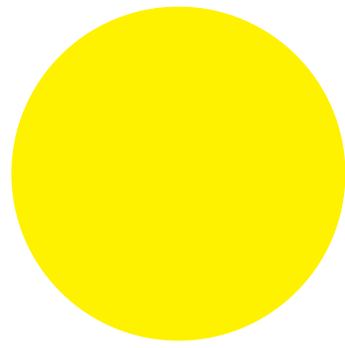


Iran begins celebrations marking 1979 Islamic Revolution



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Iranian First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (standing) speaks at the Digital Almaty 2025 forum held at the ex-capital of Kazakhstan on January 31, 2025. fvpresident.ir

'Sputnik Moment'

Iran's chance to break AI monopoly

By Navid Kamali
Guest contributor

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

The rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent years has opened new frontiers in various scientific, economic and social domains, but it has also presented major challenges to human societies. Some countries' attempts to create an AI monopoly by imposing trade and legal barriers, such as the recent export restrictions on AI chips by American company Nvidia particularly after President Donald Trump's ambition to make the US the global AI hub, have raised concerns among independent nations seeking freedom from US dominance. Such monopolization not only threatens independence and national sovereignty but could exacerbate global inequalities and empower AI-dominant countries to impose their will on others.

The history of technological colonialism clearly shows that an AI monopoly held by Western countries, especially the US, would pose multiple threats to independent na-

tions like Iran. The primary threat is the loss of independence and national sovereignty. AI, as a versatile technology, has permeated all aspects of human life and controlling it means controlling the destiny of societies. If a country or group of countries monopolize AI, they could impose their policies and shape the international order to their advantage. This is a serious concern, especially for nations not aligned with US policies. The second threat is the creation of global inequalities. AI, as a driver of economic growth, can contribute to wealth and welfare, but if it remains in the hands of a few, it will widen the gap between developed and developing nations. Countries deprived of AI access will lag in economic and scientific competition, leading to increased global poverty and inequality. The third threat is the use of AI as a tool for political and military purposes. AI can be utilized in propaganda, cyber warfare and advanced weapons systems. If controlled by a superpower, it can be used to weaken opponents, destabilize nations and impose its will. This could fuel global tensions and conflicts, jeopardizing international peace and security.

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Aref in Almaty: Iran aims to act as effective, reliable partner in region

EAEU members urged to develop joint digital products, AI tools

Economy Desk

First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref described Iran's observer status in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) as another step toward deepening mutual economic relations and emphasized that this status promises effective participation in the activities of this important economic institution in the region. Speaking at the EAEU Prime Ministers' Meeting in Almaty on Friday, Aref stated that Iran's economic diplomacy increasingly values regional and multilateral mechanisms.

He expressed Iran's readiness to expand cooperation in key areas such as energy, new technologies, transit and transportation. Representing Iran for the first time as an observer country, Aref announced that Iran is prepared to support trade interactions within the framework of a free trade agreement.

"This includes establishing an Iran-EAEU corridor, providing necessary facilities to streamline trade among the six member countries, and enhancing the transit capacities of southern

ports in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman to connect landlocked member states to global markets."

Also, speaking at the "Almaty Digital 2025" conference on Friday morning, Aref proposed connecting communication infrastructures, integrating digital economy regulations, and collaborating on shared platforms.

He also emphasized combating unilateralism in the digital domain, advancing artificial intelligence, and developing joint digital products and AI tools to leverage the capabilities of EAEU members.

The VP stressed that now is the time for Iran and regional countries to lay the foundations for a new digital and industrial era through unity and cooperation.

Aref expressed hope that such meetings would mark the beginning of a new chapter in digital and technology-driven cooperation within the Eurasian Economic Union, leading to further growth and prosperity in this and other sectors.

On Thursday evening, during his visit to Kazakhstan, Aref participated in a consultation session

with Iranian business leaders and economic activists in Kazakhstan.

He emphasized that in the realm of foreign policy and economic diplomacy, there is no alternative but to engage in significant regional unions and agreements. Aref stated, "We have concluded that alongside bilateral relations, we must actively participate in regional unions."

Expansion on ties with EAEU states

Earlier on Friday, Aref met with Kyrgyzstan's Prime Minister Akyzbek Japarov, highlighting the extensive economic, commercial, and transportation relations between Iran and Kyrgyzstan. He called for serious cooperation in science and technology and emphasized the need to activate the joint cooperation commission between the two countries.

Aref noted that the presence of Iran and Kyrgyzstan in regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, ECO, and the Eurasian Economic Union provides an excellent opportunity to deepen bilateral relations.



Japarov, for his part, reiterated Kyrgyzstan's commitment to strengthening friendly ties with Iran and expressed readiness for constructive dialogue at all levels.

On Thursday evening, Aref met with Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, stressing the importance of using regional and international forums like the EAEU to enhance trade and economic cooperation, particularly among private sectors.

He emphasized Iran's desire to strengthen comprehensive relations with countries sharing political, cultural, and historical commonalities.

Golovchenko for his part, highlighted the successful joint cooperation commission between Iran and Belarus and the need to elevate trade volumes to match the high level of political relations.

During his visit to Kazakhstan, Aref also met with Kazakh Prime

Minister Alikhan Smailov, emphasizing the cultural and civilizational ties between the two countries and the need to enhance economic and commercial cooperation. He invited Smailov to attend the Caspian Summit in Tehran late in February.

Aref also highlighted Iran's advancements in information technology, expressing readiness to share experiences in emerging technologies with neighboring countries.

Speaker: Development of steel, copper industries to diversify national economy



Economy Desk

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf emphasized the need to support the development of steel and copper industries to move Iran away from a single-product economy.

However, he cautioned that planning must ensure energy balance, as energy shortages are detrimental to both producers and the public, IRNA reported.

Speaking on Thursday at the inauguration ceremony of two development projects of alloy steel in central province of Yazd, Qalibaf noted that establishing and developing industries like alloy steel requires significant effort, but their benefits to the country are undeniable.

He praised the role of skilled labor forces and technology-based companies in utilizing domestic capacities to bring these plants and other units into operation.

Qalibaf pointed out that Iran's use of coal for electricity production is nearly zero, compared to the global average of 33%. Additionally, 68% of Iran's steel exports consist of crude steel, far above the global average of 15%.

The Parliament speaker stressed that development must not come

at the expense of the environment, noting that some cities in Yazd province rank among the most polluted in the country.

He warned that the growing technological gap between Iran's industries and global standards could soon render many domestic products unexportable.

Qalibaf acknowledged the legislative efforts of the Parliament in areas such as financing and energy sector reforms to better utilize domestic capacities.

The Alloy Steel Company of Yazd, located 25 kilometers northwest of Yazd, has a production capacity of 700,000 to 1 million tons of steel ingots and alloy billets.

The 300-hectare facility, equipped with advanced technology including a 100-ton electric arc furnace and a continuous casting station, was constructed with an investment of 185 million euros which created 800 direct jobs.

Steel industry reaches 2025 target

Meanwhile, Industry, Mine, and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak announced that Iran's steel industry has achieved its 2025 goals, marking a significant milestone.

Speaking Thursday at the inau-

guration of projects in the Gol Gohar mining and industrial region in Sirjan, Atabak noted that Iran once produced less than 2 million tons of steel annually, without a complete industrial chain. Today, the industry has reached international standards, thanks to the dedication of producers across the country, even in remote and challenging areas.

Atabak emphasized that the only sustainable revenue for the country comes from production within the economic cycle.

The minister pointed out that one of the newly launched projects, a 183-megawatt power plant, will help address energy imbalances not only for Gol Gohar but also for the country.

He said President Masoud Pezeshkian holds two to three meetings weekly to address energy shortages and promote the construction of power plants, particularly solar facilities.

Atabak noted that Kerman Province has significant advantages beyond its active mines, including rare elements that could further boost exploration efforts.

He urged large companies like Gol Gohar to invest in small- and medium-sized industries, emphasizing that economic growth and job creation in downstream industries must be strengthened. Outsourcing, he added, could help generate wealth in the vast southern province.

Gol Gohar has recently made strides in deep-earth exploration, uncovering new elements that could benefit both Kerman and the country.

Atabak concluded by stressing the importance of leveraging Iran's mining advantages to support small industries and foster economic development.

Renewables push gathers steam in Iran via financing packages

Economy Desk

In recent years, a lack of funding for renewable energy projects has been a major barrier to the expansion of renewable energy. With the introduction of foreign and local currency financing packages, investors are expected to enter this lucrative sector with more confidence.

Given the severe energy shortages, the government has placed renewed focus on renewable energy development. President Masoud Pezeshkian has repeatedly emphasized the importance of overcoming obstacles in this sector during various meetings, IRNA wrote.

Recently, the president highlighted in a meeting on overcoming obstacles to renewable power plants that the government's primary goal is to achieve a level of electricity generation capacity that can effectively manage peak demand during the summer months of the coming year.

Pezeshkian further suggested that the best way to implement this plan is by forming a consortium led by the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) at the Ministry of Energy, in partnership with financial and banking institutions, and all parties interested in constructing both large and small solar power plants. This consortium would coordinate the bulk purchase of solar panels.

The president also emphasized that the consortium would source the most up-to-date and cost-effective power plant panels and equipment with the highest quality, distributing them among contractors to ensure projects are completed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Plans for 12,000 MW of solar power plants

In this regard, Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi, during a recent visit by Iran's Leader to an exhibition showcasing the private sector's capabilities, highlighted the ministry's efforts to maximize private sector involvement in renewable energy development.

He noted that Iran Renewable Energy Association-related companies had signed contracts with the Ministry of Energy to build 12,000 megawatts of solar power plants. Aliabadi added that approximately 2,400 megawatts of the 12,000-megawatt solar capacity is expected to be operational by next summer, and with contributions from other producers, the total renewable energy production capacity will reach 5,000 megawatts by that time.

He also outlined the government's plan to generate 30,000 megawatts of renewable energy over the next four years, which is expected to save 11 billion cubic meters of fuel annually and reduce foreign currency costs by \$7.5 billion.

Clean energy financing package

One of the main concerns raised by industry actors was securing financing. Recently, the Central Bank of Iran took steps to address this issue.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and the National Development Fund, the Central Bank has issued a financing package to facilitate the 30,000-megawatt renewable energy capacity expansion.

The package includes measures to ease collateral requirements and streamline currency allocation for paying debts related to importing renewable power plant equipment.



This move has closed the door to excuses for delays in renewable energy development, leaving only the commitment of industry actors to move forward.

Under the new package, the CBI is tasked with facilitating the approval of priority projects, ensuring access to foreign finance for renewable power plants.

The National Development Fund (NDF) will provide both foreign and local currency loans, up to \$5 billion over four years, through various financial arrangements, including agent agreements and bond issuances in Iran's currency exchange market.

Investors with sufficient local currency for renewable energy projects will be prioritized for foreign currency allocation to import approved equipment (as certified by SATBA) within the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade's foreign currency budget.

Moreover, bank loans for renewable energy projects will be available through 2026, with exemptions from regulatory and supervisory rules, including major debt and related-party restrictions, with the approval of the CBI. Even non-oil exporters are allowed to import renewable power plant equipment under the regulations of Article 8 of the foreign currency repatriation law to meet their own energy needs.

Additionally, the country's banking network is authorized to issue investment certificates and use supply chain financing tools to secure funds for renewable energy projects if approved by SATBA.

Serene tomb of Ya'qub ibn al-Layth al-Saffar in Dezfula



Iranica Desk

Dezful, a city in Khuzestan Province, is one of the ancient cities of Iran, renowned for its significant attractions, including the Dezful watermills. Nearby lies the ancient city of Gundeshapur, once one of the most prosperous cities in Iran, famed for its hospital and university.

Adjacent to Gundeshapur is a remarkable building featuring a conical dome, the burial site of the celebrated hero Ya'qub ibn al-Layth al-Saffar, and the founder of the Saffarid dynasty. The shrine, dating back to the Qajar era, has recently undergone restoration and honors the prominent Iranian commander. The tomb is

a key attraction in Dezful, located not far from the city. The surrounding cemetery, adorned with ancient gravestones, further attests to the site's historical significance. While the exterior of the shrine is relatively simple, its conical, serrated dome is regarded as one of the most beautiful in the province. The building serves as the final resting place of Ya'qub ibn al-Layth al-Saffar, who played a crucial role in preserving the Persian language by declaring Persian Dari as the official language of the country.

The tomb is situated in the northeastern part of Shahabad village, approximately 10 kilometers from

the Dezful to Shushtar road, within one of the most significant historical sites in Iran. The conical dome of the tomb is celebrated as one of the finest examples of this architectural feature in Khuzestan Province. Its grandeur and beauty are visible from a distance, indicating that this shrine was constructed for a noteworthy individual.

The tomb structure features a single entrance that separates the interior from the exterior. It is primarily constructed from raw clay bricks, enhanced by bas-reliefs and mortar made from plaster and earth. The historical significance of the tomb dates back to the Seljuk and Qajar periods, with the oldest sections attributed to the Seljuk era following various restorations. Local residents recall that several decades ago, an inscription in ancient Arabic script was visible on the dome's wall, clearly citing the name of the great commander: Ya'qub ibn al-Layth al-Saffar, the son of a blacksmith from Sistan. Renowned for his bravery and noble character, Ya'qub was chosen as a commander by a group of courageous men. His pop-



ularity among the people enabled him to rise to power, establishing his seat of government in the city of Zarng (present-day Zaranj in Afghanistan). When he ascended to power, the Abbasid dynasty held considerable influence in Iran. Dissatisfied with

their rule, he harbored ambitions of overthrowing them from the outset of his reign. After capturing Kerman, Neyshabur, and Khorasan, and overthrowing the Tahirin dynasty, Ya'qub marched into Khuzestan with the intention of top-

pling the Abbasids before proceeding to Baghdad. However, he was ultimately defeated in battle against the caliph and suffered severe throat injuries, forcing him to retreat. He returned to Susa to regroup his forces and plan another campaign

to Baghdad. According to historical accounts, he suddenly fell ill near present-day Dezful during his journey and passed away shortly after. Historians universally acknowledge Ya'qub's bravery, courage, intelligence, and political acumen.

Splendid design of Aminoddole Caravanserai in Kashan Bazaar

Iranica Desk

Kashan, a city in Isfahan Province, is renowned for its rich history and stunning architecture, with the Bazaar of Kashan standing out as one of its most significant attractions. The vibrant bazaar is not only a commercial hub but also a cultural landmark that reflects the intricate craftsmanship and architectural beauty of the region.

At the heart of the bazaar lies the Aminoddole Caravanserai, known also as Aminoddole Timcheh, strategically located at the

intersection of Baba Afzal Street and Kamal al-Molk Square. This remarkable structure enhances the historical significance of the Kashan Bazaar. The term *tim* refers to a caravanserai, while *timcheh* denotes a smaller version of these lodgings. In contemporary usage, *timcheh* often refers to small, covered lodges that served traders and travelers alike.

The bazaar has a storied past, having suffered destruction from an earthquake in the 19th century CE. It was subsequently rebuilt during the Qajar pe-

riod by the esteemed Farrokh Khan Ghafari, known as Aminoddole.

The construction of the timcheh, which was completed between 1863 and 1867 and designed by the architect Ali Marayam Kashani, represents one of the notable additions to the bazaar, showcasing the architectural prowess of the time.

French traveler Madame Dieulafoy, who extensively documented her journeys through Iran in the late 19th century, provided insightful observations about the bazaars and caravanserais. She described

the vastness of the Bazaar of Kashan, noting its roof adorned with interconnected domes and several caravanserais that served as warehouses for merchants. These structures, distinct from those used for travelers, are characterized by their luxurious and ornate designs.

Among these, the Aminoddole Timcheh stands out for its architectural elegance. Resembling a square-based prism, it features entrance doors on both sides and is constructed entirely of brick, creating a striking visual effect.

The three large openings in the ceiling allow natural light to flood the space, enhancing its grandeur. This significant building not only showcases the commercial importance of Kashan but also exemplifies the prosperity of the city through its valuable merchandise.

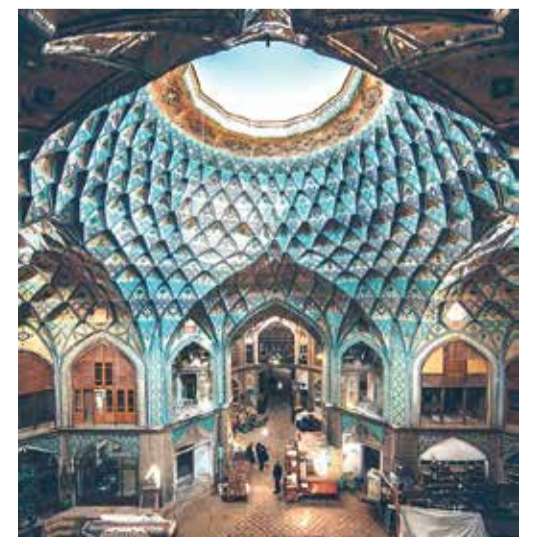
The timcheh consists of three elevated, roofed levels, making it an impressive structure in terms of both width and length. Its captivating beauty is complemented by remarkable precision in stability and layout, with no visi-

ble cracks or fissures in its foundation even after a century. The ceiling is adorned with stunning muqarnas crafted from brick and tile, showcasing traditional Iranian arching. The absence of a structural framework allowed for a Roman-style covering, elevating the ceiling height and enhancing the overall aesthetic.

Access to the Aminoddole Timcheh is through two large wooden doors, one leading to a small octagonal courtyard and the other to a larger rectangular courtyard to the south. To-

gether, these courtyards create a harmonious architectural masterpiece, regarded as one of the finest examples of Iranian architecture from the second half of the 13th century of the Islamic calendar.

In summary, the Bazaar of Kashan and the Aminoddole Timcheh represent not only the commercial heart of the city but also its rich cultural heritage. Visitors to Kashan are treated to a glimpse of its historical significance, architectural beauty, and the vibrant life that continues to thrive within its walls.



Why negotiate with the US again

International Desk

Amid Iran's domestic and regional challenges, some believe that engaging in negotiations with the US could be a solution to the crises, while others view this approach as naive. In the current context, is negotiating with the US a viable way to address problems or merely a route to a historical dead end? Negotiating with the US has always been one of the most challenging issues in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this regard, opponents of negotiating with the United States have presented various reasons for their opposition. In the last one or two months, when the issue of negotiation has once again made headlines in the media, it has been met with various reactions from government opponents who have a dim view of the matter. Below, you will find the arguments of the opponents of negotiation and the perspective of a supporter of negotiation:



Kazem Sediqi, Tehran's Friday Prayer Leader

Viewpoint: The US has lost its negotiating credentials and instead, it demands ransom.

Argument: The US demands ransom

Ahmad Alamolhoda, Mashhad's Friday Prayer Leader

Viewpoint: The country's problems cannot be solved through negotiation; negotiating with the enemy is a mistake, and if the enemy's pressures are effective, they will continue and increase.

Argument: Increased pressure in case of negotiation

Mohammad Saeidi, Qom's Friday Prayer Leader

Viewpoint: Those who are enthusiastic about negotiation with the US should know that the people and the Islamic Republic of Iran will never surrender to the US again.

Argument: Negotiation means captivity

Mohammad Baqer Laeini, Sari's Friday Prayer Leader

Viewpoint: Negotiating with the US is meaningless because the US is the 'Great Satan', and negotiating with the devil yields no results. Negotiation is a tool that enemies use to stall us, and it is futile.

Argument: Futility of negotiation

Hossein Shariatmadari, Managing Director of Keyhan newspaper

Viewpoint: Those who these days, instead of trying to solve some of the country's problems, prescribe negotiation with the US, are either "naive" and not very intelligent, or "ineffective" and hide their inability to solve problems under the cover of negotiation with the US, or, God forbid, are deceived or tempted to "collude with the enemy"... Negotiation with the US does not solve any problems. If you are willing to pay ransom, you will have to do it repeatedly, in all fundamental issues, and cross all your red lines.

Argument: Futility of negotiation and the necessity of crossing red lines

Mohammad Mehdi Hosseini Hamedani, Karaj's Friday Prayer Leader

Viewpoint: Some people, driven by betrayal, negligence, or ignorance, discuss negotiation and surrender, instilling doubts in people's minds. It is essential for the Revolutionary front to present an accurate narrative of the US' crimes to prevent deviation and counter the ongoing efforts that seek to make people forget the injustices committed by the US.

Argument: Negotiation arises from betrayal or negligence



Let's not create a dichotomy about dialogue

However, some individuals like Hossein Taeb, the former head of the Intelligence Organization of The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and current advisor to the Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC, believe that, "We must be careful not to move towards a dichotomy of compromise and negotiation because the US intends to impose its beliefs and goals on us in the negotiations. But if negotiations are to take place, we should get what is rightfully ours."

Negotiating with the assassin of Gen. Soleimani?

Recently, Ali Abdolalizadeh, the president's Special Representative for Sea-Oriented Economy, said, "We need a new foreign policy; the first principle in our sea-oriented development is to improve foreign relations with the world. I also said during the elections that we should negotiate with

Mr. Trump. We cannot keep the country's issues on hold, so we must speak honorably and defend our national interests. We have always been in favor of negotiation, and the entire ruling system has agreed to face-to-face negotiation."

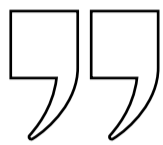
Abdolalizadeh's remarks come despite the fact that after the direct negotiation between Iran and several countries, including the US, which led to the nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the lifting of sanctions, a large group described the negotiation as treacherous, using the keyword "We will not negotiate with the assassin of General Soleimani," after the assassination of General Soleimani by Trump's order. This is while in the past year, after the Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, in which the Israeli regime killed more than 45,000 Palestinians, the resistance movement Hamas has always kept the door open for negotiation with Israel to prevent the continuation of Israel's crimes and the killing of the oppressed Palestinian

people by securing the release of hostages.

Given the diverse perspectives and the significance of the issue, Mehdi Motaharnia, an international relations expert, shares his valuable insights:

Negotiation amid distrust

Hossein Shariatmadari, managing director of Keyhan newspaper, advocates for confrontation with the US rather than addressing the country's actual issues. If he has a plan to resolve these problems, why doesn't he and his like-minded associates accept direct executive action? With the nation facing economic, social, and cultural challenges, why does it maintain a weak position in the global economy despite having substantial foreign exchange reserves in the past? It is crucial to concentrate on the country's internal issues. If these internal challenges are addressed, the country can better withstand external pressures. Despite the efficiency of the Islamic Republic that many officials highlight,



Negotiation does not imply acceptance of the other party; instead, its aim is to explore various facets of a complex issue, identify suitable solutions, and clarify existing challenges. From this viewpoint, negotiation acts as a tool for enhanced interaction and comprehension.



The United States, Iran and five other world powers announced an understanding outlining limits on Iran's nuclear program on April 2, 2015.
● BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AP

the key question remains why Iran's situation is still not better than in the past or compared to neighboring countries.

To address the country's problems, corruption must be eliminated, and long-serving officials should step aside to allow young individuals with fresh ideas to enter the arena. Furthermore, the challenges of resolving the nation's issues, even with financial resources like oil revenue and government rents, are not easily overcome.

Even in conditions of distrust, negotiating with the opposing side can be an effective tool, provided it is accompanied by self-confidence and appropriate executive mechanisms.

The issues at hand cannot be resolved solely through negotiation. Discussions serve as a means for clarifying and fostering mutual understanding of

the matters involved. Negotiation does not imply acceptance of the other party; instead, its aim is to explore various facets of a complex issue, identify suitable solutions, and clarify existing challenges. From this viewpoint, negotiation acts as a tool for enhanced interaction and comprehension. Every negotiator across diverse fields—such as business, economics, politics, culture, and values—should strive to address intricate issues by prioritizing transparency and mutual understanding. This approach should be undertaken to gain greater leverage and resolve problems through the power of the negotiation table.

Talks, not the sole resolution

The concept of negotiation must be properly understood, as a correct understanding can help resolve the country's is-

suess. However, if its essence is not grasped, desired outcomes cannot be achieved.

'Trust' in foreign policy

In critiquing the views of those who oppose negotiation with the US, citing concerns about its untrustworthiness and past breaches of agreements, it is important to emphasize that successful negotiation—particularly in the realm of foreign policy—requires negotiators to possess self-confidence and a strong belief in their objectives. The negotiator should view themselves as powerful and, by clarifying the issues, act rationally and wisely to accurately predict the future of negotiations, using this insight to enhance the current situation and guide future paths.

Opponents of negotiation with the US often highlight its untrustworthiness due to its history of breaching agreements.

This concern stems from past instances of the US violating agreements, particularly in international contexts. However, in the realm of politics and diplomacy, negotiation remains feasible even amidst distrust between parties. In such scenarios, rather than avoiding negotiation, legal and diplomatic tools should be employed to safeguard interests and avert potential issues.

Negotiation in a distrustful environment typically occurs through mechanisms such as agreements, memorandums of understanding, executive guarantees, and official registration in international organizations. Within these frameworks, even when parties lack trust, agreements can be forged that are acceptable to both sides.

In diplomacy and foreign policy, "trust" should not be expected to be absolute; instead, it should be cultivated through negotiations, guarantees, and executive mechanisms. Negotiators must navigate this space with rationality and transparency to mitigate problems and misunderstandings. This entails creating conditions where both sides can reasonably arrive at an agreement and utilize executive mechanisms to uphold the credibility of agreements. If negotiators are not well-versed in such concepts and principles, negotiations may falter, and desired outcomes may remain unattained.

Challenges of military confrontation

Opponents of negotiation with

the US often believe that the US, driven by its fear of military confrontation with Iran, emphasizes negotiation as a means to reduce tensions and secure greater advantages. They argue that the US, through its political and propaganda efforts in Iran, aims to draw Iran into negotiations to avert military conflict.

If Iran genuinely seeks to confront the US, there are opportunities available. Iran can leverage its current positions to bolster resistance groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas, and other forces in Syria. If the US is indeed fearful of military confrontation with Iran, why doesn't Iran capitalize on this fear by taking military actions, such as closing the Strait of Hormuz or attacking US aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf? If those who hold such views believe in their validity, why don't they pursue these issues practically if they are capable of such actions?

If the US turns to negotiation to avoid war, Iran should strategically take advantage of this situation because negotiation is less costly for the US than war. The fate of negotiation and foreign policy decisions must be clarified. Iran should identify its priorities and make definitive choices regarding how to confront external threats, utilizing various tools such as diplomacy or military capabilities. There is little time left for reflection in this matter, and a practical, effective path to resolve the country's political and security issues should be determined promptly.

But are Russia, China, UK, and Saudi Arabia trustworthy?

If the US is not a trustworthy negotiating party, can other countries like Russia, China,

Britain, or Saudi Arabia be considered trustworthy? Generally, no country can be entirely trustworthy, and negotiators must recognize that trust is a relative concept.

Negotiation is founded on the premise that even in a climate of distrust, discussions can occur; however, in such circumstances, agreements and executive guarantees are typically necessary, and these agreements are documented in international organizations to ensure compliance with commitments. Conversely, when negotiations occur in an atmosphere of complete trust, the processes are carried out more transparently and swiftly, without the need for additional complexities. This underscores the significance of 'trust' in negotiations, highlighting that trust must be present on both sides for negotiations to succeed.

This criticism applies to certain individuals involved in decision-making and policy-making who lack a proper and comprehensive understanding of fundamental political concepts.

If these individuals lack familiarity with fundamental political concepts, such as negotiation and trust, the results of decisions and negotiations will not achieve the desired outcome. Under these circumstances, politicians and decision-makers may encounter political and social challenges, potentially resulting in serious issues for the country. Negotiation, as a crucial instrument in foreign policy, necessitates a deeper understanding and accurate recognition of basic political concepts; otherwise, negotiations and decisions will not yield the desired results.

The article was provided by Persian service of the Islamic News Agency (IRNA).



A woman holds up a poster of Gen. Qassem Soleimani, who was assassinated in a US drone attack in 2020 in Iraq, during a commemoration for him in Tehran, Iran on Jan. 3, 2024.
● AP

Esteghlal relieves pressure after 2-0 win at PGPL

Sports Desk

Esteghlal FC claimed a 2-0 victory against their rival from the south-east of Iran, Esteghlal Khuzestan, on the 8th matchday of the Iranian Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) on Thursday.

Mosimane had signed with the Persian Gulf Pro League team based in Tehran in October 2024. Sohrab Bakhtiarzadeh has been named the Esteghlal football team's interim coach. After Esteghlal's 2-0 win over Esteghlal Khuzestan, Bakhtiarzadeh

there is a future for Esteghlal this season, Bakhtiarzadeh emphasized: "Football is like life, and you should always have hope. The fan has the right to be upset, and maybe they talk about different options. Fans want Esteghlal not to be in this position in the table."

"I was asked to help after the previous technical staff in such a critical situation, and I came without any expectations. If the club does not want to cooperate with me at any moment, I will leave with honor, and I will even proudly say that I would do menial tasks for Esteghlal."

Stressing that he was not as close to Mosimane as his four non-Iranian assistants, with whom he had been working for 10 years, Bakhtiarzadeh claimed that he was not upset about this "because when a coach comes to a new team, at first, he does not ask what someone like Sohrab says; rather he goes to his assistants."

"I was with the technical staff and had no interference in choosing the lineup," he concluded.

The Esfahani team Sepahan are standing at the top with 38 points, followed by the Tabrizi team Tractor with 35 points in second place. Foolad are in the third place with 34 points, followed by Persepolis in the fourth spot with 33 points.

However, the table is bound to change as other teams, especially all the top four teams, play their matches from Friday to Sunday.



Esteghlal FC players celebrate a penalty goal by Ramin Rezaeian (standing R) against Esteghlal Khuzestan on Matchday 8th of the Iranian Persian Gulf Professional League in Tehran, Iran, on January 30, 2025.
● IRNA

Ramin Rezaeian scored both goals for the Tehranian team at the minutes of 72 and 90+2 both from the penalty spot. With the win, Esteghlal moved up two spots on the PGPL table, relieving the increased pressure after their South African Coach Pitso Mosimane suddenly canceled his contract on Tuesday following the club's failure to observe its financial obligations.

dodged the question of whether Mosimane would have played with the same lineup if he were still at Esteghlal, saying, "I had the least share in today's win, as the players really tried hard and had good discipline. The players fought with motivation and had good support from the fans."

In response to the fact that Esteghlal fans are disappointed with the team on social media and whether

Esteghlal currently sits 8th in the Iran league's 16-team table, while Esteghlal Khuzestan are in the 11th place on the table.

In a moment of honesty, he maintained, "I have had tough days and am still having them, but I have learned that football is like a family, and if I have any discomfort or complaint, I will never say it in front of the cameras because we are like a family."



Sohrab Bakhtiarzadeh, the interim coach of Esteghlal FC

English teams reach Europa League last 16

Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur were joined by Rangers as three British clubs secured their spots in the Europa League last-16 on the final round of group games on Thursday. United, who like Tottenham have endured a disappointing Premier League season, won 2-0 at Steaua Bucharest to continue their recent upturn in form, Reuters wrote. Second-half goals by Diogo Dalot and Kobbie Mainoo silenced a raucous home crowd as United finished third in the table behind Lazio and Athletic Bilbao.

"When you get to this stage of any competition, anything is possible and they can prove they can win against anybody," United manager Ruben Amorim said. Tottenham eased to a 3-0 victory over Swedish side Elfsborg with youngsters Dane Scarlett, Damola Ajayi, and Mikey Moore all netting their first goals for the club. The victory saw Spurs finish fourth, although their joy was dampened slightly by an injury to defender Radu Dragusin. "I'm sure those boys won't sleep tonight, but we needed that. We needed some energy — we

kind of designed the game today. We're trying to protect some of our players; we've got a big week coming up, and we were going to need the young boys today, and they stood up," under-pressure manager Ange Postecoglou said. Rangers began the evening outside the top eight but a 2-1 home victory against Belgians Union Saint-Gilloise and results elsewhere enabled them to jump into eighth place and avoid having to enter the knockout phase playoffs. Nico Raskin headed the opening goal and Vaclav Cerny slotted a second for Rangers.

Lazio finished top of the rankings although they suffered a 1-0 defeat at Braga. Ricardo Horta's sixth-minute goal proved enough for the Portuguese side although they bowed out after finishing 25th in the league. Second-placed Athletic Bilbao beat Viktoria Plzen 3-1 with Nico Williams, Yeray Alvarez, and Javier Marton on target. AS Roma secured their place in the playoffs with a 2-0 home win over German side Eintracht Frankfurt who still reached the last-16 automatically by coming fifth. Goals from Angelino and Eldor Shomurodov made sure Roma finished in 15th spot. Olympique Lyonnais secured direct entry to the last 16 despite a lackluster 1-1 home draw against already-eliminated Ludogorets. Corentin Tolisso opened the scoring early in the second half after benefiting from a defensive blunder before Dinis Almeida leveled with 13 minutes left. Greek side Olympiacos finished seventh to go directly to the last 16 after a resounding 3-0 win over Qarabag. Jose Mourinho's Fenerbahce scraped into the playoffs in 24th position with a 2-2 draw at Midtjylland proving just enough as other results went in their favor. Former European champions Porto also flirted with elimination but a 1-0 win over Maccabi Tel-Aviv courtesy of a Nico Gonzalez goal helped them to 18th place and playoff.



Manchester United player Diogo Dalot (20) celebrates after scoring the opener against Steaua Bucharest at National Arena on January 30, 2025.
● ANDREEA ALEXANDRU/AP

Iran volleyball to play Italy in friendly match

Iran's national volleyball team will play Italy in a friendly match. Team Melli, headed by Italian coach Roberto Piazza, is preparing for the 2025 Volleyball Nations League (VNL). The volleyball federation of Iran has also reached an agreement with Argentina for a friendly match. Iran will commence the tournament on June 11 with a match against host Brazil and face the US and Slove-

nia in the subsequent days. The Persians will also meet Ukraine on June 15. Iran's volleyball team will lock horns with hosts Serbia on June 25 in Belgrade in Week 2. Team Melli will also play Argentina (June 27), Germany (June 28), and the Netherlands (June 29). Iran, in Week 3, is scheduled to play host Poland on July 16 in Gdansk. It will face China (July 17), France (July 19), and Bulgaria (July 20).



Iran's national volleyball team (front) plays against Italy in the 2024 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) on May 25, 2024.
● AMIRHOSSEIN KHEIRKHAH/I.R. IRAN VOLLEYBALL FEDERATION

Iran begins celebrations marking 1979 Islamic Revolution



The photo shows a motorcycle parade in the Azadi Square in Tehran as part of celebrations marking the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.
● MEHR

National Desk

Nationwide celebrations to mark the 46th anniversary of the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution started in Iran on Friday with thousands of programs organized to be held across the country. The Ten-Day Dawn celebrations begin on the 12th day of the Iranian month of Bahman in the Persian calendar which marks the return of the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini, to Iran after several years of living in exile. In the capital Tehran, thousands of Iranians as well as several officials attend-

ed a ceremony to adorn the city's major cemetery with flowers, where Imam Khomeini held his first speech after returning to the country. Meanwhile, motorcycle parades were held across the country to mark the victory of the revolution. Over 46,000 programs have been prepared and organized to mark the Islamic Revolution's anniversary this year. The programs include visiting the tombs of the martyrs, holding 900 meetings with the families of martyrs, laying flowers on the tombs of martyrs, and sounding the bell of the Revolution in 110,000

schools across the country. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei also paid tribute to Imam Khomeini at his mausoleum in Tehran on Thursday. He also visited the tombs of the martyrs in Tehran's cemetery. The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 led to overthrowing of former Iranian monarch Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. By toppling the Western-backed Pahlavi regime 46 years ago, the Iranian nation ended 2,500 years of monarchic rule and established a new political system – a republic based on Islamic values and democracy.

FM says Iran supports any Syrian gov't backed by public

US advised to unblock Iranian seized assets as trust-building step

International Desk

Iran expressed support for any government in Syria which is backed by the Arab country's people after the administration of former president Bashar al-Assad was toppled by militants in December last year. In an interview with Qatar-based Al Jazeera TV channel, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also affirmed that Tehran will support stability and integrity of Syrian territory. The Islamic Republic had been one of the main allies of the former government in Syria and had helped the country to root out the foreign-backed terrorists, including the Daesh, after the country was gripped by foreign-sponsored militancy in 2011. However, armed militants, led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), took control of Syrian capital, Damascus, on December 8 and declared an end to Assad's rule in a surprise offensive that was launched from their stronghold in northwestern Syria, reaching the capital in less than two weeks. Iran pulled out its military advisors from the country after new rulers took control of the country. Since then, Iran has repeatedly underlined that it supports Syria's sov-

ereignty and territorial integrity as its principled policy. Tehran has also highlighted the need for an inclusive Syrian government, which would include all political, ethnic and religious groups. The Iranian government has also expressed Tehran's readiness to reopen its embassy in Damascus, which was closed after the takeover of the country by militants. In a statement on December 8, Iran's Foreign Ministry reiterated the status of Syria as an "important and influential" country in the West Asia region and said the Islamic Republic will spare no effort to help Damascus establish security and stability.

Trust-building step

During the interview, Iran's foreign minister also responded to a question about the possibility of negotiations between Tehran and the new administration in the United States. Araghchi said the history of relations between Tehran and Washington is full of distrust which will not be dispelled with a single word. Araghchi said the history of relations between Tehran and Washington is full of the US hostility towards Iran. Citing the US withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018 and the assassination of Iran's anti-terror commander Lieutenant Gen-



Abbas Araghchi
● IRNA

eral Qassem Soleimani, Iran's top diplomat said, "All of these events created a history full of hostility and, most importantly, a history full of distrust between Iran and the US. Of course, all of this cannot be compensated for with one word." In response to the question of what steps the US should take to win Iran's trust, Araghchi said there are many steps they can take. The release of Iran's assets that has been blocked by the US in different countries is an example of steps that can be taken to gain Iran's trust. Positive signals are coming from Tehran and Washington as the two countries' presidents prioritize negotiations to settle their disputes, not least over Iran's peaceful nuclear program. Since taking office last July, the new

Iranian administration has repeatedly voiced its readiness to hold talks with the Western countries to resolve their disputes over the Islamic Republic's nuclear program. In recent months, Iran and European parties to the nuclear deal – France, Germany and the UK – have also held several rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program and have agreed to resume the negotiations in the future. 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 and its subsequent re-imposition of sanctions left the future of the deal in limbo.

Hamas confirms death of its military chief Mohammed Deif

Palestinian resistance group, Hamas, confirmed on Thursday the death of its military chief Mohammed Deif in an Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip during the regime's onslaught on the Palestinian territory.



"The Al-Qassam Brigades announce to our great people the martyrdom of a group of distinguished fighters and heroic commanders," Abu Obeida, spokesman for Hamas' armed wing, announced in a video statement, naming "commander Mohammed Deif, chief of staff of the Al-Qassam Brigades (and) commander Marwan Issa, deputy chief of staff" among them.

Israel had accused Deif of being one of the key architects of Hamas' October 7 operation in the occupied territory, along with Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, who was killed on October 16, 2024.

On August 1 last year, the Israeli military announced it had killed Deif in an air strike in Gaza the month before.

The military said fighter jets had struck Khan Yunis on July 13 and following an intelligence assessment, it can be confirmed that Mohammed Deif was killed in the strike.

He was killed along with one of his top commanders, Rafa Salama, the military said.

Deif became head of Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, in 2002. Deif, whose real name is Mohammed Diab al-Masri, was born in the Khan Yunis refugee camp in 1965.

Iran's chance to break

In this context, Trump's statements about making the US the global AI hub during his first days back in office indicate a serious intention to set up an AI monopoly. These are not just slogans but reflect a long-term strategy to maintain US supremacy in the post-Cold War era. Trump and his supporters understand that AI is the key to power in the 21st century and whoever controls it can shape the world's future.

Chinese AI breakthrough

Amid these circumstances, the emergence of the Chinese startup DeepSeek with its powerful and affordable AI model offers a glimmer of hope to independent nations. This initiative proves that AI monopolization is not possible and will ultimately backfire on the monopolists. DeepSeek has challenged major US tech giants like Google and OpenAI by offering a high-performance AI model at a fraction of the cost. This achievement demonstrates that impres-

sive AI progress does not require massive investments or reliance on expensive chips manufactured by US tech firms. Such a breakthrough opens up unparalleled opportunities for countries like Iran. The first and foremost opportunity is reducing dependence on Western technologies. By accessing the open-source Chinese AI model and emulating it intelligently, Iran can achieve self-sufficiency in various sectors, including industry, agriculture, healthcare and education, relying on its own hardware resources. This will free Iran from dependence on expensive, monopolized Western technologies, often several times more expensive due to sanctions and import restrictions. The second opportunity is transforming the economy. Indigenous AI can serve as a growth drive force, creating jobs, boosting productivity and slashing costs. By leveraging affordable AI, Iran can enhance its global economic competitiveness and become a regional economic powerhouse.

The third opportunity is strengthening independence and national sovereignty. By developing AI technology domestically, Iran can free itself from foreign dependence in sensitive areas like cybersecurity and national defense, reinforcing its sovereignty. Iranian policymakers should take into account that the growing prevalence of AI opens up new frontiers for societies and industries. In the not-so-distant future, AI will permeate all aspects of human life, fundamentally changing how we work, live and interact socially. In industry, AI will lead to increased automation and robotics, making factories and production lines more AI-dependent. This can boost productivity and reduce costs but will also create new challenges in employment and education. In services, AI will enable customized services and improve service quality. Customer support, education and healthcare systems will increasingly employ AI, potentially enhancing people's quality of life and driving

down service costs.

In science, AI will speed up research and scientific discoveries. AI can assist scientists in analyzing complex data and uncovering hidden patterns, leading to remarkable advancements in medicine, biology and physics.

Proposals for wise engagement with AI era

Iran should adopt shrewd policies in the face of the AI era. The first policy is investing in education and training AI specialists. Iran should set up specialized universities and research centers to nurture AI talent and tap into its young population. The second policy is supporting knowledge-based companies and AI startups. The government should provide loans and financial support to create a conducive environment for these entities and encourage innovation. The third policy is developing the necessary infrastructure for AI development.

The government should invest in ICT infrastructure, laying the groundwork for AI advancement.

The fourth policy is bringing in appropriate regulations for AI usage. The government should enact legislation to prevent AI misuse and protect individual rights and privacy.

It is crucial to emphasize that the AI era presents a unique opportunity for Iran to achieve technological advancements. However, this opportunity requires diligent planning and effort. Authorities should learn from past experiences, rely on domestic capabilities and young talents and seize this moment to shape a bright future for the beloved homeland while ensuring that research funds do not fall prey to opportunists who, under the guise of "national" projects, seek to exploit public funds with flashy proposals.

It is to be vigilant about the "AI Sputnik Moment" and act wisely to seize the opportunity to benefit the country and beyond.

Curtains up on Fajr Int'l Film Festival

Salehi lauds Iranian cinema as heartbeat of cultural memory, dignity

Arts & Culture Desk

The 43rd Fajr International Film Festival kicked off on Thursday evening at the Vahdat Hall in Tehran, coinciding with the anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution.

The event began with a heartfelt tribute to prominent figures in the Iranian cinema industry, including celebrated director Sirus Alvand, and actors Reza Babak and Manouchehr Valizadeh, IRNA reported.

In his opening remarks, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, expressed gratitude to those involved in organizing the festival. "From October onward, our dedicated team worked tirelessly in the festival's secretariat, and with the arrival of Manouchehr Shahsavari in November, we faced a tight timeline leading up to this moment," Salehi noted.

Salehi expressed hope that these strides would continue not just through this festival but also into future editions, emphasizing the importance of Iranian cinema in shaping cultural memories. "Iranian cinema has crafted many of our cherished memories, and it resides deeply within our conscious and subconscious. A significant part of our dignity and renown stems from this art



Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Abbas Salehi speaks at the opening ceremony of the 43rd Fajr International Film Festival held at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on January 30, 2025. fajrfilmfestival.com

form," he said.

He articulated the festival's purpose, stating, "We intended to take a step forward in bridging gaps and reducing distances, and it appears our friends have succeeded in this endeavor. Tonight is a testament to that progress."

The festival, which runs from January 31 to February 10, celebrates not only cinematic achievements but also the

collective spirit of the Iranian people. The opening ceremony featured a moving scene from the film 'Mother,' honoring the legacy of the late director Ali Hatami, alongside an emotional address from festival director Shahsavari.

During the event, Shahsavari shared reflections on the significance of cinema in connecting hearts and fostering unity. He added, "In moments like

this, we must turn to our hearts, seeking blessings for our journey. As artists and cultural figures, you embody the duality of suffering and ecstasy—creating enduring narratives."

He further noted the importance of recognizing both established and emerging talents, assuring attendees that the festival serves as a platform for future cinematic luminaries.



The ceremony also celebrated the artistic contributions of Sirus Alvand, coinciding with his birthday, with tributes delivered by his daughter, Mahour Alvand, and filmmaker Fereydoun Jeyrani.

Plus, the event honored late cinema icons through innovative AI-enhanced performances and video tributes, including a touching representation of Khosrow Shakibai, a beloved actor who has left a lasting imprint on Iranian cinema. Awards were distributed in various categories, acknowledging exceptional works in filmmaking, such as Best Trailer, Best Poster, and Best Photography. Notable winners included Qadir Hamzeh Emam Chay and Mohammad Rouh al-Amini.

The evening also featured a performance by Lebanese singer Moein Shereef, who delivered songs reflecting on the

recent conflict in Gaza, underscoring themes of justice and unity.

Raed Faridzadeh, head of the Cinema Organization of Iran, underscored the role of cinema as a narrative force that shapes collective memory and history. He quoted the Persian poet Rumi, saying, "While the paths may differ, the destination remains one," emphasizing the unifying power of art.

As the festival unfolds, it aims not only to celebrate Iranian cinema but also to reinforce cultural connections among audiences, artists, and storytellers alike, nurturing a collective appreciation for the rich tapestry of Iranian artistic expression. The resonance of cinema, as articulated by Faridzadeh, is a reminder of its enduring capacity to convey the complexities of human experience and foster unity through shared narratives.

Minister: Iran targets rising tourists from neighboring countries for Nowruz

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, announced ongoing efforts to attract international visitors, particularly during the Nowruz holiday season.

Speaking at Sari International Airport, the minister emphasized the importance of engaging with neighboring countries around the Caspian Sea, Central Asia, and the Caucasus region, IRNA reported.

Salehi Amiri, who was in Mazandaran province to assess the local tourism landscape, cultural heritage sites, and handicraft industries, added, "Mazandaran, as a primary destination for tourists, requires significant improvements in its tourism infrastructure."

He added that the development of tourism in the region hinges on the establishment of necessary facilities and services. "We are in dire need of transformation in the areas of cultural heritage, tourism, and

handicrafts," he added.

The minister also outlined the government's fresh initiatives aimed at attracting tourists from various countries, adding, "The government is particularly focused on investment and tourism from Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Nowruz-associated countries."

He revealed that discussions are underway with Tajikistan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, and Georgia to foster tourism opportunities linked to the Nowruz celebrations. Likewise, Salehi Amiri highlighted the need for collaboration with Gulf countries such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain to bolster tourism in the Persian Gulf region. "We are establishing special partnerships with these nations to enhance tourism prospects," he noted. As he commended the significance of the anniversary of 1979 Islamic Revolution, the minister expressed optimism, "This period presents a great opportunity to realize the ideals of our revolution. The government has a responsibility to leverage this time to serve the public effectively." He emphasized that addressing the people's concerns is paramount.

In a significant development for cultural preservation, Salehi Amiri stated that the Mayor's Building Museum in Qaem Shahr is set to officially open by mid-next year. During his visit to the historic site, constructed in 1926 and registered as a national monument in 1977, he referred to a previous memorandum of understanding between the municipality and the Mazandaran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and



Handicrafts Department.

He announced that a meeting will take place next week with local officials to update and revise this agreement.

Salehi Amiri further highlighted the necessity of strengthening infrastructure in the tourism-rich region of Nesum Forest Park in Savadkuh.

He toured the lush Nesum Forest Park, assessing its recreational and accommodation facilities, and engaged with investors involved in a resort project there, issuing directives for addressing various issues raised.

During his visit, he reiterated the importance of improving tourism infrastructure in the area to attract more visitors. "We

must enhance our facilities to transform this region into a more appealing destination for travelers," he insisted.

Nestled in northern Iran, the Nesum Forest Park is renowned for its pristine nature and verdant forests, making it one of the most attractive tourist spots in the region. The presence of valuable wildlife, including species like Roe deer and red deer, along with its abundant water valleys, further contributes to its appeal. The three-day visit by the minister is aimed at evaluating tourism projects, participating in provincial tourism conferences, and meeting with local officials to discuss the future of tourism in Mazandaran.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

