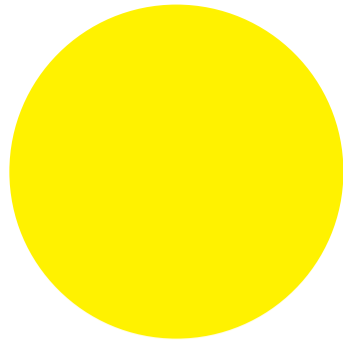


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An Arab-Iranian local leader dons a traditional garment on Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) in Ahvaz during a visit to Iran's southwestern Khuzestan Province on January 22, 2025. [president.ir](http://president.ir)



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# Leader: Gov't bodies should help not hinder private sector

## Economy Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei praised the performance of Iran's private sector that has led to its "satisfactory progress," despite extreme pressure and sanctions imposed by the West, urging government bodies not to hinder private sector.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in Tehran on Wednesday, during a meeting with a group of private sector manufacturers and economic figures. The Leader pointed to an exhibition that has been held in the Iranian capital to showcase the achievements of the country's private sector, under the banner of "Pioneers of Progress, a National Event of the Capabilities and Achievements of the Private Sector." The event was visited by Ayatollah Khamenei in person on Tuesday. "Yesterday's exhibition showed that the private sector has managed to reach an acceptable level of progress notwithstanding foreign pressures and sanctions and the threats of imposition of more sanctions," the Leader stated. Ayatollah Khamenei was referring to the illegal and unilateral economic measures that the United States and its Western allies began enforcing against the Islamic Republic in the aftermath of Washington's illegal and unilateral departure from a 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers. After imposing the sanctions, the

Western trio of the UK, France, and Germany said they would pursue the US's return to the deal, but stopped short of enabling the prospect.

The deal's Western parties will, meanwhile, ramp up the sanctions at will in response to the legitimate retaliatory nuclear measures that Tehran has been taking in response to the Western non-commitment to contractual obligations.

## De-dollarization and BRICS

Ayatollah Khamenei also encouraged "maximum use" of the country's participation in the world's economic bodies such as the BRICS group of emerging economies.

"One of our problems arises from our dependence on the dollar. The BRICS' financial system and the financial transactions using the currencies of BRICS' member countries that are expected to take place contribute greatly to resolution of this problem."

The Leader, meanwhile, regretted that the country had failed to properly publicize its achievements across various sectors in a way that would do its progress justice.

"We have fallen short in the area of [properly] displaying our instances of progress," Ayatollah Khamenei noted. The Leader, therefore, advised implementation of "important" media projects towards enabling proper presentation of the country's advances to duly inform those seeking to engage

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addresses a group of private sector manufacturers and economic figures in Tehran, Iran on January 22, 2025.



in productive economic activity in the country, including youths and students.

Ayatollah Khamenei also encouraged similar media activism towards "realization of [the country's] dreams."

"This comprises a separate chapter,

which entails [those responsible] sitting down and engaging in discussions and reflections in this area."

Ayatollah Khamenei had named the Iranian calendar year of 1403, which ends on March 20, 2025, the year of "Surge in production through people's

participation."

Addressing the meeting, the Leader advised towards continuous economic progress and just distribution of such progress' rewards among the public so the people would sense its positive effect on their lives.

## Enemies to see Iran in 'weakest position' only in dreams: *Pezeshkian*

### Ahvaz oil desalination plant inaugurated



The photo shows Iran's largest oil desalination plant in Ahvaz, southwestern Iran, which was inaugurated remotely by President Masoud Pezeshkian on January 22, 2025.

SHANA

## Economy Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Wednesday dismissed the notion that Iran had plunged to its "weakest position," saying the country would not end up in what its enemies were dreaming about.

"Our adversaries are assessing that Iran is now in its weakest position but they should only dream on that their plans will come true," Pezeshkian told a group of businesspeople and industry owners in Ahvaz during a visit to the southwestern province of Khuzestan.

"There is no way we will let Iran end up in the state they [enemies] imagine," Pezeshkian added.

He gave assurances that Iran would overcome challenges including energy shortages among others with the help of the people and the efforts of officials.

"We are working consistently and systematically to deal with shortages," Pezeshkian pointed out.

He noted that while his government inherited shortages in energy and other sectors, great efforts had been made to mitigate them, including preventing a potential gas and electricity crisis earlier this year.

He reiterated his commitment to utilizing all national resources to address shortfalls and improve conditions.

Pezeshkian further called for solidarity and collaboration to achieve progress, expressing confidence that with the support of the people, Iran could overcome its challenges and achieve regional leadership.

He acknowledged the complaints and demands raised by the public and business community, attributing many issues to inefficient structures inherited from previous administrations.

The president expressed frustration over the governments' underperformance in Khuzestan despite its abundant resources, including water, fertile land, underground resources, and access to the sea.

He stressed that such conditions are unacceptable and vowed to address these challenges by empowering local officials and leveraging capable individuals regardless of ethnicity, religion, or gender.

Pezeshkian highlighted efforts to delegate authority to provincial governors, enabling them to collaborate with the private sector and local communities to resolve issues without

needing to refer them to Tehran.

Pezeshkian and his delegation arrived in Khuzestan for a two-day visit on Wednesday, marking the administration's fourth provincial trip.

The president was accompanied by several cabinet members, including the ministers of oil, energy, roads and urban development, cultural heritage, agriculture, welfare, and health, as well as deputies for rural development and women's affairs.

The large delegation underscores the government's commitment to the development and prosperity of Khuzestan.

Oil desalination plant goes online

In another development on Wednesday, the largest desalination plant in Ahvaz began operations under Pezeshkian's directive and in the presence of the country's oil minister.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad stated that the plant will process salty oil from the Ahvaz oil field, raising the capacity to process salty crude oil by 110,000 barrels per day, IRNA reported.

Paknejad, for his part, emphasized that improving the quality of processed crude oil to meet export and refinery standards is a key aspect of the project.

The project, valued at 58 million euros, is expected to create 180 direct and 400 indirect jobs. Over 85% of the equipment was domestically produced, with 100% of engineering, construction, and commissioning services provided locally.

The plant's completion enhances the separation of oil and water, ensuring industrial wastewater meets environmental standards, thereby reducing pollution.

## Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan reach full agreement to complete INSTC: *Minister*

## Economy Desk

Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq announced that a comprehensive agreement has been reached between Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan to complete the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), one of the country's most important transit routes.

Speaking at the conclusion of the 16th meeting of the Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Commission on Wednesday, Sadeq emphasized the critical role of the Rasht-Astara route in the corridor.

She noted that Azerbaijan, as a bridge between Russia and Iran, plays a key role in facilitating cargo transportation among the three nations.

Sadeq highlighted that trilateral meetings between Iran, Azerbaijan, and Russia are underway to activate the INSTC, with a target of handling 15 million tons of transit cargo, and expressed hope that these efforts would yield results soon.

The minister also addressed the trade potential between Iran and Azerbaijan, stating that bilateral trade reached \$487 million in 2023, with Iran exporting \$473 million worth of goods and importing \$14 million from Azerbaijan.

In the first 11 months of 2024, trade volume rose to \$583 million, with



Iranian exports accounting for \$570 million and imports totaling \$12.9 million. Sadeq stressed that the two countries have the potential to significantly increase trade, setting a five-year target of \$10 billion.

Sadeq underscored the current administration's commitment to expanding bilateral relations and removing barriers to cooperation.

She expressed satisfaction with the successful hosting of the 16th Joint Economic Commission meeting in Tehran after a three-year hiatus and expressed hope that follow-ups on agreements in transportation, customs, energy, oil, gas, electricity, water, banking, preferential trade, and investment would open new avenues for collaboration.

The minister proposed drafting a roadmap to achieve the \$10 billion trade target and called for swift resumption of negotiations to boost trade volumes.

She emphasized that transit cooperation is a fundamental area of collaboration between the two countries, with significant untapped potential in rail, road, air, and maritime transport.

Sadeq acknowledged existing transit challenges but expressed optimism that comprehensive commission meetings would help resolve them.

She highlighted key infrastructure projects, including the inauguration of the second Astarachay Bridge last year, progress on the construction of Kalaleh border bridge, and ongoing road and rail projects such as the Aqband-Nakhichevan route via the Jolfa border and the Astara railway.

The meeting, held in Tehran after a three-year pause, brought together technical and expert groups from both countries to discuss economic, trade, cultural, transportation, tourism, energy and other areas of cooperation.

# Archaeological wonders of Shadiyakh Museum Site



## Iranica Desk

The Shadiyakh Museum Site is a treasure trove of Iranian culture and art, according to the head of Neyshabur's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization.

Hassan Giyahi told ISNA that Shadiyakh is an important part of ancient Neyshabur in Khorasan Razavi Province, primarily dating back to the early Islamic period. He noted that the Shadiyakh Museum Site is one of the most significant archaeological centers in the region.

Giyahi mentioned that efforts are underway to collaborate with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization to swiftly implement a new plan aimed at preserving and improving the condition of Shadiyakh.

Additionally, he stated that excavations in the area have uncovered various features, including glass-making workshops, architectural decorations and stuccowork, architectural remnants, several skeletons, and other sites. The skeletons are likely linked to an earthquake that occurred in the 7th century AH.

He stated that a substantial portion of the country's history and that of Neyshabur is hidden within these areas. In these archaeological sites, one can learn about the way of life, the tools



and equipment used, social hierarchies and classes, architectural styles, and much more. Giyahi noted that until about 80 years ago, the poetic lifestyle was reflected in all aspects of the lives of the ancients. When a piece of tile is discovered, it reveals the taste, color, aroma, and essence of their culture, art, history, and civilization. He mentioned that the works carried out by the ancestors were rooted in a theoretical foundation that they deeply believed in, emphasizing that this mystical and philosophical connection can be seen in the artifacts that remain.

He added that these artifacts are signs of civilization, culture, and history, possessing identity and authenticity. They reso-

nate with the culture, history, and particularly the geography of the regions, and can be observed at historical sites.

He stated that these artifacts are treasures and cultural wealth of Iran, playing a significant role in introducing the history of the country. He emphasized that the essence of being Iranian and living as an Iranian is rooted in culture. Giyahi considered Iran's cultural and artistic heritage to be its true gifts, noting that much of this culture and art lies hidden within the mounds and archaeological sites.

He expressed hope that further excavations will lead to even more discoveries. He pointed out that the area of the ancient city of Neyshabur spans approximately

5,000 hectares, mentioning that high costs and the importance of preserving and protecting the artifacts discovered so far have limited excavations to only a small portion of the site.

"We are working to uncover Iran's cultural treasures and assets. Neyshabur has faced numerous invasions throughout history and has even been devastated by earthquakes; however, it continues to rise from the ground, still bearing the marks of its past. The majority of ancient Neyshabur remains buried beneath the soil."

He noted the existence and identification of many ancient mounds, some of which are registered as national heritage, and emphasized that much of ancient Neyshabur is still hid-

den underground.

Giyahi highlighted that Neyshabur, with a history spanning 7,500 years, is one of the most culturally rich regions of Khorasan Razavi Province, mentioning that most excavations have taken place in Shadiyakh.

He announced preventive preservation measures for the skeletons found at the historical site of Shadiyakh in Neyshabur, explaining that the skeletons recovered from the rubble of the 7th-century AH earthquake hold significant scientific, historical, and spatial value. These skeletons have been subjected to preventive protection by conservation specialists from the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization.

Giyahi noted that, given the

specific protective conditions required at the site, measures have been implemented to manage humidity and strengthen the skeletons using calcium-compatible materials, among other strategies, to enhance their durability and preservation. He mentioned that the restoration and preventive protection operations were carried out by specialists from the restoration laboratory of the Cultural Heritage Organization of Khorasan Razavi Province.

He added that Shadiyakh is a crucial part of the ancient city of Neyshabur and one of the most important archaeological sites in the country, currently open for visitation as a museum site for enthusiasts.

He noted that the Shadiyakh site has been registered on Iran's National Heritage List, stating that during the early Islamic period, this ancient city served as the capital of the Tahirid and later the Seljuk dynasties, becoming one of the largest centers and a homeland for numerous scholars, poets, Sufis, and other notable figures. He emphasized that the Abbasid Caravanserai, the covered bazaar, historical bathhouses, numerous water reservoirs, historic houses, and the historic axis of Imam Khomeini Street constitute significant aspects of the tourism and cultural potential of this historic city.

IRNA



## Unforgettable moments at Luna Park of Shiraz

If you visit Shiraz, the capital city of Fars Province, be sure to visit Luna Park (Luna Amusement Park), located at the northern entrance of the city near the Qur'an Gate, which enhances its charm. Established three decades ago, Luna Park is situated next to the Shiraz Grand Hotel and nestled against a mountain backdrop.

The park's mountainous location and pleasant climate significantly enhance its appeal. For a breathtaking view of the city from above, Luna Park is an excellent choice. There's a large parking lot available, making it easy to find a spot. The park features a variety of exciting games suitable for all ages, with

attractions categorized by age groups to ensure everyone has fun. You'll also find numerous pavilions and shops offering various amenities, along with models of Shiraz's historical landmarks.

Luna Park boasts over 50 recreational facilities, including a classic carousel that has been a staple since the park's opening. At its highest point, you'll enjoy stunning views of Shiraz below. Additionally, there is a dedicated area for women within the park. Surrounding the park, you'll find many restaurants that offer comfortable dining options.

Luna Park is conveniently located near several key tourist attractions, allowing you

to explore multiple sites in one visit. Notable nearby attractions include the Qur'an Gate, Haft Tanan Museum, and Tang Allah Akbar. The tombs of Khaju Kermani and Baba Kuhi Shirazi are also close to the Qur'an Gate, with Hafezieh located to the south and Jahannama Garden nearby.

Luna Park is open daily until midnight. However, it has traditionally been closed during winter months, so it's advisable to check its current operating status before your visit. The best times to explore Shiraz are in spring, particularly May, and during the stunning autumn months, making either season a great choice for your trip.

# Migration can work for all

## Plan for replacing broken global system



By Amy Pope  
Director  
general of Int'l  
Organization  
for Migration

### OPINION

Across the world, a backlash to immigration is remaking politics. In election after election, voters have backed candidates who promise to do whatever is necessary to stop the flow of unauthorized arrivals and, in many cases, send millions back to their countries of origin, no matter how war-torn or desperate. Anti-immigrant politicians and activists spread disinformation to suggest that countries are being invaded by waves of undocumented migrants. Images of migrant caravans, rickety boats at sea, and chaos at borders suggest that authorities have lost control of the migration system as a whole. With these images repeated on social media and anti-immigrant views gaining traction with the general public, even politicians normally sympathetic to immigration have found themselves recalibrating and on the defensive. These politics reflect the reality that, globally, irregular immigration — entering a country without prior authorization — is at historic levels. Americans are familiar with the record number of attempted crossings of the US-Mexican border: nearly 2.5 million in 2023 alone, compared with less than half a million a year at the beginning of the millennium. But that surge is not unique to the United States. In Europe, the number of unauthorized border crossings climbed to 380,000 in 2023, the highest since 2016. In other areas of the world, even where hostility to immigrants is more pronounced and, in some cases, even violent, migrants continue to risk death and abuse to enter a country, often because they know work is available. The fact that the phenomenon is so global also points to the problem with policy responses that aim to crack down on particular borders or in individual countries: today's unprecedented levels of migration make plain that a decrepit, outdated system, built in the wake of World War II, is incapable of contending with today's humanitarian needs, demographic trends, or labor-market demands.

States that focus on border restrictions, mass deportations, or the abrogation of legal protections for asylum seekers will fail to solve the problem. They will simply redirect it while creating a new host of problems that will, in the long term, feed the problem rather than solve it. They will empower criminal networks and black markets while leaving their own economies worse off. The system will continue to decay. Instead of short-term hard-line responses, the better and ultimately more successful route is to build a new system that can replace the old one and effectively address today's challenges. That new system must start from the premise that migration is a permanent feature of human civilization — in fact, border management and standardized passports are relatively new phenomena — and that there is a way to manage the movement of people in a manner that is orderly, dignified, and advantageous to all parties. That would mean both supporting development in migrants' countries of origin and making legal immigration channels accessible and efficient. Failure to immediately begin work on this new system will mean more social unrest, more inequality, and more abuse and exploitation of the most vulnerable. A new system could reduce the sense of disorder and lack of border control that has upended politics, and it would also create more opportunities for migrants, as well as for citizens of destination countries. It could enable the refugee system to work as intended, restoring credibility to the asylum system. Contrary to much of the current public discourse, immigration does not have to be a zero-sum proposition.

### Who gets in?

For many high-income countries, the current approach to legal immigration that allows migrants to enter through family reunification and through

labor visas is not only bureaucratic but also untethered to the evolving demands of their labor markets. Job openings that migrants could fill, especially in lower-skilled sectors, are often not filled. There aren't enough labor visas available to meet workforce demand, but the number of people who can seek asylum is not capped. The asylum process is easily accessible for those who make it to the border, so it should come as no surprise, then, that people are using asylum processes as a way to enter the labor force.

the needs of the country welcoming them but, as stipulated in the convention, they also have a right to jobs, housing, education, travel documents, and social protections. Accordingly, even people who cross a border without authorization can avail themselves of these protections if they request asylum and their refugee claims are validated. Likewise, the number of people who move to escape poverty vastly outstrips the number who qualify as refugees. Many migrants face acute, often

The result has been a surge in irregular immigration and an overreliance on seeking asylum. The established systems for resettling refugees in safe countries are woefully inadequate to meet demand. Even the United States — which has the largest program, admitting more than 100,000 refugees in 2024 — does not take in a fraction of the qualifying refugees who apply for asylum. Over the last several years, growing numbers of people have been crossing borders — whether by land, sea, or air

detection than in years past. Instead, they are walking up to the border, presenting themselves to border patrol officials, and requesting asylum. Yet while more people are seeking asylum, less than half will qualify for it. But even if they fail to establish an asylum case, applicants often find a viable route to live and work in the destination country for years before immigration authorities make a final determination on their case. In the United States, the asylum backlog has now reached three million cases. Complicated cases have taken as long as seven years to be resolved.

Some countries, such as France, Germany, and Greece, have shortened asylum processing times. Still, an asylum seeker's right to appeal can add years to the clock. In many countries, applicants can work, find housing, and put down roots while their cases wind their way through the system. Many of those who are not granted work permits simply disappear into their country of destination, finding work in the informal sector, where they are often underpaid and exploited. The success of so many applicants who enter and stay in a country of destination through this irregular pathway incentivizes others to attempt the same route, adding to the overburdened asylum docket and further slowing the adjudication of new applications.

This inefficient system also traps many applicants in limbo, preventing them from returning home for fear they will not be able to come back. Applicants with legitimate asylum claims can wait years before they have the status and stability they need to build a future. For those who start new lives but eventually do not qualify for asylum, deportation can be traumatic and destabilizing. It is also expensive and time-consuming for the deporting governments; as a result, millions stay unlawfully.



A migrant sits on a fence in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, in March 2024.  
DAVID PEINADO/REUTERS

At the same time, nearly all countries grant wide-ranging access and protections for people classified as "refugees" — that is, those who are fleeing persecution because of "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion," in the words of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which counts 149 states as parties. Not only are refugees admitted to safer countries without any assessment of the skills they have or

life-threatening risks in their home countries but because of the current binary approach to individuals fleeing crises — you either qualify as a "refugee" under current laws or you don't — hundreds of millions of desperate people are either ignored or demonized.

### Broken system

For those on the move in search of stability, safety, or better opportunities, the legal channels available to migrate are few.

— and seeking asylum once they arrive in their destination country. Europe witnessed a dramatic surge in 2015 as Syrians fled the war. Although applications decreased sharply in subsequent years, the number of applications is again on the rise. In the last 20 years, asylum applications in the United States have increased from less than 100,000 a year to more than 500,000 a year. Even at the US-Mexican border, far fewer people are seeking to evade



Migrants sail on a dinghy near Wimereux, France, in September 2024.  
BENOIT TESSIER/REUTERS



A migrant worker picks blueberries in Lake Wales, Florida, US, in March 2020.  
● MARCO BELLO/REUTERS

### Human resources

In addition to harming migrants, this broken migration system is fueling a political backlash. More and more governments are embracing restrictive policies. Some are rolling back asylum protections. In 2024, both Finland and Poland passed legislation that allows border officials to turn back asylum seekers at their land borders. The United States has also significantly restricted its asylum protections for those seeking refuge at its land borders. And South Africa is contemplating withdrawing from the Refugee Convention altogether.

Ironically, this anti-immigration wave is hitting at the same time that immigration is becoming more essential than ever. Global fertility rates have dropped from 5.3 births per woman in 1963 to 2.3 in 2021. When the asylum system was set up, in 1951, many of the most advanced countries in the world were experiencing a baby boom. Veterans flooded the workforce, and the demographic trend meant there were plenty of workers to meet economic needs for decades into the future. Today, many societies are experiencing the opposite trend. By 2050, nearly 40 percent of the population in Japan and in South Korea will be over the age of 65. Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain also have fast-aging populations. Governmental efforts to encourage families to have more babies have largely failed, as have attempts to replace work often done by migrants, such as elder care, with artificial intelligence. Thirty of the largest economies in the world suffer from labor shortages, and those unfilled jobs cost an estimated \$1.3 trillion in lost GDP in 2023 alone.

### Give me your tired, your poor

Given the current anti-immigration mood, revising the Refugee Convention to expand access and protection to a greater number of people is a political nonstarter. Worse, such a move could risk rolling back the refugee and asylum protections that remain critical for tens of millions of vulnerable people. Yet without a modernized approach to the movement of asylum seekers, increasingly negative public perceptions of immigration may cause governments to chip away at these protections. Governments need to adopt an approach that recognizes the

link between development and migration: lack of development fuels migration, but migration also fuels development in source and destination countries.

The evidence is overwhelming that poverty is a key driver of the recent and unprecedented uptick in irregular immigration. As recently as 2008, more than 90 percent of the people stopped at the US-Mexican border were Mexicans. Seventeen years later, as the Mexican economy has grown, only around one-third of the migrants trying to cross the border without authorization are Mexican, and there are many more families and unaccompanied minors. Today, those apprehended hail from more than 100 countries, with growing numbers from poor communities in places such as Bangladesh, China, and India. Many are fleeing poverty, which in many parts of the world has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and a changing climate.

### Help wanted

For the millions of people around the world suffering from the effects of poverty, climate change, and violence, the response of the aid community has been to rely on official development assistance in sectors such as health care, education, infrastructure, and agriculture. Legal immigration has been an underutilized tool. Migrants' remittances already significantly boost developing economies; in 2022, migrants sent home over \$831 billion. Creating opportunities for vulnerable people to migrate legally and secure formal work can empower them to rely more on their own capacity and less on aid.

That so many migrants who are undocumented find jobs in the informal markets of their destination countries signals an imbalance between legal immigration pathways and economic need, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, construction, hospitality, and healthcare services. The United States, for example, relies on migrants entering irregularly to meet over 70 percent of its agricultural labor needs. Nearly one in five workers on dairy farms is an immigrant. During the early days of the pandemic, the share of meatpacking workers who were foreign-born stood at 45 percent, 28 percentage points higher than the average share for all industries combined.

Without migrant farm workers, the United States would not enjoy a stable food supply.

There are some promising programs that demonstrate how to address labor shortfalls through immigration. Since 2021, India has signed bilateral migration deals with Australia, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. These accords create legal immigration channels, aligning visa quotas with workforce needs, especially in high-demand sectors such as agriculture, health care, and construction. They also include provisions for skills training in the countries of origin for migrants, so they are better prepared for those key industries. Another forward-looking approach comes from, of all places, the right-leaning government of Italy. In 2023, despite having campaigned on a hard-line approach to immigration, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni announced adjustments to the country's immigration policies to allow in more foreign workers to address labor shortages. Over the next three years, Italy will admit more than 450,000 new workers to meet demand in various sectors, including agriculture, health care, and caregiving, in exchange for the origin country's agreement to accept back migrants who entered the country irregularly and do not have a legal right to stay.

The EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, an unprecedented effort by European countries to share responsibility for the union's external borders, presents another promising model. In addition to improving border management by protecting security while preserving the safety and rights of those crossing borders, the agreement calls for the recruitment of foreign talent to meet the EU's labor-market needs.

### Win-win

With the right systems in place, all parties — migrants, their countries of origin, and their host countries — can benefit. To get there, high-income countries should direct development funds toward skills training for workers that will prepare would-be migrants for high-demand industries. Such targeted aid would benefit the country receiving the aid by boosting the skills of its own workforce, in addition to ensuring that a migrant is also ready for work in a destination country.

The first step is for destination countries to analyze their own

labor-market gaps and, if needed, change their policies to ensure a better alignment between skills shortages and visas, as Italy is now doing. They should also map current trends in irregular migration and share this information with aid agencies, which should use it to prioritize skills training in source countries.

The development arms of governments must then work with organizations on the ground to ensure that the most vulnerable communities have access to regular migration opportunities. Bangladesh, for instance, is now home to many technical schools where would-be migrants learn how to fix cars or take care of children, helping them build skills they can use in Bangladesh and elsewhere. Since 2013, Germany has had an initiative to train and recruit nurses in other countries. The program doesn't just benefit the nurses; it also fills labor gaps in the German healthcare sector and creates much-needed additional skilled workers in the origin countries. Long-term strategies on the part of rich destination countries should focus on training or retraining workers from poorer source countries. Collaborative projects between the imaging company Planet Labs and the International Organization for Migration are helping identify agricultural and pastoral communities most likely to be displaced by climate change. This data-driven approach enables governments and aid organizations working in vulnerable communities to take proactive measures, such as improving water management and teaching more efficient agricultural techniques, that help people succeed and remain in their home countries while also imparting new skills linked to future job opportunities for those who will choose to move.

In places where jobs are scarce, development organizations must ensure that workers who have been trained in new skills are able to access employment abroad through legal channels. The market works reasonably well in connecting high-skilled workers to job opportunities around the globe. Low-skilled workers, by contrast, are not able to land jobs as readily through ethical, safe, and legal pathways. But there are some promising fixes in the works. In 2023, for example, Australia and Tuvalu, an island north of Fiji, established a pilot labor-mobil-

ity program that addresses the threat of rising sea levels in Tuvalu while easing labor demands in Australia. Australia committed \$110 million to Tuvalu for various infrastructure projects, including coastal adaptation and telecommunications, and established a special visa pathway allowing up to 280 Tuvaluans per year to live, work, and study in Australia. Such efforts could be scaled up around the world by using data analytics to identify at-risk communities before large-scale displacement occurs. High-income countries should also invest in apprenticeships and temporary or seasonal migration programs. Such efforts can foster innovation and progress in migrants' home countries far more effectively than can traditional assistance projects. For countries that have diaspora communities across the globe, encouraging the diaspora to invest in development programs and skills building can enhance local skills training and services. Finland, for example, has an initiative that temporarily deploys Finnish-Somali healthcare professionals to Somalia.

The world needs workers to be trained in their country of origin so that they can readily access jobs in host countries, send home remittances, and eventually bring their skills back home to fuel development there. And vulnerable migrants need to be able to access safe and legal immigration pathways when necessary. Officials should not assume that the labor market, left to its own devices, will protect migrant workers or support the communities that host them. Governments must make investments in migrant protections, empower civil society organizations and unions to play a monitoring role, and enforce labor laws.

Likewise, local officials, community leaders, and the private sector in destination countries must ensure that there are sufficient services to meet the demands of a growing population — and that migrants receive the support they need to integrate successfully in their host country. When immigration is poorly managed, communities feel the tension. Yet when local officials receive the support and resources required to manage immigration, they are often the first to express their support for newcomers.

Finally, to make the regular pathways to immigration more

attractive than the irregular pathways, countries must enforce their borders, including by deporting migrants who do not qualify for asylum or other protection; immigration authorities should process these deportations quickly and carry them out quickly, treating deportees with dignity. By encouraging migrants to rely on regular, legal pathways, current asylum systems will be able to help fulfill their original purpose by responding to refugees more effectively.

### Promise of migration

In recent years, it has become evident that public perceptions of migrants are often as outdated as the regulations that oversee immigration. By restricting immigration, countries across the globe, rich and poor alike, are missing critical opportunities to boost economic growth and social unity. The world's most vulnerable people, meanwhile, are left unprotected.

To realize the promise of migration, policymakers need to overhaul the system. Every country has the right to manage its own borders and decide who can remain in the country lawfully. But rather than spending tens of billions of dollars annually exclusively on border enforcement, which has limited effectiveness (particularly when migrants seek asylum and do not try to evade detection), governments must invest in an approach that links immigration trends with labor-market needs and development gaps.

Migration can work for all. States must build a system that takes advantage of the global marketplace and empowers people to connect with opportunities for security and prosperity. Newly skilled individuals must be able to take advantage of safe and legal immigration opportunities and then reinvest their resources into fueling development in their communities of origin.

The politics of migration seem almost impossibly fraught. But countries must pursue strategies to address their looming labor shortages. Doing so will also help address some of the world's most persistent development and humanitarian challenges, taking pressure off the desperate people who now see irregular immigration as their only way to survive.

*The full article first appeared on Foreign Affairs.*



Migrants are stopped at a border staging area in Jacumba Hot Springs, California, US, in June 2024.  
● YO NAKAMURA/REUTERS

## Persian Gulf Pro League:

## Tractor, Sepahan win as Persepolis falls further off the pace

## Sports Desk

Tractor and Sepahan tightened their grip on the title race in the Persian Gulf Pro League after respective victories over Mes Rafsanjan and Chadormalou on return to Iranian top-flight action on Tuesday.

Persepolis, meanwhile, was held to a frustrating goalless draw at 10-man Zob Ahan to lose further ground at the top of the table, while Foolad Khuzestan took advantage of the Tehran Reds' slip, beating Nasaji Mazandaran 1-0 at home – courtesy of Mohammad Asgari's 84th-minute strike – to move up to the third place.

In Tabriz's Yadegar-e Imam Stadium, Tractor's prolific front three Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh, Tomislav Štrkalj, and Mahdi Hashemnejad were on the scoresheet, with Sajjad Ashouri and Danial Esmailifar adding a couple of late goals against Reza Jabireh's consolation for Mes, as Tractor thrashed the visiting strugglers 5-1 to remain top with 35 points, equal on points with second-placed Sepahan.

Sepahan, fresh from a Super Cup triumph against Persepolis, had a Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi's stoppage-time winner to thank for a hard-fought 2-1 away win against Chadormalou to keep pace with Tractor.

Center-back Mohammad Daneshgar gave Sepahan a 79th-minute lead with a looping header from an acute angle, only to see his goal canceled out by Ali Ka-



Tractor's Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh (red) celebrates after scoring in a 5-1 victory over Mes Rafsanjan in the Persian Gulf Pro League at the Yadegar-e Imam Stadium, Tabriz, Iran, on Jan. 21, 2025.  
● ATA DADASHI/FARSNEWS

mali Jelodar in the fourth minute of added time.

Just when the host thought it had done enough to salvage a point, Mohebbi slotted home a 98th-minute winner, before his provocative 'night night' celebration led to a heated quarrel between the two sets of players and benches, while the Sepahan striker was shown a second yellow card and received his marching orders.

In Isfahan, Persepolis failed to capitalize on a one-man advantage after Zob Ahan's Hassan Shoushtari was dismissed with a second booking eight minutes before the break.

The Reds desperately knocked on the door in the second half, with Farshad Ahmadzadeh hitting the crossbar from close range, though they still felt lucky to leave the Fooladshahr Stadium with a point.

Zob Ahan substitute Behnam Taherkhani was brought down in the box by Morteza Pouraliganji in the 95th minute but referee Vahid Zamani refused to point to the spot, despite a VAR review, and was suspended "until further notice" by the federation's Referees Committee after the game.

The stalemate saw Persepolis fall to fourth in the table – trailing the top two by five points –

while there were further blow for the holders after integral Uzbek winger Oston Urunov was forced off in the first half with a hamstring problem to be a doubt for Sunday's crunch encounter with Tractor in Tehran. Elsewhere, Esteghlal got off to a dreadful start to the second half of the league campaign, suffering a shock 1-0 home loss against Shams Azar on return to the renovated Azadi Stadium on

Monday.

Amir Shabani bagged the winner in the 64th minute, as former Blues keeper Seyyed Mahdi Rahmati celebrated a winning debut as Shams Azar head coach, which saw his team move out of the relegation zone, while Esteghlal dropped to 11th with 18 points.

In Khorramabad, Mehrdad Qanbari and Mohsen Sefid-Choqaei scored in each half to help Khaybar defeat bottom-club Havadar 2-0 at home.

Iralco's Amin Kazemian netted his seventh goal of the season in the first half before Sajjad Shahbazzadeh drew Esteghlal Khuzestan level right before the hour mark as the two sides shared the spoils in Arak.

Fifth-place Golgozar Sirjan continued its impressive campaign under Mahdi Tartar, beating Malavan 1-0 at home for a third successive league victory – thanks to Mahdi Tikdari's goal in the 32nd minute.

The defeat was the sixth in seven league outings for Malavan, which had to play with nine men for the best part of the second half following red cards for Mohammadreza Rezaei and Reza Ghandipour.

## Katanec stands down as Uzbekistan head coach due to health issues

AFC – Srecko Katanec has stepped down as Uzbekistan head coach due to ill health, the Uzbekistan Football Association announcing the Slovenian had departed by mutual consent on Wednesday.

The 61-year-old has led the White Wolves to second place in Group A of the AFC Asian qualifiers – Road to 26 but has left less than two months before Uzbekistan resume the qualifiers against Kyrgyz Republic in Tashkent on March 20. "The head coach of the Uzbekistan national team, Srecko Katanec, decided to cancel his contract with the Uzbekistan Football Association by mutual consent due to health problems," the UFA said in a statement on Instagram.

"The Slovenia coach noted with regret that he cannot perform his duties in a full and professional manner in his current state."

Katanec has been in the role since August 2021 and steered the country to the quarter-finals of the AFC Asian Cup 2023 in Qatar, where they lost in a penalty shoot-out to the hosts.

He took over after previously working in the United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Macedonia having also qualified his native Slovenia for the 2002 FIFA World Cup.

Katanec leaves with Uzbekistan closing in on their first qualification for the FIFA World Cup, the team three points behind Group A leaders the Islamic Republic of Iran and three points ahead of third-placed UAE with four matches remaining.

The top two finishers qualify automatically for the FIFA World Cup while the nations in third and fourth advance to a further round of preliminaries.

● GETTY IMAGES

## Australian Open:

## Djokovic 'concerned' by injury, faces fitness race

THE GUARDIAN – The clock is ticking for Novak Djokovic and what appears to be a groin or hamstring strain sustained during his quarter-final victory after he expressed fears the injury could hinder his pursuit of an 11th Australian Open and 25th grand slam title.

Djokovic overpowered Carlos Alcaraz in four sets in a match that finished close to 1am on Wednesday, fighting back after losing a first set when he received medical treatment on his upper thigh.

The former world No 1 declined to elaborate on the injury, saying only that it was similar to one he managed during his 2023 run to the Australian Open title. That was described as a 3cm tear in his hamstring at the time.

He faces the No 2 seed, Alexander Zverev, in a semi-final on Friday, offering a period of close to three days' rest. "I'm concerned, physically," Djokovic said. "But if I manage somehow to be physically good enough, mentally, emotionally, I'm as motivated as I can be."

Djokovic appeared to pick up the injury in the first set when making a lateral movement during a rally and at one point crouched down and looked to his box, shaking his head. Trailing a break and 4-5, he went off court with a physio to receive treatment.

Although Djokovic lost the first set, he seemed to quickly recover his movement and won three sets to eliminate the No 3 seed. Djokovic said painkillers helped during the match, but he will



Novak Djokovic struggles with an injury during his Australian Open last-eight victory over Carlos Alcaraz in Melbourne, Australia, on January 21, 2025.  
● CLIVE BRUNSKILL/GETTY IMAGES

know more when they begin to wear off. "I've done tests with the physio when I had the medical timeout. He strapped me and then the doctor gave me some medication. That kicked in after 20, 30 minutes. It did help, then I had to take another dose in the beginning of the fourth."

Alcaraz said he failed to capitalise on his start and he noticed Djokovic was struggling in the second set but he failed to take advantage. "Then the third and fourth set, I didn't see anything bad from him," Alcaraz said. "I'm not saying he made a show. I'm just saying I don't know."

The high-calibre quarter-final was the first of the tournament between two top-10 players and the first between the pair since the Paris Olympic gold-medal decider last year. That was won by Djokovic to complete his so-called "golden slam" of all four majors and the Olympic title.

Djokovic said the match on Tuesday was worthy of a higher stage than a quarter-final. "Every set was super close, the crowd was into it, so much energy on the court, it was amazing," he said. "It felt like it was finals of a slam. I wish it was."

# Zarif hopes Trump would be 'more realistic' about Iran

## International Desk

Iran's Vice President for Strategic Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif expressed hope that the US president would be "more realistic" about Iran during his second term in office.

Addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Zarif, who negotiated Iran's nuclear agreement with world powers in 2015, said the US President Donald Trump should know that his withdrawal from the nuclear deal in 2018 led to a massive expansion of Iran's nuclear program.

"I hope that this time around, a 'Trump 2' will be more serious, more focused, more realistic," Zarif said.

The Iranian official said that Trump failed to achieve its goals to force Iran to curb its nuclear program by withdrawing from the nuclear agreement, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Of course, he (Trump) has imposed heavy sanctions on Iran. He should know that the low-income people in Iran are suffering due to his sanctions," Zarif said.

In response to a question about the claim by US intelligence sources that Iran has a few weeks to build a nuclear weapon, Zarif said, "Had we wanted to build a nuclear weapon, we could have done it a long time ago. A program to build nuclear weapons is not going to be like our program. You build nuclear

weapons in hidden laboratories that are not subject to international inspection." Zarif emphasized that Iran is not a security threat. He said that some countries portray Iran as a security threat for the world.

"People who are worried about our nuclear program like the Israelis, they say we are days away from a nuclear weapon, so why didn't they welcome the JCPOA. JCPOA in the worst analysis would have kept Iran away from nuclear weapons for at least 15 years. People, like Netanyahu, have claimed in the 1990s that Iran will have a nuclear weapon in 6 months." And now they claim Iran is a couple of days away from a nuclear weapon.

"Iranophobia and Islamophobia are a tool for them to carry out actions similar to the genocide in Gaza. They say they are taking these actions against Iran. But they are genocide of children in Gaza," Zarif said.

In 2015, Iran proved the peaceful nature of its nuclear program to the world by signing the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), with six world powers. However, Washington's unilateral withdrawal in 2018 and its subsequent re-imposition of sanctions against Tehran left the future of the deal in limbo. In 2019, Iran started to roll back the limits it had accepted under the JCPOA after the other parties, especially the



European countries, failed to live up to their commitments.

Referring to the Israel's onslaught on the Gaza Strip, where more than 47,000 Palestinians were killed in just 15 months of the regime's strikes, Zarif said, "Right now as you look at Gaza... Netanyahu did not achieve his goal of destroying Hamas, Hamas is still there. Israel had to come to a ceasefire."

"I wouldn't suggest anybody start rejoicing over destroying Hamas as well as the Palestinian resistance, or cutting Iran's arms, because the resistance will stay as long as they're occupied," he added.

"The resistance is not dead. I can tell you that the wishes for the resistance to go away have been based on a misrepresentation, a framing by Israel, that this

Iran's Vice President for strategic affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif (r) talks with CNN journalist Faeed Zakaria during the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, on January 22, 2025.  
● FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP

is not an Israeli-Palestinian issue but an Israeli-Iranian issue."

## UN nuclear chief urges dialogue between Iran, US to settle disputes

### International Desk

The head of the UN nuclear agency on Wednesday called on Iran and the United States to hold talks to settle their dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said dialogue was "absolutely indispensable" to move forward in nuclear negotiations with Tehran.

"Without that dialogue, there's not going to be any progress," Grossi told reporters at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Grossi said comments from US President Donald Trump and members of the new US administration show "there is a disposition" to have a "conversation and perhaps move into some form of an agreement." Iranian officials also recognize that talks are needed, he noted.

Iran's nuclear program has grown "dramatically" in terms of capabilities, facilities and inventory of nuclear material since the end of Trump's previous term in 2021, Grossi added.

During his first term, Trump pursued a policy of "maximum pressure" against Iran, withdrawing the United States from a 2015 landmark nuclear deal which imposed curbs on its nuclear program in return for sanctions relief.

Tehran adhered to the deal until Washington's withdrawal in 2018, but then began rolling back its commitments. Efforts to revive the pact have since faltered.

The IAEA said last month that a revamp of Iran's Fordow enrichment plant would lead to an increase in the rate of production of uranium enriched up to 60 percent.

The rate of production will jump around sevenfold to more than 34 kilograms (75 pounds) of highly enriched uranium per month, it said.

"I think this is a clear indication of an acceleration. They're pressing the gas pedal," Grossi said.

Iran insists on its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and denies it is seeking an atomic weapons capability.

Since taking office in July, the Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has repeatedly announced his government's readiness to



hold talks with the Western countries to resolve their disputes over Iran's nuclear program.

Ahmad Bakshayesh, an Iranian lawmaker, recently said President Pezeshkian favors direct negotiations with the United States to put an end to long-standing differences, including Iran's nuclear issue.

In recent months, Iran and European parties to the nuclear deal - France, Germany and the UK - have held several rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program and have agreed to resume the negotiations in the future.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said on Tuesday that Tehran is ready to start negotiations to lift "illegal and unilateral" sanctions imposed on Iran.

"We have always been ready for this, and if there is (readiness) on the other sides, we believe that the negotiations will take shape and will reach a conclusion," Gharibabadi told reporters on the sidelines of the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

In 2015, Iran proved the peaceful nature of its nuclear program to the world by signing the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), with six world powers.

However, Washington's unilateral withdrawal in 2018 and its subsequent re-imposition of sanctions against Tehran left the future of the deal in limbo.

In 2019, Iran started to roll back the limits it had accepted under the JCPOA after the other parties, especially the European countries, failed to live up to their commitments.

## Swiss national who died in jail had photographed military sites: Iran



### International Desk

Iran's Judiciary spokesman Asghar Jahangir said on Wednesday that a Swiss prisoner who took his own life this month had been jailed for "taking photos of restricted military sites."

On January 9, the judiciary said a Swiss national accused of spying had committed suicide in jail in the eastern city of Semnan.

A day later Switzerland confirmed the man's death, identifying him as a 64-year-old who had been visiting the country as a tourist. He had been living in southern Africa and had not resided in Switzerland for nearly two decades, the Swiss authorities added, without identifying him.

On Wednesday, Jahangir provided more details, saying the man was born in Namibia, held Swiss citizenship, and had entered Iran last September or October.

"He entered our country as a tourist in (the Iranian month of) Mehr, driving a private car equipped with various technical devices," Jahangir said at a press conference.

"After travelling through several provinces, he reached Semnan Province, where he was arrested

for taking photographs of a restricted military site."

Jahangir added that the man had been accused of cooperating with "hostile governments."

"On the day of the incident, after having breakfast, in the absence of his cellmate, he turned off the cell's electricity and, in a spot not covered by cameras, cut a curtain in the restroom and managed to hang himself. Prison staff immediately responded upon being informed of the incident and arrived at the scene, but despite their efforts, the individual passed away," Jahangir said.

"With the permission of the Iranian Prisons' Organization, a delegation from the Swiss Embassy, along with a trusted physician, was present at the scene, examined the body, and confirmed the suicide. The body was then transferred to the Tehran Forensic Medicine Organization and, in the presence of Swiss embassy representatives, handed over to them," Jahangir said.

His body was transferred to Tehran and handed over to the Swiss Embassy for repatriation, the spokesman added.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



# Minister: Shush epitomizes unity between Iran, world

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, said that Shush in southwestern province of Khuzestan is not only a treasure of Iran but belongs to all humanity. He highlighted the ancient city as a long-standing symbol of unity, stating, "Shush has always been a symbol of unity throughout its rich history." During a meeting of the administrative council in Shush, held on January 22, Salehi Amiri expressed his deep affection for Shush and underscored the need to reintroduce the city to both the Iranian people and the world. "Shush is not just a city; it is an identity and an integral part of Iranian civilization," he remarked, emphasizing its potential to reveal new mysteries with each archaeological exploration, IRNA reported. The minister urged educational institutions to incorporate Shush's historical significance into school curricula, ensuring that students understand their heritage. "If the world recognized Shush, it could become a vital economic and employment hub," he added, advocating for a renewed focus on the region to address existing shortcomings.

Salehi Amiri lamented the failure to adequately present Shush's beauty and heritage to both Iranians and the international community. He called on various cultural organizations—including the Ministry of Education, media outlets, and local religious leaders—to actively promote Shush among the youth. "We must tell our children that they live in a land that many envy, exemplified by Shush," he noted. He also addressed the rich tapestry of cultural heritage in Iran, both pre- and post-Islam, and urged the dismissal of the erroneous notion of conflict between Iranian and Islamic identities. "Iran is sacred, and there is no conflict between Islam and Iranian identity," he stated, reiterating that both aspects complement each other and form the core of the nation's identity. Highlighting the government's commitment to justice and public rights, Salehi Amiri pointed out that President Pezeshkian's upcoming visit to Khuzestan presents an opportunity to address citizens' needs. He emphasized the importance of unity in tackling local challenges, indicating that a focus on substantive issues rather than peripheral matters is essential for prog-



ress. The minister concluded by asserting Shush's potential as a significant tourist destination, calling for improved infrastructure to support this vision.

He announced plans for a collaborative approach involving cultural heritage experts to address local concerns while safeguarding historical sites. "We will ensure that the rights of the people are respected

alongside the responsibilities of the government," he said. "The future of Shush is bright and promising," he declared, encouraging proactive measures to harness the city's capabilities.

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, and his delegation tours the historic site of Shush in Iran's southwestern province of Khuzestan on January 22, 2025. ● BORNA

## Jalal literary awards established to promote nat'l literature: Salehi



Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, speaks at the closing ceremony of the 17th Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards held in Tehran on January 22, 2025. ● IRNA

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, reaffirmed the purpose of the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards, stating they were established to enhance national literature. During the closing ceremony of the 17th Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards on Wednesday, he highlighted that while one might agree or disagree with Jalal's works, he remains a quintessential figure in Iranian literature, deeply rooted

in national identity, IRNA reported. Salehi reflected on the award's journey over the past 17 years, noting both its challenges and achievements. He remarked, "This award has reached a point where we can reflect on its past and plan for its future," adding that the awards focus on three key perspectives: The Persian language, national literature, and religious literature. In his address, Salehi elaborated on the concept of national literature, clarify-

ing that it is not intended to oppose global literature or promote xenophobia. Instead, he stated that national literature serves to foster unity and cohesion within society. "Divisive literature cannot be considered national," he asserted, explaining that literature should enhance national identity while preserving its unique attributes amid cultural exchanges. Salehi described national literature as one that incorporates the diverse subcultures within a nation, rather than positioning them in opposition. He emphasized that Iranian national literature acknowledges regional and religious subcultures as integral components of the national identity.

## Ancient Iranian artifacts on display in China for nine months

## Arts & Culture Desk

A collection of 151 ancient Iranian artifacts is on display at an exhibition titled 'Land of Kindness' at the Sichuan University Museum in Chengdu, China. The exhibition, a proof of cultural diplomacy, aims to introduce the ancient and rich civilization of Iran to the Chinese people. The 'Land of Kindness' showcases a diverse array of historical treasures, including metal, ceramic, glass, textile, carpet, and painting artifacts, ILNA reported. This cultural initiative is a collaborative effort between two great Asian civilizations, both of which have significantly influenced human history and culture. The exhibition, a part of a reciprocal agreement, emphasizes Iran's eastward focus and the potential for shared cultural heritage to bring nations closer together.



'Land of Kindness' exhibition is organized by Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the Directorate of Museums, the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage of Tehran province, and the University of Tehran, in collaboration with the China International Culture Exchange Center. As part of this cultural exchange, China has committed to displaying an exhibition of its historical artifacts in Iran in the future. Participating Iranian museums include the Reza Abbasi Museum, the University of Tehran's Museum of Contemporary Art, the Glassware and Ceramic Museum, the Carpet Museum, the Museum of National Arts, and the Moghadam Museum, each showcasing a unique aspect of Iran's rich heritage. The collaboration was overseen by Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Salehi Amiri, and his deputy, Ali

Darabi. The agreement was signed between the General Directorate of Iran's Museums and the China Cultural Exchange Center, with Laleh Khosravi and Mr. Ping Tang representing Iran and China, respectively. According to Parham Janfeshan, Director General of Tehran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department, the exhibition covers a vast historical period, from the third millennium BC to the late Islamic periods, featuring metal, ceramic, glass, textile, and carpet artifacts. 'Land of Kindness' exhibition highlights Iran's role as one of the deep-rooted and influential civilizations of the East, seeking to convey messages of empathy and cultural connection to the world. It serves as a reminder of the power of Eastern civilizations in public and cultural diplomacy, inspiring dialogue and cooperation between nations in the modern era.