## Alcaraz slaps down Borges to reach second week



● TINGSHU WANG/REUTERS

REUTERS – Third seed Carlos Alcaraz dropped his first set of the tournament but still safely secured his passage into the fourth round of the Australian Open with a 6-2 6-4 6-7(3) 6-3 victory over Nuno Borges on Friday. Two conversions from four break

points were enough for 21-year-old Spaniard to take the first set, one from one handed him the second, before the experienced Portuguese number one snatched the momentum back at the end of the third. Borges blew one set point at 6-5 by

going along with a return but made no mistake in the tiebreak to claim the set and leave Alcaraz seething in his chair. The four-times Grand Slam champion came out in the fourth set like a man on a mission, breaking at the first opportunity for 2-0 with a spectacular over-the-shoulder pass from the back of the court.

A huge roar of "Vamos!" echoed over the sunbathed Rod Laver Arena and from that point Alcaraz's place in the fourth round for the 11th time in 16 Grand Slam campaigns looked assured.

The remainder of the set from Alcaraz was venomous serving, a few sumptuous drop shots and the customary barrage of forehand winners, the 35th of which brought up match point after just under three hours on court.

"I'm just really happy to be able to play here once again and show my best tennis here. It's been a pleasure whenever I step on this court, it's a beautiful court. The last time I played here, I lost so I really wanted a win here," Alcaraz said.

He already has two Wimbledon crowns and one title each at the U.S. and French Open so the Australian Open, where his best result was his quarter-final appearance last year, would count as his least successful Grand Slam.

BBC – Manchester City striker Erling Haaland has signed a new long-term deal with the club that will keep him at the Etihad until 2034. The Norwegian joined City from Dortmund in 2022 and has scored 111 goals in 126 games for the club since. The striker's previous deal, which reportedly included a release clause, had been due to expire in 2027.

Haaland's new deal would see the striker remain with City until his 34th birthday should he stay at the club until its

expiry in nine-and-a-half years' time.

Haaland's contract renewal comes two months after manager Pep Guardiola's decision to sign a new two-year deal of his own.

The length of Haaland's deal is the longest in the Premier League, eclipsing the nine-year deal Cole Palmer signed with Chelsea last August.

Since moving to the club from Germany, the Norway forward has won two Premier League titles, the FA Cup, the Champions League and the Super Cup.

## Haaland signs 10-year extension with Man City



● MCFC

Azmoun strike leads  
Shabab Al Ahli to  
Challenge Shield

Shabab Al Ahli striker Sardar Azmoun (top left) is seen in action against Al Rayyan in the UAE-Qatar Challenge Shield in Al Rayyan, Qatar, on January 16, 2025.  
● QATAR NEWS AGENCY

## Sports Desk

Sardar Azmoun continued his prolific form for the season as Shabab Al Ahli defeated Al Rayyan 3-1 to win the Challenge Shield on Thursday.

Brazilian-born Emirati midfielder Yuri Cesar gave Shabab Al Ahli the lead right before the half-hour mark at the Ahmad bin Ali Stadium, before a Renan's own goal drew the home side level in the 42nd minute.

Azmoun restored the lead for the Emirati outfit seven minutes after the

break, finishing off a diagonal cross from Guilherme Bala in the 18-yard box with a simple tap-in.

This was a 17th goal in 19 games across all competitions for the Iranian international, who has contributed with four assists in his debut season in the Asian club football. Bala found the net himself in the seventh minute of added time as Shabab Al Ahli won a second title in as many years in the Qatar-UAE Super Cup, having beaten Al Duhail 2-1 to win the Super Shield in Dubai in the inaugural bilateral tournament last year.

# Iran, Russia ink strategic partnership agreement

Pezeshkian calls treaty 'new chapter' in relations

**Putin:** Long-term deal adds momentum to ties

## International Desk

Iranian and Russian presidents signed a long-awaited strategic partnership agreement on Friday to further expand cooperation between the two nations. The 20-year agreement covers economic, transportation, energy, health, tourism and agricultural areas, in addition to Tehran-Moscow cooperation to deal with common challenges, reduce the consequences of natural disasters, combat organized crimes, fight terrorism, and make joint investments. After the signing ceremony, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian at a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin called the agreement a "new chapter" in relations between the two countries, especially in the economic area.

Pezeshkian said that the agreement, which is based on the interests of the two nations, can shape the path of cooperation between the two countries.

The Iranian president said both Tehran and Moscow are determined to remove obstacles to customs tariffs, banking, investment guarantees, facilitation of

meetings among traders and visa issues.

He added that the increase in level of relations using the capacities of the Eurasian Economic Union, improving the level of cooperation on issues such as combating terrorism and organized violence have been emphasized in the agreement.

## 'Breakthrough document'

"It is truly a breakthrough document," Putin said after the signing ceremony, adding that the two countries were "united... in taking our relationship to a new level."

He said that the agreement offers variety to the economic cooperation between Tehran and Moscow.

He also said Russia and Iran are discussing the supply of Russian gas.

Putin said that if the project is implemented, gas supplies to Iran could eventually reach 55 billion cubic meters per year, but it would need to start with small volumes of up to 2 billion bcm.

## Opposing external pressure

The Russian leader added that

his country and Iran were resolutely opposed to external pressure from abroad.

"Our countries firmly uphold the principles of the rule of international law, the principles of sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs... and resolutely oppose diktats from the outside," Putin said.

## 'Strategic relationship'

Ahead of the signing ceremony, both leaders held a meeting during which Pezeshkian said Iran considers its strategic cooperation with Russia as pivotal, sensitive and strategic and has tried to remove all the hurdles facing expansion of relations between the two countries.

He also said that Tehran and Moscow signed new agreements on the construction of a new power plant in Iran.

Pezeshkian, on his first Kremlin visit since winning the presidency last July, said that Iran believes that regional issues should be resolved by the countries in the region.

"There is no need for others from the other side of the world to come here and disrupt the region and implement



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin during a meeting in Moscow on January 17, 2025.  
● president.ir

their own policies," the Iranian president emphasized.

He said that the development of Tehran-Moscow relations will thwart their plans.

Russian president said the new treaty will add "momentum" to their ties.

## 'Solid foundation' for relations

"This will give us the opportunity to give additional momentum to almost all areas of cooperation," Putin told Pezeshkian, who replied that the document

would become a "solid foundation" for relations.

"We will discuss all areas of our cooperation and sign a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement," Putin said. "We have been working on it for a long time and I am very pleased that this work has been completed," he said, adding it should further boost trade and economic ties.

Putin said that the increase in trade between the two countries is acceptable, noting that, "In the first 10 months of

2024, we witnessed a growth of more than 15% in bilateral trade."

Iran and Russia are both subject to illegal Western sanctions. They have over the past years deepened their cooperation in various sectors.

In 2001, Tehran and Moscow signed a long-term cooperation deal, officially known as the Treaty of the Foundation of Mutual Relations and the Principles of Cooperation. It was initially set for 10 years but was extended up until 2026.

## Iran: Gaza cease-fire result of Palestinians' resistance



A youth sits in the rubble of a building hit in Israeli strikes in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip, on January 16, 2025.  
● OMAR AL-QATTAA / AFP

## International Desk

Iran welcomed a cease-fire agreement reached between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip, calling it the result of Palestinians' resistance against the regime's aggression.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in a post on his X social media account on Thursday commended the sacrifices and valor of Palestinians and their resistance in the face of the months-long Israeli aggression

that resulted in the cease-fire in the Gaza Strip and forced the regime to back down.

"Today, the world realized that the Palestinian people's patience and the Palestinian resistance's resilience have forced the Zionist regime to back down," the Leader said.

"It will be written in books that one day, a Zionist group massacred thousands of women and children in the most horrific way and at the end, they were quashed." The cease-fire, brokered by Qatar, Egypt

and the US, was announced by Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani late on Wednesday. It consists of three phases and would come into effect on Sunday over a span of 42 days.

The truce deal, which would potentially bring an end to Israel's devastating genocidal aggression on the territory, stipulates that a large-scale prisoner exchange will occur, including the release of 1,000 prisoners from Gaza and hundreds of detainees serving lengthy sentences.

Negotiators from Egypt, Qatar, the US and Israel met in Cairo Friday to set out "mechanisms" for implementing the truce in Gaza.

During Friday's talks, negotiators agreed on facilitating the entry of 600 aid trucks per day into the Gaza Strip as per the deal, the source said.

The Israeli security cabinet also approved the cease-fire deal on Friday. Since the announcement of the cease-fire on Wednesday, Israeli strikes have killed over 100 people in Gaza.

Israel launched its brutal Gaza onslaught on October 7, 2023, after Hamas-led resistance groups carried out a historic operation against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

Since October, the occupying regime has killed at least 46,707 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured nearly 110,265 others, in Gaza.

Iran's Foreign Ministry also welcomed the deal but called for "the arrest, trial, and punishment" of Israeli leaders for committing "the most serious war crimes" in Gaza.

In a statement on Thursday, the Foreign Ministry said the people of the war-ravaged Palestinian territory have suffered "one of the greatest acts of genocide and population displacement in history" since October 2023, when Israel's war machine began unleashing fire and destruction on the territory.

The cease-fire is also the result of "solidarity and unity of the people of Gaza in their honorable resistance and steadfastness against the forced displacement of Palestinians," the statement read, hailing the truce "as a historic victory for the Palestinian nation."

## Iran dismisses claims of providing assistance to Yemeni forces

Iran's ambassador to the UN dismissed as "groundless" claims that Tehran has trained or provided assistance for the Yemeni Ansarullah resistance forces, saying such claims lack credible technical evidence and are driven by political agendas.

In identical letters addressed to UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the rotating president of the Security Council Amar Bendjama, Amir Saeid Iravani responded to a report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen, Press TV reported.

The panel, Iravani said, had cited what it viewed as Ansarullah's limited capabilities to conclude that it was affiliated with "foreign trainers" and that similarities between the group's materials and those linked to Iran indicated technical support from Iran.

After "thoroughly reviewing the alleged evidence, Iranian authorities categorically rejected these claims, including the supposed similarities between confiscated weapons and Iranian productions," Iravani wrote in the letters.

"Such claims are unfounded, as similar weapons can be manufactured worldwide through reverse engineering, and the technology in question is neither advanced nor exclusive to Iran. Moreover, the photos and images presented by the Panel lack credibility and fail to meet the standard of reliable evidence. Regrettably, the Panel has compromised its own credibility by relying on speculative assumptions instead of providing substantiated and verifiable facts." The senior Iranian diplomat



IRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC Amir Saeid Iravani

stressed that a significant portion of the report relies on "vague and unreliable" references, including so-called "sources," "confidential sources," and "multiple sources," undermining its credibility with biased and unsubstantiated claims.

He also roundly repudiated the allegations in paragraph 67 of the report regarding "the level of coordination between Ansarullah, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and other resistance groups" concerning Operation True Promise against Israeli assets within the occupied territories.

"This operation was exclusively an Iranian military initiative, undertaken in the exercise of its inherent right to self-defense. It was a direct and proportional response to the Israeli terrorist attack on Iranian diplomatic premises in Damascus on April 1, 2024 - a blatant violation of fundamental principles of international law, particularly the inviolability of diplomatic premises and representatives. Such baseless claims seek to distort the legitimate nature of Iran's response to an unlawful act of aggression," Iravani stated.

Iran's UN ambassador also stated that his country has never had proxy groups nor considers other nations in the region as proxies.

## Mohammad Ali Rajabi

Cartoonist



# Latest methods, treatments for infertility available in Iran

## Iran hosts many foreign patients seeking sterility treatment

By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

### INTERVIEW

Iran is recognized as a leading country in the field of infertility treatments globally, holding a significant position in this medical domain. According to a board member of the Iranian Society of Reproductive Medicine and a professor at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, the latest advanced methods and treatments for infertility are indeed accessible in Iran.

Saghar Salehpour states, "Due to our high level of scientific and medical expertise in infertility treatments and the considerably lower costs of health-care services in Iran compared to developed countries, a large number of foreign patients travel to Iran each year for infertility treatment. They return to their home countries after achieving satisfactory and favorable results."

Iran Daily conducted an exclusive interview with Saghar Salehpour regarding the state of medical knowledge in Iran concerning infertility treatments. The full text of the interview follows:

#### IRAN DAILY: Could you briefly explain the history and current level of infertility treatments in Iran?

**SALEHPOUR:** Infertility treatment in Iran began with the establishment of the Yazd Research and Clinical Center for Infertility in 1989. For about 35 years now, these treatments have been conducted at a very high standard in Iran. All infertility treatments, including IVF, microinjection, male infertility treatments, endoscopic procedures, laparoscopy, hysteroscopy, and genetic-related treatments such as embryo biopsy and various genetic screenings, are available in our country.

Currently, there are over 120 infertility centers in Iran, with approximately 30% of these centers affiliated with universities and government institutions. Our

infertility specialists, whose primary specialty is obstetrics and gynecology, collaborate effectively with embryologists, urologists, and geneticists to manage the activities of these centers successfully, leading to high patient satisfaction with the outcomes. The success rates for patients are excellent in both public and private centers, and indeed, our centers are on par with advanced global centers in the field of infertility treatment. Furthermore, the costs associated with infertility treatments in Iran remain significantly lower than those in many medical facilities worldwide. As a result, in addition to Iranian expatriates who seek medical services in Iran every year, we observe a notable influx of patients from various regions, particularly from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf countries. Each year, a substantial number of infertile couples from our northern, eastern, western, and southern neighboring countries come to Iran for these services.

#### How does Iran rank in terms of infertility treatment in the region?

Rankings regarding the status of countries are typically announced by organizations such as the World Health Organization. However, to describe Iran's situation in the region, it suffices to note that a significant number of our patients currently come from the Middle East. This trend is not solely due to the low treatment costs in our country; even if free medical services were offered, if they did not yield results, no one would be willing to invest their time and travel expenses for such services. At present, the success rate of infertility treatments in Iran matches that of advanced centers worldwide.

#### What is the current state of infertility in Iran? How many couples face this issue, and how many of these cases are treatable?

Statistics regarding the prevalence of infertility among couples in Iran vary, but it can generally be stated that approximately 12 to 15 percent of Iranian couples experience infertility issues. In other words, for every six couples that marry, typically one couple is infertile.



As is common worldwide, about 35 to 40 percent of infertility problems are attributed to male factors, while 50 to 55 percent are due to female factors. Additionally, around 10 to 15 percent of cases involve couples with no significant issues but who still face challenges conceiving. The success rate of treatments in each cycle is approximately 45 to 50 percent, and with repeated treatment cycles, it can be said that nearly all infertility issues are treatable. In certain cases, we may need to seek assistance from a third party, such as when a woman has no eggs. Additionally, some patients may resort to egg donation, embryo donation, or surrogate motherhood as part of their treatment process. Thus, almost all couples can remain hopeful that they will achieve results through one of these methods.

#### Can you discuss the latest infertility treatment methods available both

#### globally and within our country?

Since about 35 years ago, in vitro fertilization (IVF) has been performed in Iran. The microinjection method has been utilized for around 30 years worldwide and is also employed in Iran. We have been freezing embryos using various methods for approximately 30 years. Plus, genetic testing methods have been introduced in the field of reproductive health in Iran for over a decade. We can assess the genetic health of embryos and identify specific genes that may lead to diseases within families, such as thalassemia, hemophilia, and Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

In cases where individuals have children with specific diseases requiring stem cells similar to their own, or where children need bone marrow transplants but suitable cells are not available, we utilize HLA typing. When a mother becomes pregnant, we can identify the HLA type that matches the sick child in



Since about 35 years ago, in vitro fertilization (IVF) has been performed in Iran. The microinjection method has been utilized for around 30 years worldwide and is also employed in Iran.

the embryo we implant. This enables the newborn to potentially assist an older sibling in terms of bone marrow or stem cells. These represent some of the cutting-edge methods being implemented in Iran today.

## Tehran, Moscow usher in ...

Over three decades, Iran and Russia have expanded their cooperation in all areas, and given the current circumstances and the level of their relations, it was essential to update the previous document.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has previously said that the 20-year contract is not merely a political document but a roadmap for the future. According to the minister, the agreement encompasses all aspects of cooperation, with a particular focus on three main areas: economic, scientific and technological, and cultural and tourism cooperation. Araghchi elaborated on the matter, stating that the comprehensive agreement places special emphasis on enhancing economic relations between the two nations.

North-South Corridor: the major transportation project connects Iran to Russia and subsequently to Europe and Asia.

Trade and Investment: Last year, trade between Iran and Russia grew by 15%, and the new agreement is expected to accelerate this trend even further. The agenda for this cooperation includes developing joint markets and investing in infrastructure projects.

The second focus is on technology and science. The comprehensive partnership agreement provides a framework for knowledge sharing and collaboration in areas such as nanotechnology, aerospace, artificial intelligence, and medical sciences. This cooperation will extend not only at the government level but also between universities and research institutions in both countries.

The third area is culture and

tourism, aimed at strengthening humanitarian relations. This strategic agreement will facilitate tourist exchanges and establish joint cultural programs.

According to Araghchi, Iran and Russia are redefining a new model of regional and global cooperation through their active participation in organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS, and the Eurasian Economic Union. These organizations represent emerging powers and challengers to the unipolar order, creating a platform for enhanced synergy and coordination between Iran and Russia.

Also, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has emphasized that the agreement is not directed against any other country but aims to ensure the security of both nations. Lavrov noted that the accord is intended to accel-

erate economic exchanges, address social issues in bilateral relations, and ensure reliable defense capabilities.

This deal, which, according to Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali, comprises an introduction and 47 articles, encompasses all areas of bilateral relations. Its drafting has taken into account balance, independence, and respect for territorial integrity. Given that Iran and Russia possess energy resources, cooperation between the two countries in the fields of international trade and energy has also been anticipated. The Iranian diplomat stated that cooperation in new technologies, particularly in new technologies, information security, and cybersecurity, is also included in the comprehensive joint agreement. Furthermore, collaboration in peaceful nuclear energy, defense

and military matters, combating terrorism, environmental issues, the Caspian Sea, and tackling money laundering and organized crime constitutes additional provisions of this agreement.

The Kremlin spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, stated that the comprehensive joint agreement meets the aspirations of the peoples of these two friendly neighboring countries and elevates their relations to a strategic partnership level. Following the signing of the treaty by the two presidents, it must be ratified by the legislative bodies of both countries. As announced by the Iranian ambassador to Moscow, the document is not confidential. When the government presents it to the Iranian Parliament as a bill, its text will no longer be concealed from anyone. Leonid Slutsky, chairman of the international affairs committee

of the State Duma of Russia, has described this document as a roadmap for developing bilateral relations, saying that the two countries will focus on enhancing economic cooperation, including in transportation, energy, and technology.

He noted that this treaty represents an important step both in the context of bilateral relations and in the regional and international agenda, particularly concerning security issues and balanced cooperation. Both Russia and Iran oppose US hegemony, the unipolar world, the collective West's attempts to dictate policies to others, illegal sanctions, and interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The collaboration between Russia and Iran is deeply rooted and can be seen as a genuine example of a partnership based on mutual respect.