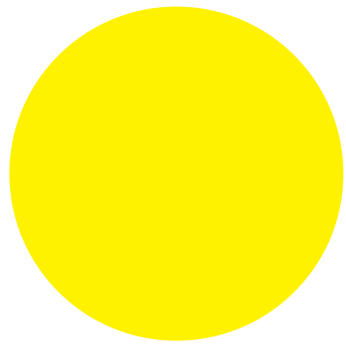


Envoy: UNSC meeting 'unwarranted interference' in Iran-IAEA cooperation 2 >



Foreign Ministry raps US 'absurd' sanctions on oil minister

Pezeshkian: Oil embargo incapable of posing problems for Iran 3 >



Legal implications of being on FATF blacklist 4 >



Women's Volleyball Premier League: Saipa defeats Paykan, crowned Iranian champion 6 >



Cultural and architectural treasures of Bushehr 7 >



Iran seeks stronger regional presence for handicrafts industry 8 >

Russia, China call on US to drop Iran sanctions, restart talks on 'mutual respect'



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi (C) welcomes Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov (L) and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazeem Gharibabadi before a meeting regarding the Iranian nuclear issue at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on March 14, 2025. AFP

Iran-Afghanistan economic diplomacy:

Overcoming sanctions, developing bilateral relations



By Ashkan Pirzadeh
Strategic affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan are two neighboring countries with a long history and numerous religious, economic, and cultural commonalities. Given the unique geopolitical and economic positions of both nations, the advancement of economic relations and developmental diplomacy could play a crucial role in improving their economic and social conditions.

As a landlocked nation, Afghanistan requires reliable and permanent routes

to access international waters. Thus, economic and trade cooperation with neighboring countries holds strategic importance for it. The cultural and linguistic affinities have kept Iran at the heart of Afghanistan's attention. Simultaneously, Iran's geographical advantages, particularly its access to open waters, can serve as a commercial gateway for Afghanistan, significantly contributing to meeting its essential goods needs.

Opportunities, challenges ahead

The development of economic relations between Iran and Afghanistan presents unique challenges and opportunities. Among the challenges, the economic sanctions imposed by the West on both

countries have targeted their growth, creating restrictions on trade interactions. To overcome these obstacles, a serious willpower from both nations and the formulation of practical strategies to counteract and offset these sanctions is essential.

Moreover, insecurity and political instability in Afghanistan significantly impact economic relations, hindering investments and severely affecting cooperation with other nations. Infrastructure issues in transportation and communications further complicate development in Afghanistan. Tehran's recent efforts to connect its railway to Afghanistan and establish roads in the country are seen as steps to tackle these challenges. Despite these hurdles, there are excep-

tional opportunities for enhancing economic ties between the two countries, which outweigh the challenges. For instance, Iran's strategic position enables it to supply Afghanistan with necessary goods, potentially positioning it as a key player in the latter's economic growth. Afghanistan's access to international waters through the Chabahar Port presents a remarkable opportunity for Kabul to procure goods from the global market. Moreover, as one of the world's largest holders of oil and gas, Iran can make significant contributions to Afghanistan's industrial growth and energy needs through fuel and petrochemical exports.

Furthermore, the establishment of joint companies and investments in sectors such as industry, agriculture,

infrastructure, and energy will foster economic interdependence, creating jobs and increasing GDP in both nations, thereby complicating matters for any potential sanctions imposed on them. Given Iran's foreign policy aims to support stability and development in Afghanistan, another outstanding opportunity lies in scientific and technological collaborations. These partnerships, covering a broad range of topics, will significantly enhance the economic and cultural relations between the two countries, with Iran consistently being a favored destination for young Afghan students pursuing higher education.

Such academic and cultural exchanges further tighten the bonds between the two nations. Page 2 >

Russia, China call on US to drop Iran sanctions, restart talks on 'mutual respect'

International Desk

China and Russia stood by Iran on Friday after the United States demanded nuclear talks with Tehran, with senior Chinese and Russian diplomats saying dialogue should only resume based on "mutual respect" and that all sanctions ought to be lifted. In a joint statement issued after talks with Iran in Beijing, China and Russia also said they welcomed Iran's reiteration that its nuclear program was exclusively for peaceful purposes, and that Tehran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be "fully" respected.

"(China, Russia and Iran) emphasized that the relevant parties should be committed to addressing the root cause of the current situation and abandoning sanction, pressure or threat of force," China's Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu told reporters after the meeting.

China, Russia and Iran also emphasized the necessity of terminating all "unlawful" unilateral sanctions, Ma said. Ma's meeting with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi came days after Tehran rejected US requests for resumption of dialogue over the nuclear program. Last week, Trump said he had sent a letter to Iranian officials, proposing nuclear talks, adding that, "There are two ways Iran can be handled: militarily, or you make a deal." Trump's letter was delivered to Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Wednesday by Anwar Gargash, a diplomatic adviser to the president of the United Arab Emirates. Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Thursday that Iran will conduct a "thorough assessment" before responding to the letter.

No negotiations under pressure

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Tuesday that he would not negotiate with the US while being "threatened," and Iran would not bow to US "orders" to talk. Pezeshkian sharply rebuked the Trump administration's maximalist approach toward Iran, declaring that Iran is not Ukraine and it will not negotiate with the US under threats or coercion. "We must maintain relationship with the world. We do not want to be estranged or quarrel with anyone, but that does not mean we will bow in humiliation before anyone," Pezeshkian said. "We may die with honor, but we will never live in disgrace." In February, Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei also urged the government not to negotiate with the US, citing Washington's withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal.

In 2015, Iran agreed to curb its nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of international sanctions in a deal with the US, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany. But in 2018, Donald Trump, a year into his first term as US president, pulled out of the pact. In recent months, Tehran and Washington have expressed their interests in new negotiations to resolve the standoff over Tehran's nuclear program. However, Iranian officials became skeptical after Trump restored his "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran in February, which includes efforts to drive its oil exports down to zero in order to stop it from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

'Peaceful' nuclear program

"The Iranian nuclear program is peaceful in nature," said Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Gharibabadi on Friday. "It is under the surveillance of



Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov (L), China's Executive Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Ma Zhaoxu (C) and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi hold a press conference after their meeting at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on March 14, 2025.
LINTAO ZHANG/AFP

the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran is receiving huge inspections from the IAEA, and our nuclear program has never been diverted to non-peaceful purposes."

The main root cause of the current situation is the unilateral US withdrawal from the 2015 pact, Gharibabadi said.

China hopes all parties will meet each other halfway and resume dialogue and negotiations as soon as possible, Wang told the Iranian and Russian ministers separately after the trilateral meeting. The United States should show "sincerity" and return to talks with Iran as soon as possible, said Wang.

Envoy: UNSC meeting 'unwarranted interference' in Iran-IAEA cooperation



Amir Saeid Irvani

International Desk

Iran condemned a recent UN Security Council's meeting on its nuclear program, calling it an "unwarranted interference" in its ongoing cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Amir Saeid Irvani in a statement on Thursday described the Wednesday's meeting as a "blatant political maneuver" which misuses the world body in an attempt to "advance narrow agendas." "We strongly object to this provocative and unwarranted meeting. This is not a legitimate discussion on non-proliferation—it is a blatant political maneuver and a misuse of the Security Council to advance narrow agendas," he said. "Such actions set a dangerous precedent that undermines the Council's credibility,"

he added. The closed-door meeting on Tehran's nuclear program, initiated by the UK, France and Germany at Washington's request, came a few days after the IAEA Board of Governors made its observations about Iran's nuclear issue.

UK snapback threats

After the meeting, the UK — which called for the meeting along with the United States, France, Greece, Panama, and South Korea — indicated that Iran's actions could trigger the snapback of UN sanctions. "We categorically reject the baseless claims made by the United States, the United Kingdom and France. These countries have conveniently ignored the reality that they themselves are responsible for the current situation." Irvani said the Security Council meeting had been held for discussing purely technical issues and thus fall exclusively within the mandate of the IAEA, which were just discussed last week at the Board of Governors in Vienna. "There is no legitimate basis for Security Council involvement," the statement said, calling it "an unwarranted interference in the ongoing, constructive engagement between Iran and the IAEA." "It serves only one purpose: to continue the failed and unlawful policy of maximum pressure against Iran," Irvani said, refer-

ring to US President Donald Trump's policy of targeting the Islamic Republic since taking office. Irvani said it was the US that unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear agreement in 2018 in direct violation of Security Council Resolution 2231 and reimposed illegal sanctions, punishing the Iranian people. "And it was the United Kingdom, France and Germany, European parties to the JCPOA that, instead of upholding their obligations, chose to appease Washington by failing to implement their commitments," he added. "The Security Council must not be exploited by those who openly defy its resolutions while demanding that others adhere to them," Irvani said. Also on Thursday, Iran's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it summoned the diplomatic representatives of the UK, France and Germany to convey its "strong protest at the irresponsible and provocative approach" of the three countries in convening the closed-door UN Security Council meeting on Tehran's nuclear program. There was "no technical or legal justification" for the meeting, the statement said, calling it "provocative and political, in line with the unilateral and nervous approach of the United States." The three European envoys said they would convey Iran's protest to their respective governments.

Tehran welcomes Armenia-Azerbaijan agreement on peace deal

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei welcomed the news of an agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the terms of a peace agreement between the two republics, describing it as a necessary and important step towards achieving lasting peace in the South Caucasus region. The spokesperson expressed hope that with the commitment of Azerbaijan and Armenia to resolving disputes through dialogue and diplomacy, the world would soon witness the signing of a peace agreement between the two countries and lasting peace and stability in the region. Azerbaijan and Armenia said Thursday that they had wrapped up talks aimed at resolving the Caucasus neighbors' decades-long conflict, with both sides agreeing on the text of a possible treaty. A deal to normalize ties would be a major breakthrough in a region where Russia, the European Union, the United States and Turkey all jostle for influence. Baku and Yerevan fought two wars for control of Azerbaijan's Armenian-populated region of Karabakh, at the end of the Soviet Union and again in 2020, before Azerbaijan seized the entire area in a 24-hour offensive in September 2023.



Esmail Baqaei

Both Armenia and Azerbaijan have repeatedly said a comprehensive peace deal to end their long-standing conflict is within reach, but previous talks had failed to reach consensus on a draft agreement. "The negotiation process on the text of the peace agreement with Armenia has been concluded," Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov told reporters. "Armenia has accepted Azerbaijan's proposals on the two previously unresolved articles of the peace treaty," he said. Armenia's Foreign Ministry later confirmed that in a statement, saying, "Negotiations on the draft agreement have been concluded" and "the Peace Agreement is ready for signing." Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan hailed it as an "important event," saying Yerevan was "ready to begin discussions on the place and time for signing the peace agreement." "We believe this text is a compromise, as a peace agreement should be," he told reporters.

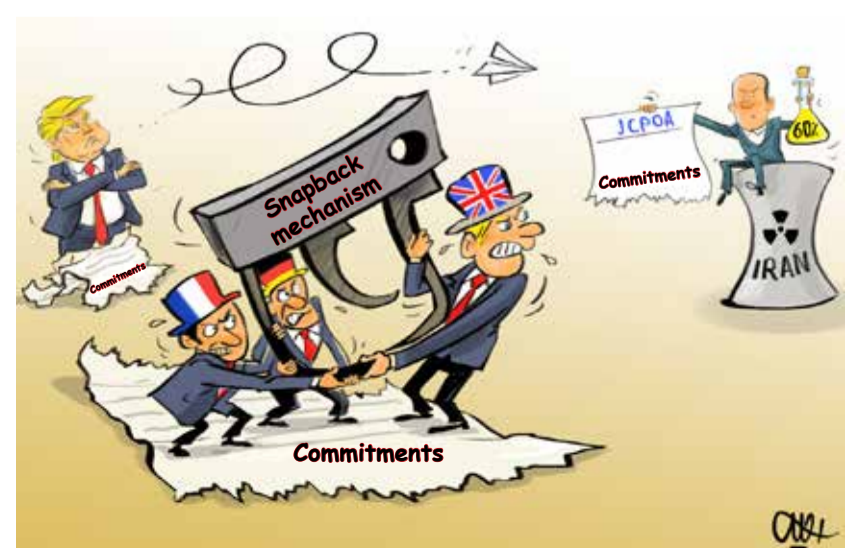
Iran-Afghanistan economic ...

Breaking through sanctions, strengthening foundations

Page 1 > To seriously address Western sanctions and foster economic relations, infrastructure development is vital. Joint efforts in enhancing transportation and communication infrastructure will improve Afghanistan's economic and trade status, while Iranian engineering expertise can fulfill Afghanistan's needs without reliance on the West. This could involve the development of railways, roads, and communication systems. In the current critical period, Afghanistan's rulers need to consider regional interests, particularly those of their neighbors. History has shown that the policies of extraterritorial actors in Afghanistan have led to instability and unrest, ultimately resulting in conflict and hindering the country's progress. Countries with high political risk struggle to attract foreign investment, making their paths to economic development challenging. Focusing on economic diplomacy can play a significant role in improving the economic situation and effectively

countering the sanctions faced by both Iran and Afghanistan. By identifying the existing opportunities and challenges in their economic relations, the groundwork for paving the way for Afghanistan's development through the Islamic Republic of Iran is increasingly being laid. As a regional power with substantial energy reserves and advanced scientific knowledge in engineering and modern sciences, Iran is a crucial neighbor for Afghanistan. Notably, Iran's policies towards Afghanistan consistently aim to secure the interests of the Afghan people, showing a genuine intent to support developments in the country. It is also vital for Afghan leaders to understand their neighbors' interests. For example, the issue of Iran's water rights from the Helmand River, a contentious topic in bilateral relations, can be addressed within this framework. Increased trade and commercial cooperation, joint investments, and scientific and technological collaborations can serve as incentives for Afghanistan's development, requiring proper interactions and a realistic understanding of existing realities by Afghanistan's leaders.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Foreign Ministry raps US 'absurd' sanctions on oil minister

Pezeshkian: Oil embargo incapable of posing problems for Iran

Economy Desk

The spokesperson for the Iranian Foreign Ministry strongly condemned the US move to sanction several individuals, including the country's oil minister, as well as multiple oil tankers and commercial companies. Esmail Baghaei, referencing the repeated claims by US officials of their readiness for negotiations, described the US imposition of sanctions against Iran as clear evidence of the insincerity of these claims and another sign of their hostility toward the development, progress, and welfare of the Iranian people. He characterized the US addiction to sanctions and pressure against independent nations as a violation of the rule of law at the international level and a threat to global peace and security. Baghaei emphasized that the US's malicious actions to disrupt Iran's economic and trade

exchanges with other countries constitute a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of international law and free trade. He stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran holds the US government responsible for the consequences of such unilateral and illegitimate measures. The Foreign Ministry spokesperson praised the tireless efforts of the dedicated individuals in Iran's Oil Ministry and its subsidiaries in the production, distribution, and trade of petroleum products. He described the US Treasury's sanctions against the respected oil minister as absurd and contrary to all international legal standards. Baghaei asserted that such inappropriate actions will have no impact on the national resolve of Iranians to defend their country's independence and dignity or their efforts toward development and prosperity.

Oil sanctions not effective

On Thursday, President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized the capabilities of Iran's scientists, experts, artists, and producers, stating that as long as the country relies on its domestic capacities and resources, enemies cannot create problems for Iran through oil sanctions. Speaking during a meeting with artists and handicraft industry sector players in the southeastern region of Tehran Province, Pezeshkian stressed that the conspiracies of enemies against the Iranian people will not succeed. "As long as we have the national assets of experts, elites, producers, industrialists, and artists, we will not be concerned about oil sanctions," he said. Pezeshkian noted that problems arise when a nation loses its resources. "Any nation dependent solely on its material resources will eventually face destruction. Therefore, we must focus on hu-

man capital, producers, artists, merchants, and scientists. If we support them and do not hinder their activities, threats and sanctions will not succeed," he added. Pezeshkian went on to say that, "The US pressures us because we have made ourselves dependent on oil and gas. As long as we rely on the resources beneath our feet, we will face difficulties if those resources are depleted or if their sale is blocked. But if we create art and produce, no power can stop us." The president emphasized the government's unconditional support for artists and its commitment to providing a conducive environment for their work. He said, "We say we are Muslims and Shia, but what sets us apart from non-Muslims? Why should they accept us? It is through our behavior, art, and performance that we must prove ourselves." Pezeshkian stated, "Certainly, there are individuals among us who can innovate and achieve



Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad
SHANA

new things, but first, we must develop this belief within ourselves." Highlighting human potential for innovation, Pezeshkian said, "If we believe that we can solve problems with our hands, intelligence, and abilities, no power can bring us to our knees. In Iran, we are sitting on treasure,

and every part of this country is full of riches. It is not befitting for us to remain in our current state. To overcome these conditions, we need a new perspective, solidarity, and fresh support. We must envision new conditions for ourselves, and only then can we live together with dignity and pride."

CBI: Economy posts 3.7% growth as non-oil trade hits \$116b



IRNA

Economy Desk

Mohammadreza Farzin, the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), outlined the latest economic developments, stating that the country's economy experienced a 3.7% growth in the first nine months of the current Iranian year of 1403 (March 20-December 20, 2024). Fixed capital formation grew by 3.4%, while non-oil trade volume surpassed \$116 billion, marking an 11.2% increase during the nine-month period. Farzin also noted that inflation has been controlled and reduced from 55.7% to 35.4%, attributing the tumble to governmental measures curbing liquidity and monetary base growth. He added that small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will benefit from more innovative financing methods in the upcoming year's credit policies. Farzin highlighted that the 3.7% economic growth rate is a stable and proportional figure, comparing favorably with global and regional averages. He pointed out that while China and India remain global economic growth leaders, European countries have experienced low growth rates for years. Iran's growth rate outperforms regional peers such as Turkey (2.8%), Saudi Arabia (1.4%), Pakistan (2.5%), Iraq (1.4%), and the Middle

East and Central Asia average of 2.4%. Despite political and security challenges in 1403, including the unexpected death of the president and subsequent uncertainties, Iran achieved a relatively strong growth rate. Farzin acknowledged that while the 3.7% growth is acceptable, it falls short of the targeted 8%, and efforts are underway to improve growth figures in the final quarter of the year. Farzin explained that economic growth calculations are based on both base prices and market prices. Using market prices, Iran's economy grew by 3.9% in spring, 3.5% in summer, and 3.9% in autumn, averaging 3.7% over the nine months. Using base prices, growth was 3.1% in spring, 2.7% in summer, 3.6% in autumn, and 3.1% overall. He noted that while growth slowed slightly in summer, it rebounded in autumn, driven by non-oil sectors such as agriculture, services, and industry. The services sector, accounting for 50% of GDP, played a significant role in economic growth, followed by industry and mining (30%), agriculture (10%), and oil (10%). Farzin emphasized that the services sector's large share makes it a key driver of overall economic growth. Fixed capital formation grew by 3.4% in the first nine months, with machinery investment contributing significantly due to currency policies aimed at meeting capital needs. Non-oil trade volume grew by 11.2%, reaching \$116 billion, up from \$105 billion in corresponding period of 1402. Exports rose by 18.8% to \$53.3 billion,

while imports increased by 5.6% to \$63 billion, resulting in a \$10 billion trade deficit excluding oil. Including oil exports, the trade balance would show a \$15 billion surplus. Farzin also discussed efforts to increase gold reserves through exports, noting that some imports are related to gold, which bolsters national reserves. The CBI governor highlighted the importance of supporting production and preventing liquidity blockages, which have contributed to increased liquidity growth, reaching 27.8% in Bahman (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The monetary base growth rate stood at 22% in Bahman, below the multi-decade average of 25%. Farzin stressed that maintaining this rate aligns with long-term trends and supports inflation control. Annual inflation decreased from 55.7% at the beginning of 1402 to 35.4% in Bahman 1403, with further reductions expected through new policies. Farzin also addressed producer inflation, which peaked at 82.6% before dropping to 40.4% at the start of 1402 and further to 26.7% in Bahman 1403. He noted that producer inflation is a leading indicator for consumer inflation and expressed hope for further declines in the coming year. In conclusion, Farzin emphasized the resilience of Iran's economy, with growth across all sectors, particularly non-oil industries. He reaffirmed the CBI's commitment to stabilizing monetary policies, supporting SMEs through innovative credit methods, and controlling inflation as a key priority.

Mapna Group to build 1,500 MW power plants for domestic industries

Economy Desk

Mapna Group CEO Mohammadali Olya announced the implementation of a new initiative to construct 1,500 megawatts (MW) of power plants dedicated to supporting domestic industries. The project, part of the "Industrial Power Plant Construction Plan," aims to enhance energy security and meet the growing demands of Iran's industrial sector. Olya, speaking at the delivery ceremony of the latest locomotive unit for Mobarakeh Steel Complex (MSC), revealed that 800 MW of the planned power plants will be renewable energy facilities. He emphasized the company's ongoing efforts to develop multiple solar energy projects, some of which are being carried out in collaboration with industrial partners. One of the largest solar power plants under development is the Eastern Sun Project in Isfahan, owned by MSC. Olya noted that the first phase of this project is set to be completed by the end of this year or early next year, with the entire project expected to be operational by the end of the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2026). Regarding Mapna's locomotive and wagon manufacturing activities, Olya stated that the majority of production is focused on domestic needs. The company's locomotive factory currently has an annual capacity of 50 units, with a significant portion already operational. He expressed optimism that new contracts with domestic industries could further increase this capacity. Olya also highlighted that 60% of the locomotive production capacity is currently active based on existing orders. He pointed to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region as a key export market, with several countries nearing contract agreements. Additionally, Mapna is involved in locomotive and wagon repair and refurbishment projects in Iraq.



IRNA

On the South Pars pressure boosting project being implemented by Mapna, Olya mentioned that the recently signed contract, requires financial backing and advance payments to proceed. He expressed confidence that the project, critical to Iran's energy security, would commence in the first half of the next Iranian calendar year. However, Mapna has already begun engineering work in preparation for the project's implementation. The ceremony for the delivery of the latest locomotive unit to MSC was held on Thursday, attended by Saeid Zarandi, CEO of the complex. The event highlighted Mapna's ongoing contributions to Iran's industrial and energy sectors, reinforcing its role as a key player in the nation's development. Mapna Group, a leading Iranian industrial conglomerate, has long been at the forefront of energy and infrastructure development in the country. Known for its expertise in power plant construction, renewable energy projects, and locomotive manufacturing, the company plays a critical role in supporting Iran's industrial growth and energy security. In recent years, Mapna has expanded its focus on renewable energy, aligning with global trends and Iran's domestic needs for sustainable energy solutions. The company's latest announcement underscores its commit-

ment to bolstering Iran's industrial sector by addressing its energy demands. With industries facing increasing pressure to reduce reliance on traditional energy sources, Mapna's initiative to build power plants, including renewable energy facilities, marks a significant step toward modernizing the country's energy infrastructure. Iran's industrial sector has faced some challenges in recent years, including energy shortages and the need for modernization. The country's reliance on traditional energy sources has also raised concerns about sustainability and environmental impact. Mapna Group's latest initiative to build power plants, particularly renewable energy facilities, reflects a broader shift toward addressing these challenges. By integrating renewable energy into its industrial infrastructure, Iran aims to reduce its carbon footprint and enhance energy efficiency, ensuring long-term economic and environmental benefits. The collaboration between Mapna and key industrial players like MSC underscores the importance of public-private partnerships in driving large-scale infrastructure projects. As Iran continues to navigate economic pressures and global energy transitions, initiatives like these are critical to securing the country's industrial future and energy independence.

Legal implications of being on FATF blacklist



● PWC LUXEMBOURG

By Gholam Nabi Feizi Chekak
Lawyer

ANALYSIS

In the not-so-distant past, war and military actions played a significant role in advancing the foreign policy objectives of various countries, particularly the United States. However, today, sanctions have replaced war, and sanction tools and policies are used to change the policies and behavior of target governments or even to alter the ruling system of the target government.

Thomas Jefferson, the third US president, said in 1808 that in foreign policy, there are only three options: Sanctions, war, and surrender and tribute. However, in practice, sanction policies have become the most important tool of US foreign policy. Policymakers in this country prefer to use economic sanctions as a substitute for war. Because by imposing sanctions on target countries, without incurring human casualties and enormous expenses and without spending ammunition, more or less the same results are achieved.

American author Bo Ram Kwon, in his 2013 dissertation titled "The Effectiveness of Sanctions Revisited: An Empirical Analysis Using a Bargaining and Enforcement Framework," states: "...Since economic sanctions can inflict significant costs on a target without generating as much human cost and public opinion backlash as the use of force, they have become a much-preferred policy to induce change in a target state's behavior." Richard Nephew, in his book titled "The Art of Sanctions: A View from the Field," says that the goal of US sanctions is to create hardship, or better put, to inflict pain and frustration, in such a way that the target country changes its behavior.

The US has always used sanction policies alongside other tools for various objectives. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s, to contain communism and prevent its spread, it imposed sanctions on

communist countries as well as on anyone with trade relations with them. In the 1970s, it enforced sanctions on countries under the pretext of human rights violations and in the late 1980s, on some countries under the pretext of terrorism, drugs, and the proliferation of weapons.

In recent years, US sanctions against Iran have extensively targeted various sectors of Iran's economy, including banking, insurance, transportation, metals, oil, petrochemicals, etc. It is evident that the primary objective is to compel Iran to change its international behavior through economic pressures and constraints.

Broader effects of being on FATF blacklist

On the other hand, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), by providing a set of international standards, aims to support the integrity of the global financial system through anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) and preventing the production of weapons of mass destruction. Countries that do not cooperate with this intergovernmental organization, after going through certain stages, like Iran, North Korea, and Myanmar, are placed on the so-called blacklist. The effect is that, according to the provisions of Recommendation 19 and Paragraph 20 of Recommendation 10, they are subject to countermeasures, and all countries are obligated to minimize their financial interactions with them and place all their financial and commercial activities under strict surveillance and control. These measures can have broader and more fundamental sanction-based effects than US sanctions. Considering the United Nations' support for FATF recommendations, the relevant country may even fall under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and face military enforcement.

Non-cooperation with FATF exacerbates sanctions

Therefore, it seems that the effects of non-cooperation with FATF and remaining on the

blacklist exacerbate sanctions and equate to giving the US sanctioning entities the rope to hang you with! It effectively transforms the unilateral economic sanctions of the US into multilateral and comprehensive global sanctions.

To better understand the above, we first briefly introduce FATF recommendations, then discuss how countries are systematically controlled by this body and Iran's position, followed by an examination of how sanctions are systematically intensified.

FATF recommendations

Financial crimes such as money laundering, so-called terrorist financing, and the like have become international problems and have contributed to the spread of other forms of economic corruption in various countries. Therefore, international and intergovernmental organizations and governments have deemed transnational cooperation in systematically combating them inevitable. To prevent these crimes and avoid the damages caused by them, solutions have been devised, and principles and rules have been established and implemented. Actions such as the Vienna Convention (1988), the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure, and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime (1990), the EU Money Laundering Directive (1991), the

Basel Committee Statement, the Resolution of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (1992), and the like can be considered the offspring of crimes such as money laundering. Also, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which is considered an independent inter-governmental organization, was established in 1989 with this approach.

Apart from the G7 member states, the European Commission, and eight other countries that are considered its founders, the number of members has now reached 35 countries, and more than 200 judicial systems and a multitude of regional organizations and international institutions cooperate with FATF. Thus, its standards and recommendations are widely applied. This group is obligated to monitor the progress of its members in implementing the proposed recommendations and, by examining new methods of terrorist financing and money laundering, amend the rules for combating them to enhance the level of cooperation in enforcing financial crime rules.

FATF recommendations are a set of international standards aimed at supporting the integrity of the global financial system through combating money laundering (AML) and terrorist financing (CFT), and preventing the production of weapons of mass destruction. In other words, the



It seems that the effects of non-cooperation with FATF and remaining on the blacklist exacerbate sanctions and equate to giving the US sanctioning entities the rope to hang you with! It effectively transforms the unilateral economic sanctions of the US into multilateral and comprehensive global sanctions.



The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) penalizes Iran during a plenary session in Paris, France, on February 21, 2020, by authorizing member states to take up strict counter-measures against Tehran for not passing appropriate financial safeguarding laws.

● FATF

goal of these guidelines is to create transparency in the financial system and, consequently, facilitate the examination of criminal activities, help countries combat money laundering, and prevent so-called terrorist financing.

In 1990, FATF guidelines were first published in 40 articles aimed at combating money laundering. In subsequent years, amendments were made to increase their applicability.

Also, after the September 11, 2001, attacks, combating so-called terrorist financing was included among the objectives of this group's guidelines, and in October 2001, eight special guidelines on combating terrorist financing were issued. In October 2004, nine more special guidelines were issued to strengthen international standards.

Finally, in February 2012, 40+9 amended guidelines were published as a clear and robust set, with nine of them dedicated to combating terrorist financing. The current valid set of recommendations is a merged text of previous sets. It is stipulated that FATF must continuously monitor and control monetary exchanges and relationships between banks, financial institutions, and even non-profit organizations, and these controls and monitoring extend to law offices, notary offices, auditing and inspection companies.

Systematic control of countries, Iran's position

In the FATF structure, countries that do not adhere to the above recommendations and standards and do not cooperate in this regard are not treated equally but are classified differently based on the level of cooperation. This classification is briefly as follows:

- Fully compliant countries,
 - Largely compliant countries,
 - Partially compliant countries,
 - And non-compliant countries.
- The last group of countries is divided into two types: those with high risk but not deserving countermeasures (grey list) and those subject to countermeasures (blacklist).

In this regard, Iran has been warned in at least eight public statements from 2009 to 2016, and finally, after repeated extensions, in the February 19, 2016, FATF statement, it was strongly urged that if Iran does not reform by June 2016, it will be subject to intensified and effective countermeasures.

Therefore, Iran's then-minister of economic affairs and finance, by signing a high-level political commitment to cooperate with FATF and implement the Action Plan within a one-year period, i.e., until June 2017, managed to temporarily halt the implementation of the FATF decision and, so to speak, suspend Iran's entry into the blacklist.

During the period, despite some efforts, the Iranian government, due to some internal disagreements, could not implement the relevant Action Plan, although FATF granted several extensions until February 2020. But ultimately, due to the incomplete approval of the four bills, Iran was placed on the blacklist.

Currently, on the official FATF website, two countries, Iran and North Korea (plus Myanmar), are on this list. From FATF's perspective, these countries do not have a serious will to combat money laundering and international terrorism. Therefore, they are considered high-risk in terms of economics and investment, and the



result is that all countries must take countermeasures against them.

Of course, countries always have the opportunity to change their group by striving to implement more recommendations and, for example, move from the blacklist to the grey list or the group of fully compliant countries. At the recent FATF meeting held from June 23 to 28, 2024, in Singapore, Turkey and Jamaica were removed from the grey list because evaluations showed that these two countries had successfully addressed strategic deficiencies. Conversely, two countries, Venezuela and Monaco, were added to the grey list, and Iran remained on the blacklist, and unfortunately, the suspended deterrent measures against Iran were reinstated. In the final statement of this meeting, the suspension of deterrent measures against Iran was lifted, and it was emphasized that, considering that Iran has not implemented the Palermo Convention and the CFT, FATF calls on member countries to apply all these deterrent measures against Iran. Of course, if Iran joins the Palermo Convention and the CFT, there will be a review of subsequent measures. Depending on the progress in cooperation, deterrent measures may be suspended or moved from the blacklist to the grey list, etc.

Systematic intensification of economic sanctions

Some may think that FATF recommendations lack enforcement. Although these recommendations are formally considered soft law and have a recommendatory nature and apparently lack enforcement, in practice, given their widespread acceptance among countries and international organizations, they have high credibility and status. Legally, UN Security Council resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter have strongly emphasized the implementation of FATF recommendations. Many countries have officially used them as the primary source and reference for drafting laws and regulations to combat money laundering. Some countries have integrated these standards entirely and uniformly into their legal systems through their legislative authorities.

Therefore, even if we are not a member of the intergovernmental organization, according to international law, some provisions of the CFT Convention and Security Council resolutions and, consequently, FATF recommendations and standards, are practically enforced against us. These recommendations are more of a criterion for assessing the health of countries' financial and banking systems, and a country that does not comply with the recommendations will gradually face formal or informal sanctions from other countries.

Thus, in the current legal system, non-compliance with the aforementioned recommendations can lead to severe international, multilateral, or unilateral sanctions and ultimately result in the isolation and even commercial and economic bankruptcy of countries. It is bitter, but as long as we are on the blacklist, we will face increasingly severe and serious consequences in the country's financial, commercial, and banking relations.

Some opponents think that if we join FATF, we will be forced to provide information and data that we do not wish to disclose

to FATF. These individuals are unaware that as long as we are on the blacklist, we are monitored more intensely.

According to FATF regulations and standards, countries on the blacklist are subject to comprehensive and much stricter global controls. Even friendly and allied countries must monitor these countries and limit or, in some cases, cut off cooperation with them and report all financial and economic activities of their affiliated companies and institutions in detail, and the like. Whereas these strict measures are not applied to countries that have little cooperation but are not on the blacklist.

As long as a country is on the blacklist, one of the things that is heavily controlled is the issue of cash transfers or so-called suitcase transfers.

Some think that if we join FATF, we will come under control, whereas these controls are reasonable and standard, applied to all countries. However, when on the blacklist:

According to FATF Recommendation 19, all countries, whether friend or foe, are obligated to more rigorously and meticulously monitor cash transfers and assets of Iranian individuals or entities within their own countries, and even the movement of cash through luggage will face difficulties.

In the interpretive note on the implementation of FATF Recommendation 19, member countries are asked to apply the "Know Your Customer" (KYC) rule more strictly to a country on the blacklist, and all banks, financial and non-financial institutions, individuals, and entities will be monitored with a much more serious lens.

According to FATF Recommendation 19, a fully regular and continuous reporting system is applied to all financial transactions destined for Iran in all countries.

The establishment of financial institutions the opening of branches or representative offices for Iranian individuals or entities in all countries will face restrictions, and in addition, other countries are prohibited from establishing institutions, branches, or representative offices in Iran. FATF Recommendation 19 also prohibits financial institutions, banks, and foreign companies from cooperating with Iranians and emphasizes that they review their relationships and take action to amend or terminate business relationships with Iranian financial institutions.

In some countries, banks have informed Iranian residents in those countries to close their accounts. The list of such cases is very long.

Without the approval of Palermo and CFT and without Iran's accession to the group of cooperating countries, we will remain on the blacklist, and Iran will even lose the methods of circumventing sanctions.

Long ago, the Chinese and Russians announced that if we do not approve Palermo and CFT, they will not be able to continue financial and banking cooperation with us. Also, Europeans will certainly not cooperate with us, and all countries, big and small, will consider themselves obligated to apply these rules more strictly to the Iranian government, Iranian institutions, companies, and even individuals.

Apart from the political perspective, in general, if we remain on the blacklist, we will have a darker and gloomier outlook,



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) talks with officials of the Economy Ministry during an unannounced visit on February 19, 2025. "The implementation of the [FATF] mechanism helps us monitor the flow of liquidity and prevent the withdrawal of resources or the occurrence of financial crimes," said Pezeshkian.
—president.ir

and countries that wished to invest in Iran will withdraw their investments, and we will pay very high costs for financial and banking transactions. That is, on the one hand, the possibility of selling oil and transferring currency will become more difficult, and the country's income will decrease; On the other hand, since currency transfer and the sale of goods become more difficult, the cost of currency transfer resulting from the sale of these products will increase even more. Also, Iranian institutions and companies in other countries will face problems.

Rewards for exiting blacklist

What we said so far should have clarified that non-cooperation with FATF means keeping the name of our beloved Iran on the blacklist, which would lead to the intensification of sanctions and the exacerbation of political, economic, and developmental crises in the country, severely affecting the welfare and livelihood of the noble Iranian people. To facilitate the adoption of an appropriate decision by thoughtful and wise decision-makers and policymakers on joining the Financial Action Task Force, paying attention to the following points will not be without merit:

One of the concerns of some individuals regarding the acceptance of FATF recommendations is related to the future of supporting liberation movements that are considered terrorist groups by Western countries. We know that in the FATF glossary, terrorism is defined. Now, the question is, from the perspective of this group, which institution is allowed to judge whether this concept applies to various instances, and what mechanism is considered for this application?

The concept of terrorism and terrorist depends on the conditions, circumstances, and context of the act and the type of act committed. For example, in the conventions mentioned under FATF Recommendation 36, a single meaning of the concept of terrorism is not obtained because each of the proposed conventions governs in a different context. Perhaps for these reasons, FATF has published a series of concepts and definitions in a glossary attached to the recommendations to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations and thus correctly convey and implement its demands and recommendations.

One of these terms is "terrorist." According to FATF's definition, "The term terrorist refers to any natural person who: (i) commits, or attempts to commit, terrorist acts by any means, directly or in-

directly, unlawfully and willfully; (ii) participates as an accomplice in terrorist acts; (iii) organizes or directs others to commit terrorist acts; or (iv) contributes to the commission of terrorist acts by a group of persons acting with a common purpose where the contribution is made intentionally and with the aim of furthering the terrorist act or with the knowledge of the intention of the group to commit a terrorist act."

Perhaps in the worst case, it can be said that the determination of a terrorist instance should be made by the United Nations and its resolutions, and we should not allow such an important matter to be subject to different interpretations by various countries.

Does accepting FATF standards, apart from its impact on Iran's international financial transactions, have other consequences for the country?

Firstly, joining FATF, in addition to depriving hostile countries of excuses, will lead to Iran being considered a normal country globally, freed from accusations of supporting money laundering and terrorist financing and the like, removed from the blacklist, and consequently removed from the group of high-risk countries. As a result, foreign investment in Iran will be facilitated, and restrictions on Iran's international financial transactions will be lifted.

Secondly, it will increase cooperation with international banks, lead to transparency and stability of the financial system, enhance banking standards, and better align us with the global system.

Thirdly, it has many other advantages, including access to World Bank facilities, easier membership in international treaties and bilateral or multilateral agreements.

Fourthly, it will reduce crimes such as smuggling, money laundering, and financing of terrorist organizations and international terrorism, and reduce financial corruption and bribery.

Fifthly, without joining the Paler-

mo and CFT conventions, which are prerequisites for cooperation with FATF, the normalization of financial and



We should not be concerned about the reporting system for accession. Contrary to what is believed, if we are a cooperating member of FATF, the reporting system is optional in many cases because the basis of the Palermo Convention and CFT and FATF recommendations are also based on the national interests and national security of countries and are connected to the internal regulations of countries. It is not like if we join this international organization, unusual pressures will be imposed on us, but on the contrary, if we do not join, control over us will increase.



The article first appeared in Persian on ISNA.

international interactions and alignment with the international community will not be possible, and we will, whether we want it or not, stand against the international community and outside the arena of international cooperation.

It is wise that instead of being passively controlled outside the arena, we enter the playing field as a powerful actor and be active and hardworking members in regional and global assemblies of FATF.

We should not be concerned about the reporting system for accession. Contrary to what is believed, if we are a cooperating member of FATF, the reporting system is optional in many cases because the basis of the Palermo Convention and CFT and FATF recommendations are also based on the national interests and national security of countries and are connected to the internal regulations of countries. It is not like if we join this international organization, unusual pressures will be imposed on us, but on the contrary, if we do not join, control over us will increase. In this case, with the fading of the principle of good faith, our reports will not be accepted, and they will decide how to deal with Iran and Iranians.

It is worth mentioning that Iran is not the only country that has been placed on the blacklist. Previously, Russia was also on the blacklist, i.e., when it had to cooperate and did not, and later had to cooperate and was then accepted as a member of the FATF assembly. Or the occupying regime was previously on the blacklist, and naturally, the reason was non-cooperation; but now, after implementing the necessary actions and cooperation with FATF, it is free to act within the assembly. Last summer, Turkey and Jamaica also celebrated exiting the grey list. Why should Iran leave this fertile ground to others and be absent from it?

Moreover, organizing the country's troubled economic situation, exiting the deadly and costly economic isolation, preventing further waste of national wealth and interests, and improving the livelihood and welfare of the people is impossible without fundamentally resolving the issue of economic sanctions, and the fundamental and basic resolution of economic sanctions depends on reasonable and realistic interaction with the world and exiting the FATF blacklist and grey list.

Therefore, it is expected from thoughtful policymakers, especially the esteemed president and the new government, to consider cooperation with the Financial Action Task Force and exiting the blacklist and grey list as obvious priorities of the country's economy. Now is late, tomorrow is much later!

Women's Volleyball Premier League: Saipa defeats Paykan, crowned Iranian champion



Sports Desk

Saipa was crowned the Iranian Women's Volleyball Premier League champion, thanks to a 3-1 victory over Paykan in Tehran.

Having won the first game of the best-of-three series in four sets on Tuesday, Saipa repeated the scoreline on Thursday to defend its title.

Saipa had to bounce backs from a 27-25 loss in the first set to come out victorious 25-20, 25-17, and 25-19 and lift third top-flight crown under head coach Samira Imani.

The triumph also secured a place for Imani's girls at the inaugural AVC Women's Champions League – starting April in Pasig, Philippines.

Saipa will be drawn in Group C of the 12-team tournament alongside China's Beijing BAIC Motor and Vietnamese champion VTV Binh Dien Long An.

Saipa had registered a remarkable 16 victories – conceding a single defeat – to finish atop the league table and then rallied

from behind to beat Foolad Mobarakeh Sepahan in the last-four best of three series.

Foolad and the Iranian under-20 side jointly finished on the third podium.

There was further glory for Saipa girls in the awarding ceremony, as Mahsa Saberi was named the Most Valuable Player at the 24th edition of the competition, while sharing the Best Outside Hitter prize with teammate Mahsa Kadkhoda.

Saipa's Soudabeh Baqerpour and Paykan's Zahra Karimi were the joint Best Middle Blockers, with Sepinoud Dast-Barjen of the Iranian under-20 team taking the award for Best Opposite. Saipa's Shabnam Alikhani won the Best Setter award and Paykan's Negar Kiani taking the Best Libero prize.

Saipa players celebrate after a 3-1 victory over Paykan in the second game of the Iranian Women's Volleyball Premier League final in Tehran, Iran, on March 13, 2025.

● VOLLEYBALL.IR

Persian Gulf Pro League: Sepahan held at Nassaji, suffers blow in title race

Sports Desk

Sepahan was dealt a massive blow in its bid for a first Persian Gulf Pro League title in a decade after sharing the spoils in a 1-1 stalemate at Nassaji Mazandaran on Thursday. Reza Shekari gave the visitors a 43rd-minute lead at the Vatan Stadium, tapping in from close range on a Kaveh Rezai's low cross, before Kevin Yamga drew Nassaji level in the seventh minute of added time in the first half.

Nassaji was given a penalty after Sepahan defender Siavash Yazdani was deemed to have fouled Aref Rostami in the box

following a VAR review. The Frenchman had his spot-kick saved by Sepahan keeper Payam Niazmand but found the net on the rebound. A fifth draw in six top-flight outings – third on the bounce – saw Sepahan go one point clear of Tractor on top of the table – before third-place Persepolis's home game against Malavan on Friday – but the Tabriz-based club, having two games in hand, could move back on top when taking on Golgozar Sirjan at home on Sunday. Nassaji is second from bottom in the 16-team table with 20 points. Elsewhere, Khaybar de-

feated Chadormalou 2-0 at home to sit six points clear of the relegation zone. Mohammad-Javad Mohammadi converted a spot kick in the 37th minute before Amirhossein Jeddi doubled Khaybar's lead three minutes later. Shams Azar also claimed a massive victory in its survival battle, defeating bottom-club Havadar 3-2 in Tehran. Goals from Hومان Rabi-zadeh and Mojtaba Fakhri-an inside four minutes saw the visiting side take a two-goal lead at halftime. Australian Matthew Millar pulled one back for the home side in the 57th minute but

Abbas Habibi restored the two-goal cushion for Seyyed Mahdi Rahmati's side 12 minutes later. Mojtaba Haqdoust's 77th-minute strike proved to be just a consolation for Havadar, as Shams Azar moved up to 13th with 24 points.



Nassaji Mazandaran midfielder Siamak Nemati (1) challenges Sepahan's Bryan Dabo during a 1-1 draw in the Persian Gulf Pro League at the Shahid Vatan Stadium, Qaemshahr, Iran, on March 13, 2025.

● MOHAMMAD MAHDIZADEH/ FOOTBALL.NET



Curry becomes first in NBA history to make 4,000 3-pointers

AP – Stephen Curry's shooting range and accuracy from way back have long stood alone – whether with a defender or two in his face or when letting it fly from the logo.

Now, the NBA's career leader in 3-pointers has reached new territory from beyond the arc: Golden State's star guard is the first player in league history to reach 4,000 3s.

He did it a day before his 37th birthday, as the Warriors extended their winning streak to a season-best six games with a 130-104 victory over the Sacramento Kings in San Francisco. His 4,000th came from the right wing and under pres-

sure off a pass from Moses Moody with 8:19 left in the third quarter, on his fourth attempt of the night.

Fans jumped to their feet and roared when Curry made it, and a tribute played on the big screen during a timeout shortly after. It included a congratulatory message from former Warriors big man Andris Biedrins of Latvia who dished out the assist on Curry's first 3.

The two-time NBA MVP needed two more from deep coming into Thursday night's game at Chase Center. He hit his first from the left wing with 5:35 remaining in the opening quarter. Smothered by Keegan Mur-

ray or DeMar DeRozan, Curry missed on his second attempt from near the top of the arc — after teammate Draymond Green scored the first six points on a pair of 3s and 7-footer Quinten Post also had two 3s. Curry hit the front rim with his next try, a 30-footer four minutes before halftime. He could sense how everybody in the building couldn't wait.

"I could feel the energy and the buzz from the beginning of the game after I made my first 3, even the second one I shot and missed it was an adrenaline rush, and they were with me every moment of the game tonight," Curry said.



Warriors guard Stephen Curry celebrates his 4,000th career 3-point basket during an NBA win against the Sacramento Kings in San Francisco, CA, US, on March 13, 2025. D.

● ROSS CAMERON/ IMAGN IMAGES

Cultural and architectural treasures of Bushehr

Iranica Desk

Bushehr, a hot, border province in southern Iran rich in history and culture, boasts numerous tourist attractions that reflect the historical and cultural identity of its people. From centuries-old historic buildings to museums and cultural centers showcasing the region's tangible and intangible heritage, Bushehr stands out as a significant destination for anyone interested in Iran's history and culture. Once recognized as a key commercial port, the city has witnessed many historical and cultural transformations, with remnants of its rich past still visible throughout the area.

The historic buildings of Bushehr symbolize Iranian architectural art in the south of the country, each telling stories from a distant past. These unique structures have played important social and economic roles and are now highlighted as attractions that draw visitors and researchers alike. Many have been transformed into museums and cultural centers, displaying artistic works, handicrafts, and other aspects of the province's cultural heritage, IRNA wrote.



● [chn.ir](#)

Taheri Mansion

One of the ancient structures in Bushehr is the Taheri Mansion, formerly known as the Amiriyyeh Mansion. During the Pahlavi era, this building served the municipality but is now administered by the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department as the Bushehr Anthropology Museum. This museum narrates the culture, lifestyle, and traditions of the region's people, making it a valuable attraction for those interested in Bushehr's history and culture.

This building features two floors with sea views and is constructed from various materials, including coral stones, plaster, teak wood, and sandalwood. The Bushehr Municipality has undertaken renovations to prevent significant damage to the structure. Inside the Anthropology Museum, visitors can explore various rooms and exhibits, including agricultural tools, a ship model, aerial maps of Bushehr port, a henna room, a kitchen, a traditional living room, a music room, and handicrafts.

Kazeruni Mansion

Kazeruni Mansion, one of the most beautiful and magnificent historical buildings in Bushehr, was constructed during the Qajar era in the historical Behbahani neighborhood. This building belonged to Hajj Abdul Rasul Kazeruni, a prominent merchant from Bushehr, and its geographic location and unique architectural style make it one of the city's most important historical attractions.

This two-story structure features exquisite arches and wooden columns, built in the traditional architectural style of southern Iran. The materials used for its construction include teak wood, plaster, coral stones, and lime, contributing to both its strength and beauty. The wooden windows and tall windcatchers enhance its visual appeal while providing adequate ventilation during hot seasons.



● [alibaba.ir](#)



● [wikipedia.org](#)

Malek Mansion

Malek Mansion is another magnificent historical building in the city of Bushehr, constructed in the late Qajar era. It belonged to Malek al-Tojar, a wealthy and influential merchant from southern Iran, and is an exemplary representation of traditional Bushehr architecture.

This three-story mansion is inspired by both French and Iranian architectural styles, featuring columned balconies, wooden windows, large windcatchers, and luxurious rooms. Notably, the mansion

is constructed with teak wood and local materials such as coral stones and plaster, making it resilient against the region's climatic conditions. Presently, the Cultural Heritage Department of Bushehr is responsible for its restoration and maintenance, with ongoing efforts to revive this important structure. Malek Mansion is considered a historical symbol of Bushehr, showcasing the grandeur of traditional architecture and the rich history of this ancient port. It was registered on Iran's Cultural Heritage List in 1998.



● [chn.ir](#)

Golshan Mansion

Golshan Mansion is one of the historical and magnificent buildings in Bushehr, dating back to the Qajar era. Situated near the shores of the Persian Gulf in the city's old fabric, it is regarded as one of the most significant historical sites due to its unique architecture. Constructed from local materials such as coral stones, teak wood, plaster, and stained glass, the mansion's design is well-suited to Bushehr's hot and humid climate. Key features include tall wind-

catchers, balconies overlooking the sea, and intricately designed wooden windows, all of which contribute to natural ventilation and a cooling effect within the space. Historically, the mansion served as the residence of a prominent merchant named Mohammad Golshan, after whom it is named. The interior is adorned with beautiful plasterwork and intricately carved wooden doors, reflecting the artistic achievements of Iranian architecture during that period.

Sa'adat School

Sa'adat School is one of the most important educational centers in Iran and a valuable structure in Bushehr, having significantly contributed to the city's scientific and cultural growth. Established in the late Qajar period at the initiative of Ahmad Khan Daryabigi, the then-governor of Bushehr, it is often referred to as the "Mother of Schools in Southern Iran" due to its pivotal role in the development of modern education. As the first modern school in southern Iran, Sa'adat School introduced a new style of education. Many prominent schol-

ars, writers, and politicians are among its notable alumni. Beyond teaching modern sciences, it fostered thought and social awareness among the people of Bushehr. The school building is constructed from local materials such as coral stones, plaster, and teak wood, featuring a central courtyard, classrooms with high ceilings, wide balconies, and large wooden windows that exemplify traditional southern Iranian architecture. Sa'adat School was registered as a national heritage site in Iran on January 30, 2000



● [wikipedia.org](#)



● [kajaro.com](#)

Raees Ali Delvari Museum

The house of Raees Ali Delvari, situated in the southeastern part of Delvar city in Bushehr Province, is a significant historical site from the late Qajar period. Now a museum, it commemorates Raees Ali Delvari, a commander in the fight against colonialism. Donated by his descendants to the province's Cultural Heritage Organization, the house is open to the public as a museum. It not only holds historical importance but also embodies the resilience of the people of southern Iran against foreign powers. Raees Ali Delvari was a prominent figure in the con-

stitutional movement and the leader of the uprising against British forces during World War I. His courage and patriotic spirit made him a symbol of resistance in Iranian history. The Raees Ali Delvari Museum aims to preserve and promote the history of this notable figure while raising awareness among new generations. It displays various artifacts, including documents, photographs, weapons, historical records, and personal items belonging to Delvari. In addition to showcasing the history of resistance, the museum also reflects aspects of the culture and lifestyle of the people in the region.



● [alibaba.ir](#)

Persian Gulf Maritime Museum

Persian Gulf Maritime Museum, showcases one of the most important aspects of Iranian history through its collection of historical and cultural artifacts related to sailing and the maritime life of the region. This museum beautifully presents not only the history of navigation but also the maritime arts, industries, and customs of the people along the Persian Gulf, offering visitors an excellent opportunity to engage with this facet of Iran's cultural heritage.

As one of Iran's key ports and a gateway to maritime trade, Bushehr has long been a hub for sailors and mariners, playing a significant role in the country's commercial and maritime history. Drawing on this rich historical background, the museum houses an array of artifacts and documents related to navigation, allowing visitors to explore the developments and advancements in this industry throughout the Persian Gulf.

Persian Gulf Museum of Medical History

The Persian Gulf Museum of Medical History is one of the province's key cultural and scientific attractions, focusing on the rich history of medicine in the region. Established to preserve and showcase medical and health achievements throughout various eras, particularly in the Persian Gulf and Iran, the museum features a collection of ancient medical instruments, scientific texts, historical documents, and artifacts related to the medical history of Iran and the surrounding region. Visitors can explore ancient therapeutic practices and the medical tools once used for diagnosing and treating diseases. In addition to its displays of medical instruments and documents, the mu-



● [yjc.ir](#)

seum highlights the contributions of Iranian physicians to the history of medical science. Notably, the museum is housed in the Dehdashti Mansion, which traces the evolution of medicine in Iran from ancient times to the modern era. It presents medical developments across various historical periods, including ancient times, Islamic civilization, the Safavid and Qajar periods, as well as during the Pahlavi era and after the victory of Islamic Revolution. The collection includes valuable artifacts, documents, books, photographs, and historical images.

The Dehdashti Mansion, originally a residential home for Haj Gholamhossein Dehdashti, a prominent merchant from Bushehr, is one of Bushehr's historic and magnificent buildings, dating back to the Qajar era. Built with materials such as stone, teak wood, gypsum, and colored glass, the structure features windcatchers for natural ventilation, demonstrating an intelligent adaptation to Bushehr's warm and humid climate. Its exquisite decorations, lattice windows, and spacious interiors make this mansion an outstanding example of traditional southern Iranian architecture.



● [yjc.ir](#)

Persian Gulf Maritime Commerce Museum

The Persian Gulf Maritime Commerce Museum is an important cultural center in Bushehr, dedicated to the rich history of maritime trade in the city and the broader Persian Gulf region. As one of Iran's ancient ports, Bushehr has played a crucial role in navigation and international trade. The museum offers visitors the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the historical developments of this industry in the

region through its collection of maritime tools, maps, historical documents, and items related to maritime commerce and transportation. A notable feature of this museum is its emphasis on the history of trade relations between Iran and various countries. In addition to showcasing maritime tools, the museum includes sections that display models of ships, photographs, and documents pertaining to commercial voyages and naval battles.

Iran seeks stronger regional presence for handicrafts industry

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Maryam Jalali, emphasized the economic, social, and cultural significance of the country's handicrafts sector, saying that regional markets are eager for Iranian handmade products.

Speaking on Thursday at a meeting between President Masoud Pezeshkian and artisans from Tehran Province, Jalali stressed the role of handicrafts in fostering cultural identity and entrepreneurship, IRNA reported.

"Handicrafts not only generate wealth and create jobs but also cultivate ethics and law-abiding generations with a deep love for Iran," she said.

During his visit to southeastern Tehran counties, President Pezeshkian met with local artists and industry stakeholders, engaged with regional officials, and participated in a virtual inauguration of several development projects. The visit aimed to address local concerns and strengthen government support for the handicrafts sector.

Jalali stressed the necessity of inter-agency collaboration between the

Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts to bolster social and economic cohesion through the handicrafts industry.

She relayed a message from Tourism Minister Reza Salehi Amiri, who was unable to attend the session, extending his regards and appreciation to the attendees.

Highlighting the sector's potential, Jalali noted, "Regional countries are thirsty for Iranian handicraft products, yet we remain overlooked in the discourse of development and trade."

She urged greater emphasis on traditional crafts alongside heavy and high-tech industries, warning that "handicrafts should not be overshadowed by technological advancements, as they narrate Iran's story and serve as a source of soft power."

Concluding her remarks, Jalali called



for comprehensive government and institutional support to safeguard the

nation's cultural heritage. "The handicrafts community needs full-fledged

backing to preserve Iran's identity for future generations," she added.

'The Legend of Sepehr' wins two international accolades

Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian animated film 'The Legend of Sepehr' directed by Emad Rahmani and Mehrdad Mehrabi and produced by Mehdi Jafari Jozani, won two international awards.

Following its debut at the 43rd Fajr Film Festival, the film embarked on an international festival tour, securing the Best Animated Feature award at the 2025 Kaya Film Festival in Turkey, IRNA reported.

The animated feature, which follows the heroic journey of Sepehr and Babu, also claimed the Best Animation award at the 2025 New York International Film Awards

(NYIFA), reinforcing its strong presence among global productions.

In the Persian-language version of 'The Legend of Sepehr,' voice acting was performed by Kazem Sayahi, Akbar Manani, Shayan Shambati, Saeed Moghadam Manesh, Azam Delbari, Mohammad Loghmanian, Parsa Kajouri, and Hasti Salah.

The New York International Film Awards (NYIFA) is a recognized IMDb-qualifying festival that provides a platform for independent filmmakers worldwide. Similarly, the Kaya International Film Festival (KAIFF) is a prominent, government-supported event that showcases and promotes emerging talent in global independent cinema.



Filmmaker Salehi Nezhad joins jury of US festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian documentary filmmaker and producer Mostafa Salehi Nezhad was selected as a jury member for the Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival, a prominent Oscar-qualifying event in California, US.

The festival, known for its focus on socially and culturally significant documentaries, provides a crucial platform for films vying for Academy Award recognition. Winners of the festival become eligible for Oscar consideration, IRNA reported.

Salehi Nezhad, whose works have been showcased at Oscar-accredited festivals and recognized by Canadian film institutions, will judge entries alongside two acclaimed jury members from the US and Spain, both of whom have received awards such as the Emmy and the Oscar.

His documentary 'Meeting with the Undertaker' was recently honored at India's IFFC



cultural and tourism short film festival, while his English-language documentary 'Cold Wind Blows' was selected for the Pune International Short Film Festival in India. Also, one of his films was featured at Canada's 29th Rendezvous with Madness festival. Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival draws international submissions from countries including the US, Japan, Russia, Finland, Canada, Iran, and Scotland, with many competing for a path to the Academy Awards.

Parviz, Iran's oldest chimpanzee, dies at 70



Parviz, Iran's oldest chimpanzee and one of the world's longest-living members of the species, died at over 70 years old due to age-related complications, officials at Tehran's Eram Zoo announced on March 13.

According to the zoo's public relations office, Parviz passed away peacefully while resting in his enclosure. The chimpanzee had

been a symbol of the zoo since its establishment and was widely known among visitors, ILNA reported.

Zoo veterinarian Ali Taheri said Parviz had exhibited signs of illness over the past ten days, including weakness and loss of appetite. Medical examinations revealed a severe arrhythmia, an extremely weak pulse, and pale

mucous membranes, indicative of significant age-related health deterioration.

Qassem Mohammadi, director of Eram Zoo, previously stated that around 60 percent of the zoo's animals are elderly. Efforts had been made to transfer the aging chimpanzee group to a specialized sanctuary in Kenya and bring in a younger troop, but negotiations remain unresolved.

Parviz, a well-recognized figure at the zoo, also had a brief stint in cinema, having appeared in a feature film during his lifetime. Chimpanzees share approximately 98.6 percent of their genetic makeup with humans, making them our closest living relatives in the animal kingdom. Known for their intelligence, complex social behaviors, and ability to use tools, chimpanzees are considered one of the most remarkable species.

Iran's environment chief calls for better policies amid growing ecological crises

Social Desk

Iran's environment chief, Shina Ansari, warned that the country is facing severe environmental challenges, largely due to past neglect in policymaking, particularly in water resources and energy management.

In a statement marking 200 days in office, Ansari stressed the urgency of integrating environmental concerns into national development strategies, ILNA reported.

"We have prioritized strengthening environmental discourse at the governance level," she said, highlighting her agency's efforts in presenting key reports on waste management, air pollution, land subsidence, and marine-focused development to the government.

The Department of Environment (DoE) has also been pushing for international support in wetland conservation and air pollution control, while a national task force on air quality has intensified focus on fuel standards, vehicle scrapping, and electrifying public transport.

Despite challenges, Ansari pointed to progress,



including regulatory changes to accelerate renewable energy projects, enhanced environmental monitoring through inter-agency cooperation, and a 47% budget increase for the organization in the coming year.

She acknowledged the complexity of Iran's ecological crisis, exacerbated by economic and political factors, but stressed the need for stronger inter-agency collaboration and public engagement to drive meaningful reforms.