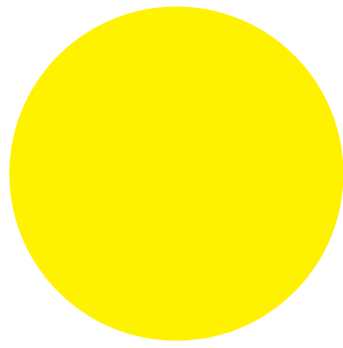


Turkey, Turkmenistan agree gas supply via Iran

3 >



Iran Daily

Vol.7768 • Wednesday, February 12, 2025 • Bahman 24, 1403 • Sha'ban 13, 1446 • 100,000 rials • 8 pages



> irandaily.ir

| newspaper.irandaily.ir

| IranDailyWeb

Iran files complaint to UNSC over Trump's threats of military attack

2 >



Friendship, peace key to boost tourism growth: *Pezeshkian*

Iran seeks to restore its real status in world

8 >

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) stands alongside representatives from diverse Iranian tribes in a group photo during the inauguration of the 18th Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition, held at the Tehran International Exhibition Center on February 11, 2025. president.ir



Iranian military chief urges regional unity to confront Israel

2 >



PM Modi backs investment in Iran's Chabahar port: *Indian official*

3 >



Ronaldo to sit out Al Nassr's game against Persepolis: *Report*

6 >



A new chapter in archaeological discoveries of Fars Province

7 >

Interaction or confrontation?



Since Donald Trump reignited the maximum pressure campaign against Iran last week, questions have arisen about his true intentions—whether he seeks “interaction” or an “agreement” with Tehran. Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf warned that Trump's recent sanctions targeted not only the nuclear program, but also Iran's military capabilities, signaling a push for disarmament. The shift raises doubts about Trump's earlier willingness to negotiate, leading some experts to interpret his actions as a mix of coercive diplomacy, while others fear it signals a move toward brinkmanship and potential military confrontation.

See Page 4 >



Fajr Film Festival winners announced

'Call Me Ziba' triumphs

8 >

Iran files complaint to UNSC over Trump's threats of military attack

International Desk

Iran filed a complaint to the United Nations Security Council over recent threatening remarks by the US President Donald Trump against the Islamic Republic, Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said on Tuesday.

In a post on his X account, Gharibabadi said that a "large turnout" of the Iranians in the Monday's nationwide rallies commemorating the 46th anniversary of the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution was a "strong response" to the US president's recent threats.

"Iran will resolutely protect its security and national interests," Gharibabadi added.

He called Trump's remarks in "violation of international law and the UN Charter."

His comments came following the US president's talks of Israel's military attack on Iran if Washington and Tehran fail to reach an agreement on the latter's nuclear program.



"I would like a deal done with Iran on non-nuclear. I would prefer that to bombing the hell out of it... They don't want to die. Nobody wants to die," Trump told New York Post on Saturday.

"If we made the deal, Israel wouldn't bomb them." In a separate interview with Fox News on Monday, the US president reiterated its threats, saying that "I think Iran would love to make a deal

and I would love to make a deal with them without bombing them."

"Everybody thinks Israel with our help or our approval will go in and bomb the hell out of them," Trump said, stressing

that Israel would need the US support for such a strike.

"I would prefer that not happen. I'd much rather see a deal with Iran where we can do a deal, supervise, check it, inspect it."

After taking office on January 20, the US president restored his so-called "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran that includes efforts to drive its oil exports down to zero.

Snapback of sanctions

Trump also directed his UN ambassador to work with allies to "complete the snapback of international sanctions and restrictions on Iran," under a 2015 deal between Iran and world powers that lifted sanctions on Tehran in return for curbs on its nuclear program.

The US walked out of the agreement in 2018, during Trump's first term, and Iran began moving away from its commitments under the deal after parties to the agreement failed to keep up their end of the bargain. The Trump administration had also

tried to trigger the snapback of sanctions in 2020, but the move was dismissed by the UN Security Council.

Responding to the Trump's threats, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday that the country "does not seek war... but will not yield to foreign pressure."

He further criticized US president's claim of willingness to hold talks with Iran while simultaneously restoring his "maximum pressure" policy.

Rejecting Trump's offer of negotiations for a deal, Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said that talks with the US was "not smart, wise or honorable," under threats.

"It will not solve any of our problems. The reason? Experience!" Ayatollah Khamenei said on Friday.

He was referring to the US' withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear agreement and its subsequent reimposition of sanctions against Tehran, which left the future of the deal in limbo.

Iranian military chief urges regional unity to confront Israel

International Desk

Iran's Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri said on Tuesday that "the only way" to confront Israel is unity among regional countries.

Baqeri made the remarks in a meeting with his visiting Omani counterpart Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi in Tehran, IRNA reported.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the situation in the region, especially Israel's atrocities against Palestinian people in Gaza and strongly condemned the US-Israeli plan to relocate Palestinians from the Gaza Strip.

US President Donald Trump floated the idea of relocating Palestinians last month, saying he would urge the leaders of Jordan and Egypt



Iran's Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri (R) and visiting Omani counterpart Vice Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi give a military salute at the headquarters of the General Staff of the Armed Forces in Tehran on February 11, 2025.
● defapress.ir

to take in Gaza's now largely homeless population, so that "we just clean out that whole thing." He added that resettling most of Gaza's population of 2.3 million could be temporary or long term.

Trump's plan drew condem-

nations from many countries, especially the region's Arab states.

Baqeri said that ties between Iran and Oman are strong and stable, but given recent developments in the region, the relations need to be expanded more

than ever.

He also underlined that development of maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz and the Sea of Oman is necessary to combat smuggling and ensure maritime security. Iran and Oman share a maritime border along the Gulf of Oman.

Baqeri invited Oman to participate in the Maritime Security Belt naval drill hosted by Iran.

Back in October 2024, Iran and Oman held a joint maritime rescue and relief exercise involving the naval forces of both countries in the Indian Ocean and the Strait of Hormuz.

The Omani official, for his part, said that good coordination has been formed to expand the interaction between the two sides in the fields of naval exercises and maritime security police.

Al Raisi underlined that nations of the region are the main owners of this region but some trans-regional countries are seeking to sow discord among regional countries.

Hamas: Trump warning 'further complicates' Gaza truce



Women and children walk along a destroyed road past collapsed buildings in the west of Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip on February 11, 2025.
● BASHAR TALEB/AFP

A senior Hamas leader said Tuesday that US President Donald Trump's warning for the group to immediately release all Israeli hostages "further complicates matters" relating to the fragile Gaza truce.

"Trump must remember that there is an agreement that must be respected by both parties and this is the only way to return the prisoners (hostages)," Sami Abu Zuhri told AFP.

"The language of threats has no value and further complicates matters," he added.

The cease-fire, in place since January 19, largely halted more than 15 months of fighting in Gaza and saw five groups of Israeli hostages freed in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails.

But tensions spiked last month after Trump proposed taking over Gaza and removing its more than two million inhabitants.

He further ramped up pressure on Monday, saying he would call for an end to the cease-fire if all Israeli hostages were not freed by noon on Saturday.

"As far as I'm concerned, if all of the hostages aren't returned by Saturday

12 o'clock - I think it's an appropriate time - I would say cancel it and all bets are off and let hell break out," Trump told reporters at the White House.

Under the deal, which came into effect on January 19, 17 more hostages should be released before the end of the first 42-day phase of the truce.

Trump's latest warning came after Hamas said the next hostage release would be "postponed until further notice," accusing Israel of failing to meet its commitments under the truce agreement, including on aid deliveries.

"The release of the prisoners (Israeli hostages), which was scheduled for next Saturday, February 15, 2025, will be postponed until further notice, pending the occupation's compliance and retroactive fulfilment of the past weeks' obligations," Abu Ubaida, spokesman for the Ezzedine al-Qasam Brigades, said in a statement.

The Israeli military said on Monday it would "significantly reinforce" areas around the Gaza Strip after Hamas announced its intention to postpone the release of Israeli hostages, part of a truce agreement for the territory.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Effective policies launched to diversify Iran's vehicle fuel mix

The head of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) on Tuesday announced the implementation of effective policies to diversify the country's vehicle fuel portfolio, stating that plans to build 100 new CNG stations and introduce bioethanol are now underway.

Mohammad-Sadeq Azimifar, speaking during the inauguration ceremony of projects aimed at diversifying the fuel portfolio, said that by the end of the Iranian year 1403 (March 20, 2025), an estimated 71% of petroleum products (approximately 185 million liters per day) will be consumed on the roads, with an annual growth rate of around 7%, Shana reported.

He attributed part of the increased vehicle fuel consumption to natural growth and part to weaknesses in the implementation of structural



energy policies. Azimifar emphasized that 53% of the country's vehicles are outdated, burring two to

three times more fuel than the global average. The deputy oil minister noted that diversification

of the fuel portfolio in the transportation sector has not been adequately addressed.

He recalled that in 2020, Iran's High Energy Council approved a document outlining energy supply for

the transportation sector through 2041.

According to the document, CNG's share in the transportation fuel portfolio was projected to reach 23% by 2041.

However, CNG consumption has declined from 23 million cubic meters (12% share) in the first half of the Iranian year of 1400 (2021) to approximately 19 million cubic meters (6.5% share) in the first half of the current Iranian year.

Azimifar pointed out that reduced focus on CNG has been a key factor in its declining share in the fuel portfolio.

"Fortunately, with effective policymaking and the efforts of colleagues, we have initiated projects such as the free conversion of public fleets, the operation of new stations, and the construction of 100 new CNG stations across the country," he added.

PM Modi backs investment in Iran's Chabahar port: Indian official

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi supports India's investment in Chabahar port, Iran's only ocean port on the Sea of Oman, and believes it could enhance trade relations with Central Asia, an official said.

Secretary for East in the Ministry of External Affairs of India Jaideep Mazumdar highlighted the port's growing potential for improving connectivity to Afghanistan and Central Asia in recent years.

"As the Trump administration threatens to roll back the sanction waiver that allowed India to develop the strategic Chabahar port in Iran, the Indian government strongly backed the port, saying it has provided a much-needed alternative route to Afghanistan for its reconstruction and economic development, while boosting trade linkages with Central Asia," Mazumdar was quoted as saying by Times of India.

The remarks came ahead of Modi's planned visit to the United States to meet US President Donald Trump for dis-

Turkey and Turkmenistan signed an agreement to facilitate the flow of Turkmen natural gas to Turkey through Iran, marking a significant step in energy cooperation between the two nations, Turkish Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said on Tuesday.

The deal, between Turkey's state-owned pipeline operator BOTAS and Turkmenistan's Turkmengaz, aims to begin gas flows on March 1, he said, according to Reuters.

Turkey consumes more than 50 billion cubic meters of gas per year. It relies on a mix of piped gas from Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran, along with liquefied natural gas imports from various suppliers.

"With this agreement, which we have been working on for many years, we will further advance the strategic cooperation between the two countries while strengthening the natural gas supply security of our country and region," Bayraktar said in a statement.

The minister had previously said Turkey could buy up to 2 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas annually from

Turkey, Turkmenistan agree gas supply via Iran



Turkmenistan, with the gas expected to be transported via Iran's existing natural gas network. A representative of the Turkmenistan government said that supplies of 2 bcm per year at the initial stage would be possible through Iran. He also said that a separate project to build a gas pipeline across the Caspian Sea from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan and further to Turkey is being discussed as part of the long-term cooperation between the countries.

Specific details regarding the volume of gas to be supplied under the new agreement and the exact terms of transit through Iran were not disclosed. On Monday, the president of Iran and the national leader of Turkmenistan stressed the importance of expanding gas cooperation and strengthening peace and trust in the region. In a phone conversation with the national leader of Turkmenistan, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian also emphasized

the country's support for enhancing cooperation among Caspian Sea littoral states to secure mutual interests and preserve the region's environment. Pezeshkian highlighted the existing collaboration between Iran and Turkmenistan in electricity and energy, describing the two nations as neighbors and brothers capable of expanding cooperation in areas such as gas swaps, transportation, and electricity exchange. He noted that the regular

convening of the Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Cooperation Commission could significantly boost bilateral ties.

Turkmenistan national leader, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, congratulated Iran on the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution and wished success for the Iranian government and people. Berdimuhamedow also advocated for expanded cooperation in transportation, energy, and gas swaps, stressing the im-

portance of regular meetings of the joint economic commission to strengthen economic ties.

He also expressed Turkmenistan's interest in deepening economic collaboration with Iran.

In order to expand cooperation in the electricity sector, Turkmenistan has proposed building a section of the power line (HPP) from the Mary HPP to the Iranian border as part of the construction project for the Merv-Mashhad transmission line, Berdimuhamedow said.

The necessary negotiations have already taken place with the Iranian side and a corresponding document has been signed stipulating that the project will be implemented by Iranian companies, he said.

Transportation is among the main areas of bilateral cooperation, the parties said.

They discussed a construction project for a highway that will run from the Iranian border to the Turkmen city of Gumdag. A memorandum on implementing this project has been signed and an Iranian company will serve as the contractor.



cussions focusing on averting a potentially devastating trade war between the two allies.

Recently, Trump signed an order directing the secretary of state to consider modifying or rescinding sanctions waivers related to Chabahar port.

In January, Iran and India exchanged their views on the joint development of the Chabahar port and enhancing trade and economic ties as they discussed potential cooperation in agriculture and other sectors.

The 19th India-Iran Foreign Office Consultations took place in Delhi in early-January where Iran urged India to consider resuming Iranian crude oil imports after the latter halted the imports in mid-2019 due to US sanctions on Tehran.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi said on January 3 that the relations between Iran and India are traditional and historical.

"This afternoon in New Delhi, I participated in the 19th Iran-India Political Consultations. We discussed bilateral, regional and international issues with Mr. [Shri Vikram] Misri, the Foreign Secretary of India," Takht-Ravanchi wrote on his X account.

"Economic relations, including Chabahar port, were prominent in the negotiations," he stated.

The senior diplomat said he also had a useful meeting with India's Foreign Minister Subramanyam Jaishankar.

Iran to import renewables equipment for its 30,000 MW target

Economy Desk

The Supreme Economic Council of Iran approved the import of equipment to build 30,000 megawatts (MW) of renewable power plants, including 25,000 MW of solar farms and 5,000 MW of wind parks.

The council's resolution, issued on Feb. 8 by Hamid Pourmohammadi,

the vice president and head of the Plan and Budget Organization, grants permission for the purchase and import of machinery and equipment needed for green energy projects, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The implementation of these projects require compliance with durability standards for equipment, as outlined by the Vice Presidency

for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy.

Previously, Mohsen Tarzatab, the head of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), stated 10,000 MW of renewable energy, regardless of the type, must be added to the country's daily production capacity annually to meet the target of 30,000 MW of clean energy.



Interaction or confrontation?

International Desk PERSPECTIVE

Since Tuesday last week, when Donald Trump signed the order to revive the maximum pressure campaign against Iran, and also after his administration's actions last Thursday to take practical steps in that direction, which was accompanied by the imposition of sanctions on part of Iran's oil sales to China, the question of whether Donald Trump is essentially seeking "interaction" with Iran or not is being reinforced. And if he is trying to reach an "agreement" with Tehran, we should ask what kind of agreement he has in mind.

In response to this question, Speaker of Iran's Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf stated on Saturday that "the issue is no longer the nuclear [program]. The [Trump's order] includes nuclear, missile, and asymmetric and conventional weapons issues; this means disarming the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Following the remarks by the speaker and according to some experts, Trump's actions, particularly over the past week, are in stark contrast to his previous positive stances on negotiating and reaching an agreement with Iran. Although this contradiction can be discussed and analyzed under the policy of carrot and stick or coercive diplomacy, some have rejected this scenario. The second group pessimistically considers the issue to be beyond negotiation and agreement and, instead, predicts that the US is pursuing brinkmanship, the military option, and a full-scale confrontation with Washington.

Agreement with 'non-nuclear Iran'

Explaining and clarifying his administration's foreign policy towards Tehran, Donald Trump claimed in a recent interview with the New York Post, "I would like a deal done with Iran on non-nuclear [issues]." However, he continued in a threatening tone, "I would prefer that to bombing the hell out of it... They don't want to die. Nobody wants to die." According to Trump, "If we made the deal, Israel wouldn't bomb them."

The US president also announced that he would not reveal details of any potential negotiations with Tehran, saying, "I don't like telling you what I'm going to tell them. You know, it's not nice." He added, "I could tell what I have to tell them, and I hope they decide that they're not going to do what they're currently thinking of doing. And I think they'll really be happy."

Change in tone or policy?

Analyzing Trump's latest remarks about Iran, Vahid Bayani, in an interview with Shargh Daily, approaches the New York Post interview from two perspectives and first points out "the change in Trump's tone and language compared to his previous stances". Bayani acknowledges that "Trump's sentences in the New York Post interview had a warning tone but were accompanied by measured and precise words."

Bayani then cites the US president's interview with Fox News, in which he expressed a great deal of respect for Iran, or quoting Donald Trump as stating that he intends to take the initiative to reach out to the president of Iran. With that in mind, the security expert believes that following the signing of the executive order to revive the maximum pressure campaign and the imposition of the first oil sanctions on Iran, Donald Trump's tone and language will gradually toughen up and become more hardline,



● ROHAN HANDE/THE ATLANTIC

as borne out by his statements in the New York Post interview. Another point that seems important to Bayani is Trump's threat of a military attack on Iran. The expert explains that "Donald Trump is pursuing the confrontation or military option indirectly and through the Israelis. This means that the US president is not inclined to have a military confrontation with Tehran, and if necessary, the responsibility for the attack will be assigned to Netanyahu and the Israelis in a division of tasks."

In a more important part of the conversation, Bayani refers to Trump's statement that "if we made the deal, Israel wouldn't bomb them" and connects it to Washington's new actions to send the GBU-43/B MOAB, also known as the Mother of All Bombs, to Israel, which he finds very "meaningful".

"Donald Trump, in the first layer of his policies towards Iran, is pursuing coercive diplomacy, interaction accompanied by maximum sanctions, negotiation from a position of strength, and ultimately reaching an agreement that contains the most benefits for Washington and the least benefits for Tehran." Building on this understanding, Bayani further suggests that in the event of failure, Trump will fall back on the

second layer of his policies towards Iran, which involves stepping up to a military attack and exercising the military option.

Trump agrees to send MOAB to Israel

As Bayani stated and based on a report by Al Mayadeen, Donald Trump has agreed to deliver the GBU-43/B bomb to Israel. It is worth noting that the "Mother of All Bombs," made in the US and weighing 11 tons, is considered one of the most powerful non-nuclear bombs, designed to attack underground fortifications.

This bomb is carried by a C-130 Hercules aircraft instead of a fighter jet. However, some military analysts speculate that the Mother of All Bombs can also be operated by an F-15 fighter jet, and since Israel has both aircraft, "Trump's decision to send this weapon (the Mother of All Bombs) to Israel can be interpreted as sending a threat signal to Tehran." It implies that if Iran does not cooperate with Trump in holding talks and reaching the desired agreement, a military option is possible.

Building on his previous point, Vahid Bayani brings up the recent shipment of a new arms package by Donald Trump to Israel. The US State Department announced that it has approved the shipment of \$6.75 billion worth of ammunition, guidance kits, fuses, and other munitions, including 2,166 GBU-39/B Small Diameter Bombs, to Israel.

The US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) stated in a press release that the US will also be shipping

3,000 Hellfire missiles and other equipment to Israel, at an estimated cost of \$660 million. The delivery of these missiles is set to commence in 2028. "The proposed sale will improve Israel's capability to meet current and future threats," the announcement reads.

The members of the US Congress have deemed this a circumvention of the law and Congress. Gregory Meeks, a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, criticized the Trump administration for bypassing Congress and continuing to send arms to Israel. Previously, Congress had put a hold on a \$1 billion arms package to Israel, which reportedly included 4,700 1,000-pound bombs and Caterpillar armored bulldozers. This news comes as Benjamin Netanyahu, as the first foreign guest, met with Donald Trump in Washington.

Trump, regime change in Iran?

A more critical issue revolves around the keyword "regime change". In this regard, some quote Trump's statements that "we can't totally interfere; Let's face it, we can't even govern ourselves" or "It would really be nice if that could be worked out without having to go that further step (Israel attacking Iran's military installations)". These experts believe in the flexibility of the second Trump administration's foreign policy towards Iran. As such, they reject any confrontational scenario.

For example, Sadegh Zibakalam, in a previous interview with Shargh Daily, thinks that

"Donald Trump is essentially not seeking war, conflict, and tension with Iran." Zibakalam refers to the "unspoken" aspects of Trump's meeting with Netanyahu last Wednesday and says: "The fact that the US President, both when signing the executive order to revive the maximum pressure campaign and during the press conference with Netanyahu, did not mention trying to overthrow and change the regime in Iran and did not support the opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran, indicates that at this juncture, Donald Trump does not intend to engage in an all-out confrontation with Tehran." According to this analyst, "the US president only referred to preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons," which, as Zibakalam says, "is acceptable to Tehran since Iranian officials have repeatedly stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran is not seeking to build nuclear weapons." Therefore, this political activist has an optimistic and positive assessment that the ground for negotiations will be prepared as soon as possible. Earlier, American officials claimed that some of Trump's close associates are opposed to the idea of attacking Iran's nuclear facilities, and Trump himself is also hesitant about this idea. The report says that Trump prefers to reach a very strict agreement that prevents Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and believes he can reach an understanding with Iran.

The article first appeared in Farsi on Shargh Daily.



Vahid Bayani believes that Donald Trump, in the first layer of his policies towards Iran, is pursuing coercive diplomacy, interaction accompanied by maximum sanctions, negotiation from a position of strength, and ultimately reaching an agreement that contains the most benefits for Washington and the least benefits for Tehran.



Days after the US president reinstated his maximum pressure campaign, people gather in Tehran's Azadi Square to celebrate the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, on February 10, 2025.

● IRNA



Three different stances in less than 24 hours

What will be Trump's next move?

International Desk
ANALYSIS

Donald Trump, the president of the United States, revived his maximum pressure policy against Iran by signing a presidential memorandum, while also expressing his willingness to engage in direct negotiations with Tehran. This apparent contradiction in Trump's stances has raised several questions about the real objectives of Washington, the possibility of a military attack, and the potential consequences.

Pressure, coercive diplomacy

In less than 24 hours, Trump took three different stances on Iran:

1. He signed a memorandum reinforcing maximum pressure to "prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and reduce its oil exports to zero".
2. He expressed his willingness to negotiate with the president of Iran and referred to the possibility of a "verifiable" nuclear agreement.
3. He coordinated with Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of Israel, to counter Iran's "regional threats".

This dual approach has been interpreted by analysts as "coercive diplomacy," a strategy aimed at forcing Tehran to accept Washington's demands through a combination of severe sanctions and negotiation openings. Trump emphasized in his interviews that they have the right to block Iran's oil sales, but he prefers to reach an agreement.

Military threats, coordination with Israel

Despite Iran's earlier implicit announcement of its readiness for conditional negotiations (including the lifting of sanctions and international guarantees), Trump seems to be prioritizing the path of exerting pressure, ignoring the positive signals from Iran. One of the main reasons for Trump's decision is his current perception of Iran being in a "weak position," a perception that, according to political experts, is far from reality. Based on the published documents, Trump's plan includes:

1. Unprecedented economic sanctions: The sanctions are aimed at reducing Iran's oil revenues to zero — despite China's opposition and potential consequences for the US's own goals — reducing the value of the rial,

and exacerbating the economic crisis affecting the livelihood of Iranians.

2. Indirect military threats: Trump emphasized the US's "right" to attack Iran's nuclear facilities during his meeting with Netanyahu. Israel has recently requested the purchase of \$7 billion worth of advanced weapons from the US, which Trump has accepted. On the other hand, analysts believe that a direct attack on Iran is less likely due to the "high regional costs" and that it is more likely that Israel will provoke Iran into attacking Israel, providing a legal pretext for Israel to counter-attack Iran.
3. Pressure on Europe: Washington has asked its European allies to activate the "snapback" sanctions mechanism. The US is seeking to build a consensus against Iran among European countries through the International Atomic Energy Agency.
4. Technological restrictions: This will be done to prevent Iran from accessing sensitive missile and nuclear technologies.

Objectives beyond nuclear program

Although Trump claims that his main objective is to "prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons," internal US documents reveal broader goals:

1. Weakening Iran's regional influence: He will try to cut Iran's support for groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Ansarullah (Houthis) in Yemen.
2. Curbing Iran's ballistic missile program: The US has prioritized limiting the development of Iranian missiles with a range of over 2,000 kilometers.
3. Changing the behavior of the Islamic Republic: Creating divisions within the Iranian government by exacerbating the economic crisis is desirable for the Americans.

Iran's response to reciprocal threats

Iranian officials have responded to Trump's actions in a unified manner, emphasizing the following points.

Abbas Araqchi, Iran's foreign



● ERIN AULOV/POLITICO

minister, emphasized that "maximum pressure is a failed experience, and re-imposing it again will lead to another failure". Iranian officials have repeatedly stated that, according to the religious decree of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the production of nuclear weapons is forbidden. Therefore, Trump's policies against Iran are based on incorrect assumptions, and the US's excuses for preventing Iran from accessing nuclear technology are driven by hegemonic ambitions. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian had previously stated that Tehran is ready for principled negotiations without preconditions, but the lifting of sanctions is essential. However, the threatening tone of Trump has led to a change in his counterpart's tone as well. In response to Trump's policy of maximum pressure and the possibility of "reducing Iran's oil sales to zero," Pezeshkian said: "The Americans think that we are totally dependent on oil. Iran has vast resources. If we manage those resources correctly and interact positively with our

neighbors, we can render the sanctions ineffective".

Potential consequences of attack on Iran

In such circumstances, political analysts believe that any military action against Iran will lead to a regional conflict with economic, political, and military dimensions. The main consequences of an attack on Iran include:

1. Exacerbating the global economic crisis: It will lead to an increase in oil prices to over \$200 and a recession in financial markets, as predicted by economic experts.
2. Proxy war in the region: An escalation of conflict in Yemen is among the potential consequences of an attack on Iran.
3. Russia and China's response: The possibility of Russia and China vetoing resolutions against Iran in the UN Security Council and strengthening their military cooperation with Tehran are among the significant consequences of a Western coalition attack on Iran.
4. Increased tensions within the US: Even Israel's involvement in a war with Iran will lead to increased costs for the US in the region and will be met with opposition from Democrats and some

Republicans, who will oppose a new war in the Middle East.

Navigating between war, negotiation

In his second term, Trump is trying to bring Iran to the negotiating table by reviving the maximum pressure policy and threatening military action. However, Tehran, emphasizing Trump's breach of promise in withdrawing from the JCPOA, is seeking practical guarantees in the event of any potential negotiations. Negotiations under current circumstances are unlikely to happen. Meanwhile, Israel, as a key player, is playing the provocation card, encouraging Iran to carry out military operations so it can then persuade the US to attack Iran's economic and nuclear infrastructure. Therefore, the shipment of new military equipment and weapons from the US to Israel can be seen in this context. As the Leader of the Islamic Revolution also emphasized in his latest response to Trump's statements, "negotiating with the US is unwise, unintelligent, and dishonorable".

The article first appeared in Farsi on Khabar Online.



In his second term, Trump is trying to bring Iran to the negotiating table by reviving the maximum pressure policy and threatening military action. However, Tehran, emphasizing Trump's breach of promise in withdrawing from the JCPOA, is seeking practical guarantees in the event of any potential negotiations. Negotiations under current circumstances are unlikely to happen.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (front-2nd L) visits the Ministry of Defense missile and defense achievements exhibition in Tehran on February 2, 2025.
● president.ir



US President Donald Trump (L) and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hold a press conference in the White House on February 4, 2025.

● EPA-EFE



Ronaldo to sit out Al Nassr's game against Persepolis: Report



Sports Desk

Al Nassr head coach Stefano Pioli is expected to give rest to Cristiano Ronaldo for Monday's dead rubber against Persepolis in Tehran at the AFC Champions League Elite, according to Saudi newspaper Arriyadiyah.

Ronaldo, who turned 40 last week, has bagged six goals in five appearances in the competition as Al Nassr sits third in the west zone's 12-team table with 16 points – three behind fellow-Saudi Pro League heavyweights Al Hilal and Al Ahli, and four points above Al Sadd of Qatar.

With Al Nassr already secured a last-16 spot, the Italian boss wants to make several changes to his first-choice lineup for the final game of the league phase to "give game time to all members of the squad," Arriyadiyah has been told by sources in the club.

Also standing third in the Saudi top flight – trailing league leader Al Ittihad by eight points – Pioli's side will visit Jeddah to face Al Ahli in domestic action on Thursday before leaving for the Iranian capital.

The report means Iranian fans

will again miss the chance to watch the Portuguese superstar from the stands at the Azadi Stadium, after the previous meeting between the two sides in September 2023 took place behind closed doors at the same venue, due to an AFC punishment for Persepolis.

It will, however, be a major boost for the Tehran Reds, for whom even a draw on the final day could prove not enough to finish in the top eight and, thus, progress to the round of 16.

Last week's 4-1 humiliation at Al Hilal saw Persepolis drop to ninth in the table with six points – equal with eight-placed city rival Esteghlal.

the battle for three knockout spots in the west will go down to the wire between Al Rayyan (eight points), Al Gharafa (seven points), Esteghlal, Persepolis, and Pakhtakor (four points) on Monday and Tuesday. Pakhtakor will face Al Sadd in Tashkent on Monday, with Al Gharafa playing away to Al Ahli. Esteghlal will visit Al Rayyan on Tuesday, with a single point – if other results on the preceding night go its way – likely to be enough to send the Tehran Blues through.

Fujairah Open International Taekwondo Championship: Iranian girls steal the show with 11 medals

Sports Desk

Iran collected 11 medals, including four golds, to win the women's team title at the 12th Fujairah Open International Taekwondo Championship in the United Arab Emirates.

Hasti Valinejad came out on top against Sogand Shiri in an all-Iranian final in the -46kg contests.

Former world silver medalist Mahla Mo'menzadeh also defeated her compatriot Saeideh Nasiri in the -49kg final, while Sogol Shiri took a consolation bronze after a last-four setback against Mo'menzadeh.

Nastaran Valizadeh beat reigning Olympic champion and world No. 1 Viviana Marton of Hungary to the

-62kg title, with Melika Mirhosseini beating Jordanian Rama Abu Al-Rub for the -73kg crown.

Elsewhere, Mobina Ne'matzadeh, an Olympic bronze medalist last summer, had to settle for a silver medal in the -53kg contests after a defeat against Saudi Arabia's Dunya Abutaleb, who made up for her loss to the Iranian girl in the third-place bout at the Paris Games.

Saghar Moradi also finished her campaign with a silver medal in the -67kg event, with Tina Madanlou (-57kg) and Zahra Pour-Esmaeil (+73kg) adding a couple of bronzes to Iran's medal haul.

Monday's results came after the Iranian men's squad had bagged 12

medals, including double golds, on the preceding night at the Sheikh Zayed Sport City.

Abolfazl Zandi grabbed the -58kg gold, thanks to a final victory over fellow-Iranian Alireza Hosseinpour, while the other all-Iranian showdown saw Matin Rezaei come out victorious against Mahdi Hajmoussaei for the -63kg gold.

Mohammad-Hassan Palang-Afkan (-68kg), Ali Ahmadi (-87kg) and Amirmohammad Rahmani (+87kg) were also among the Iranian silver medalists, with Yassin Valizadeh (-54kg), Saman Ziyaei (-54kg), Ali-Asghar Alimoradian (-63kg), Amirsina Bakhtiari (-74kg), and Mohammad-Hossein Yazdani (-87kg) collecting five bronze medals.



taekwondo.ir

Doncic makes debut as Lakers sail past Jazz



AP – Luka Doncic had 14 points, five rebounds and four assists in his Lakers debut as Los Angeles beat the Utah Jazz 132-113 on Monday night.

LeBron James finished with 24 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, Austin Reaves scored 22 and the Lakers got their sixth straight win.

Doncic, acquired in a shocking trade from the Dallas Mavericks on Feb. 2, played for the first time since sustaining a calf strain on Christmas. He was limited to just under 24 minutes as a precaution and was able to sit out the fourth quarter with his new team in complete control, but still had several standout moments to help the surging Lakers get

their 12th victory in 14 games. Buoyed by its new superstar, Los Angeles had seven players reach double figures, shot a blistering 54.3% from the floor and led by as many as 34.

Lauri Markkanen and John Collins each scored 17 points for the Jazz, who have dropped nine in a row on the road.

Elsewhere, Nikola Jokic scored 40 points, Christian Braun had 26 points, and the surging Denver Nuggets beat the Portland Trail Blazers 146-117 for their seventh straight win.

Jamal Murray added 17 points and eight assists before picking up his second technical foul and Julian Strawther finished with 18 for Denver.

The seven-game winning streak is the longest of the season for the Nuggets, who played without Michael Porter Jr. for the second straight game due to hamstring tightness.

Donovan Clingan scored a career-high 21 points and Da-

lano Banton added 22 for the Blazers, who lost their second straight after winning 10 of 11. Stephen Curry scored a season-high 38 points and the Golden State Warriors pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat the Milwaukee Bucks 125-111 on Monday night.

Jimmy Butler had 20 points, nine rebounds and six assists in his second game with the Warriors. Buddy Hield added 16 points, while Quinten Post and Moses Moody added 13 each.

The Bucks were playing for a second straight day after beating the Philadelphia 76ers 135-127 at home on Sunday.

Milwaukee also was playing a sixth straight game without two-time MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo, who will be out through the All-Star break as he deals with a left calf strain. Damian Lillard scored 38 points for the Bucks after collecting 43 on Sunday. Kyle Kuz-



Lakers guard Luka Doncic (77) scores during an NBA win against the Jazz at Crypto.com Arena, Los Angeles, CA, US, on Feb. 10, 2025.

JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA/IMAGN IMAGES

A new chapter in archaeological discoveries of Fars Province

Gur
kite.ir

Iranica Desk

The Director General of Fars Province's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization announced the discovery of 70 historical rock carvings in the Marvdasht Plain.

Mohammad Sabet Eghlidi also mentioned that ancient hidden artifacts can be found in the cities of Marvdasht, Pasargad, and Beyza.

Regarding the latest status of archaeological excavations, he stated that recent digs have taken place in the city of Gur in Firuzabad, following the acquisition of the necessary permits. He added that a permit for excavating the Valerian Palace has also been secured, ISNA wrote.

Sabet Eghlidi described engaging in archaeological excavations as a key initiative of Fars Province's cultural heritage, emphasizing the importance of protecting historical artifacts. He noted that the Sassanid and Achaemenid Land-

scape spans a vast area in the province, stressing the need for advanced protection measures.

He further stated that Fars Province has been designated as a national pilot for the smart protection of historical artifacts. Under this initiative, activities will be conducted to monitor and protect the area between Persepolis and Beyza using drones.

He also discussed the significance of Postchi Hill in Shiraz, noting that, like other locations, it requires archaeological excavations; however, it is not currently a priority. "Our focus is on excavating some other places including the Valerian Palace in the city of Gur. We also aim to shift excavation efforts towards Beyza, as we intend to alter the tourism route of Persepolis," he explained.

Sabet Eghlidi emphasized the need to utilize the province's tourism potential, highlighting that the Sang-e Siah neighborhood in Shiraz features a mosque, a synagogue, and a church, yet we

do not fully leverage this historical and tourism potential.

He announced that the process of registering the historical mosques of Fars Province for UNESCO recognition will begin, with the goal of including eight mosques in this effort: the Jaame Mosque of Neyriz, the Jaame Mosque and Stone Mosque of Darab, as well as Moshir al-Dowleh, Vakil, Nasir al-Mulk, Atiq, and the New Mosque of Shiraz.

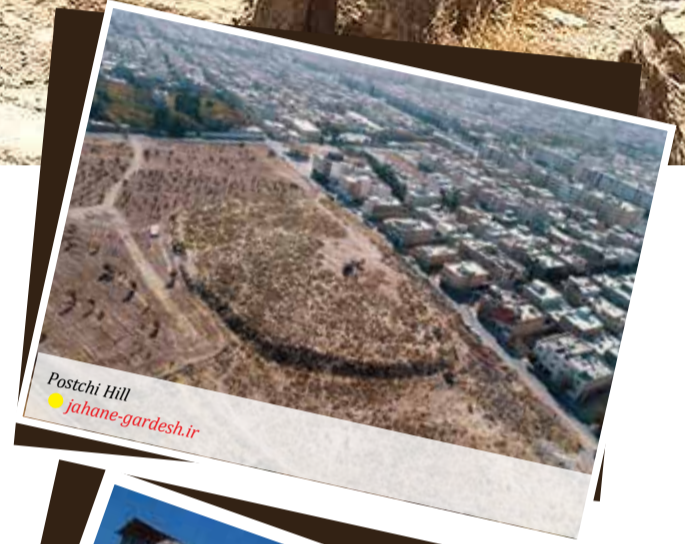
In addition, he announced Fars Province's participation in the 18th Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition, taking place from February 11-18. He stated that this exhibition is the most significant tourism event in the country and becomes increasingly specialized each year. "This year, we are participating in the exhibition with several approaches. One of these focuses on tourism and the economic aspects of this type of tourism," he noted.

He added, "We aim to form a pil-

grimage tourism triangle with the cities of Mashhad and Qom, and we will vigorously pursue this initiative at the exhibition."

Furthermore, he highlighted another approach for Fars Province's presence at the exhibition, emphasizing the importance of showcasing the region's civilizational heritage: "This year, we will participate under the slogan 'Fars, the Glory of Civilization and Faith.'"

Fars Province, known as the cradle of Persian civilization, boasts a rich history that includes the ancient capitals of Persepolis and Pasargadae. Its cultural heritage is reflected in its numerous historical sites, monuments, and traditions that date back thousands of years. By promoting its archaeological sites and cultural assets, Fars aims to enhance its status as a premier destination for both domestic and international tourists, ensuring that its historical significance is preserved and celebrated for future generations.



Kolah Farangi of Shush Castle sees new life

Iranica Desk

The restoration and revival of the *Kolah Farangi* (watchtower) at Shush Castle in Khuzestan Province have begun after 23 years since the fire that destroyed this historic structure, according to the deputy director of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization in Khuzestan Province.

He stated, "Unfortunately, about 23 years ago, an electrical short circuit caused the Kolah Farangi to catch fire and be destroyed." He added, "The watchtower is

one of the most beautiful parts of Shush Castle, and its restoration has been neglected for many years."

"The materials used in building the Kolah Farangi were primarily wood, which sustained the most damage during the fire," he explained, according to IRNA.

He also noted, "The French constructed this watchtower during their time in Shush, on the north-eastern side of the castle, providing a magnificent view of the historical area and the city of Shush." Hosseini emphasized that the more than two decades since the

destruction of the Kolah Farangi had led to its being forgotten, stating, "The restoration and revival of the watchtower have commenced with secured funding, aiming to preserve the original style. This part of the castle will be operational before the Nowruz holiday.

In the late Qajar period, a French archaeological team established a presence in Iran to conduct excavations in Shush. They used materials leftover from the Apadana Palace and the Chogha Zanbil Temple, including historical bricks from the nearby acropolis,

which is a significant historical site, to construct Shush Castle.

Shush Castle features two central courtyards and three entrance doors, built over two floors. Its design resembles the Bastille Prison in France, and it includes a watchtower that offers a panoramic view of the surrounding area. Known also as the French Castle, Shush Castle is one of Khuzestan Province's most famous tourist attractions, located adjacent to the Acropolis Palace and on the Shush hill.

Most of the materials used in its construction are historical bricks

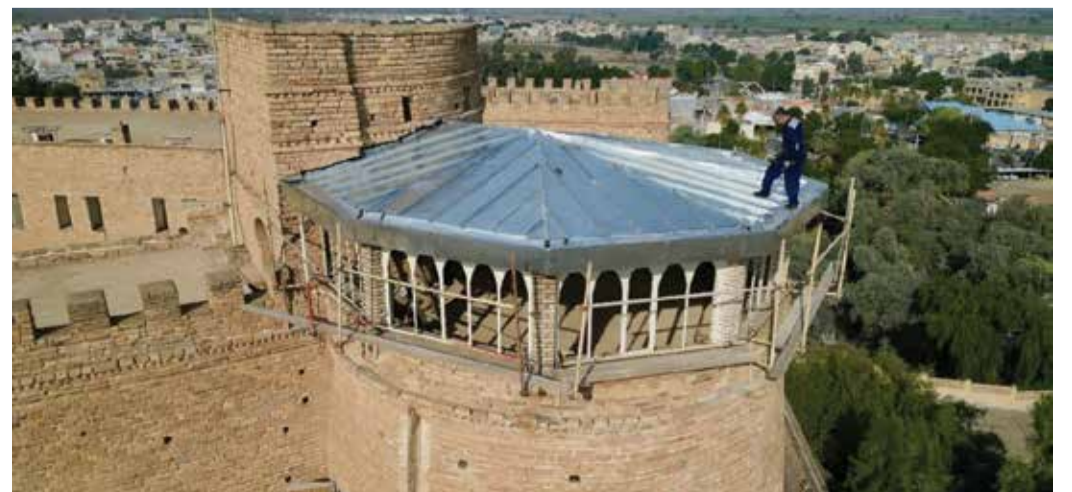
from the ancient site of Shush, made from raw clay. The castle's structure was crafted by a master craftsman from Dezful.

Shush Castle was never intended for military use; from its inception, it has served cultural and research purposes and is now the site of the UNESCO World Heritage base for Shush.

The city of Shush itself is rich in history and culture, boasting several significant attractions. The Apadana Palace, a monumental structure from the Achaemenid era, showcases intricate carvings and architecture that reflect the

grandeur of ancient Persia. The Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of the best-preserved ziggurats in the world, offering insights into the Elamite civilization.

Additionally, the Shush Museum houses a vast collection of artifacts that narrate the story of the region's rich history, making it a must-visit for history enthusiasts. The city's vibrant bazaars and local cuisine further enhance the cultural experience for visitors, making Shush not just a historical site but a lively destination for tourists.



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized the importance of restoring Iran's true place on the global stage and stressed the need for global peace and friendship to unlock the country's tourism potential. He made the statements at the opening of the 18th Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition on February 11. The event, which runs through February 14, brought together representatives from several countries, including the UAE, Turkey, Russia, and Brazil, to showcase Iran's vast potential in tourism, president.ir reported. Pezeshkian highlighted that despite the challenges, Iran's diverse culture, rich heritage, and human warmth provide a strong foundation for the country to thrive as a major player in global tourism. "Iran's pride is tied to our people and the land. We are committed to restoring Iran to its rightful place in the world," Pezeshkian stated, adding that tourism could play a vital role in this mission. Pezeshkian pointed out that for many visitors, experiencing Iran firsthand often dispels the misconceptions painted by international

media. "Those who visit Iran understand that the narratives against our country are not true. They see the hospitality, unity, and beauty that reside within this land," he said. The president also said that travel enriches individuals in various fields, including science, economics, industry, humanitarian efforts, politics, and culture. He referenced the United Nations' designation of 2025 as the Year of Peace and Security, asserting that such ideals cannot be achieved through violence and discrimination. Instead, he stressed the importance of creating conditions for co-existence. Pezeshkian affirmed that his administration is committed to supporting tourists as well as investors in the tourism sector, pledging to eliminate legal barriers that hinder the industry's growth. He also expressed Iran's

Friendship, peace key to boost tourism growth: Pezeshkian

Iran seeks to restore its real status in world



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at the inauguration of the 18th Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition, held at the Tehran International Exhibition Center on February 11, 2025.

readiness to collaborate with foreign investors in cultural, industrial, and economic initiatives, emphasizing the need for expanded cooperation at both national and international levels. In his remarks, the president

made it clear that Iran seeks peace and tranquility with its neighbors in the West Asia region. However, he pointed out that certain global powers continue to violate human rights across various parts of the world.

The president asked: How can those who bomb thousands of innocent people claim to be defenders of human rights? Addressing the suffering of the people in Gaza, he argued that children and

women do not pose a threat to international security; rather, they are the true victims of wars fought under the pretext of combating terrorism. In conclusion, President Pezeshkian expressed his hope for peace and coexistence for all people, urging everyone to work towards building a better world where humanity can live together in harmony. Reza Selehi Amiri, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, also spoke at the event, underscoring the country's enormous potential in various tourism sectors. He noted that with Iran's rich historical, cultural, and natural attractions, the country has all the makings of a top-tier tourism destination. "We are fully committed to attracting 15 million tourists by next year. In fact, we've already seen an 18% increase in international visitors, reflecting the growing

global interest in Iran," the minister remarked. He added that the country's vast tourism infrastructure is rapidly expanding, with significant projects underway to accommodate both domestic and international visitors. "From historic sites to coastal resorts, Iran offers something for every traveler," he said. The minister also recognized the role of the private sector in driving tourism growth and noted that the government is working to remove barriers for investors in the sector. He called for greater cooperation between all stakeholders to ensure Iran can fully capitalize on its tourism potential. Both Pezeshkian and the tourism minister emphasized the importance of national unity in achieving the country's tourism goals. The president called for solidarity, stating, "Only through unity can we achieve the progress we seek for Iran and for our tourism industry." Pezeshkian's remarks were a clear call for collective effort, encouraging Iranians from all backgrounds to come together and share their country's rich cultural heritage with the world, while simultaneously building a more peaceful and interconnected global community.

Fajr Film Festival winners announced 'Call Me Ziba' triumphs

Arts & Culture Desk

The 43rd Fajr Film Festival, a major event in Iran's cinematic calendar, concluded with a memorable ceremony and awarding the winners at Tehran's Milad Tower on Monday. The festival, which began on January 31, celebrated the finest in Iranian film, drawing attention to both emerging talent and established icons of the industry, IRNA reported. The coveted Crystal Simorgh for Best Film was awarded to 'Call Me Ziba', directed by Rasoul Sadr Ameli and produced by Maziar Hashemi. The drama about identity and self-discovery captivated audiences and stood out amidst strong competition. "We are thrilled with this recognition, which reflects the hard work and dedication of the entire team," Sadr Ameli commented following the win. As anticipated, 'Prophet Moses', directed by Ebrahim Hatamikia, dominated the festival with an impressive five Crystal Simorgh awards. These included Best Supporting Actor, Costume Design, Art Direction, Makeup, and Visual Effects, underscoring the film's multifaceted excellence. In addition to the Best Film award, 'Prophet Moses' emerged as a clear frontrunner in the technical categories. Meanwhile, 'People's Child' by Mahmoud Karimi and 'North from Southwest' by Hamid Zarganejad were also among the standout films. Both productions secured



three awards each. 'People's Child' took home honours for Best New Director, Best Screenplay, and Best Editing, while 'North from Southwest' triumphed in the categories of Best Director, Best Actor, and Best Cinematography. The latter film's cinematographer, Hamid Ghaffari, was especially lauded for his breathtaking visuals. The Best First Film Award went to Saeed Khani, producer of 'Raha,' a film that explores the complexities of contemporary Iranian society. In the short film category, 'Kuti,' directed by Soheila Pourmohammadi, received the Honorary Diploma for Literary Adaptation, while Nadereh Sadat Serki's 'Claimant' won the Crystal Simorgh for Best Short Film. The documentary section was equally competitive, with Nima Mahdian's 'A Handful of Dust' clinching Best Director, and Jafar Sadeghi's 'The Apprentice' named Best Documentary Film. 'Dolphin Boy 2,' directed by Mohammad Amin Hamedani and Mohammad

Kheirandish, triumphed as the Best Animation. While the festival's awards were the highlight, the event was not without its controversies. A considerable amount of attention was given to the festival's poster, which featured a design inspired by Roghaye Chehreh-Azad's portrayal in 'Mother' by Ali Hatami. The poster faced widespread criticism, leading the festival organizers to promise a redesign after acknowledging the feedback. Furthermore, the festival saw the return of prominent filmmakers such as Ebrahim Hatamikia and Rasoul Sadr Ameli, who brought their new works to the competition. The judging panel included familiar names such as director Kamal Tabrizi, critic Reza Dorostkar, and filmmaker Alireza Raeisian. However, the panel faced some disruption when actor Bahram Radan withdrew from his judging duties midway through the festival, leaving the panel to proceed with six members.

Kermanshah named Cultural Capital of Asian Cities for 2025

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Kermanshah was designated as the Cultural Capital of Asian Cities for the year 2025 by the Secretariat of the Asian Mayors' Council. This announcement was made by Kermanshah's Mayor Nader Noroozi during a press conference held on February 11 at the tourism exhibition in Tehran, IRNA reported. Noroozi explained that Kermanshah's selection was largely due to its active participation in various cultural events throughout 2021. He added that approximately 100 cities are part of the Asian Mayors' Council, with 11 members from Iran, while the remaining 89 cities hail from other Asian nations, including China and Turkey. "The aim of the Asian Cities Council is to facilitate the exchange of information among cities throughout Asia," Noroozi stated. He emphasized Kermanshah's rich historical heritage, diverse ecosystems, and ethnic variety as key factors in its recognition as a cultural hub. "We can showcase our city on the Asian continent," he added, highlighting the region's culinary diversity and its status as a creative city. Urban diplomacy, according to Noroozi, plays a crucial role in fostering social and economic development. He pointed out that Kermanshah has successfully positioned itself among cities known for their culinary creativity, boasting an impressive array of 100 traditional dishes. As the largest city in western Iran, Kermanshah is also a significant cultural center, with over 4,000 registered historical sites. Hassan Fartousi, Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO in Iran, underlined the importance of global networks, including the Creative Cities initiative, which encompasses domains such as film, tourism, and cuisine. He highlighted that Iran is home to two creative food cities: Rasht and Kermanshah. "Kermanshah is now not only active among



UNESCO cities regionally and internationally but has also emerged as a cultural focal point among Asian cities," Fartousi added, commending the city for effectively presenting itself on global platforms. He expressed gratitude for the efforts of the municipal authorities in promoting cultural initiatives, stating that the commitment of Kermanshah's leaders and the concerns of its cultural advocates have culminated in this prestigious recognition. Before the press conference, attendees enjoyed a traditional Kurdish program accompanied by local music. Following this, both the UNESCO Secretary-General and the Kermanshah Mayor unveiled various cultural initiatives, including a certification for restaurants that offer at least 50% traditional Iranian dishes, and a promotional video on local cuisine. Hashem Darvishi, the head of Kermanshah's City Council, also praised the media for their role in promoting the region's tourist attractions. He attributed Kermanshah's selection to its historical caves, the presence of the ancient Kurdish ethnic group, and the growing cultural ties with Kurdish, Lur, and Lor communities abroad. Darvishi elaborated on Kermanshah's rich artistic heritage, music, and linguistic diversity. "When viewed through a social and anthropological lens, both Shia and Sunni communities coexist harmoniously here," he noted, referencing the city's historical significance as a connector between Asia and Europe along the Silk Road.