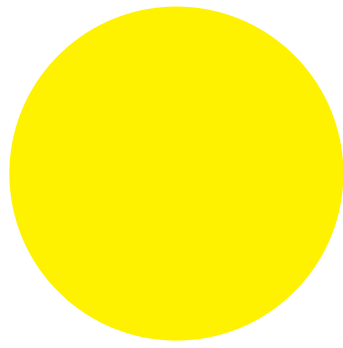


Pezeshkian says Iran favors negotiation, not afraid of threats

2 >



# Iran Daily

Vol. 7834 • Sunday, May 18, 2025 • Ordibehesht 28, 1404 • Dhu al-Qadah 20, 1446 • 100,000 rials • 8 pages



> [irandaily.ir](http://irandaily.ir)

| [newspaper.irandaily.ir](http://newspaper.irandaily.ir)

| IranDailyWeb

## Trump lying about using power to establish regional peace: *Leader*

2 >

### National communication projects unveiled

**Minister:** Major space industry projects to be completed by yearend 3 >



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (C) visits the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology's achievements on the sidelines of a ceremony unveiling three national projects, held to mark World Telecommunication Day on May 17, 2025. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

#### Pushing pixels, boundaries in Iran's digital art movement

INTERVIEW  
EXCLUSIVE



He has been called the architect of Iran's digital revolution. From sacred poetry to generative code, Mohammad Ali Famori is transforming pixels into philosophy and glitch into global dialogue. As the founder of Platform 101 and the artist behind Iran's contribution to Expo 2025 in Japan, Famori is not just curating art, he is redefining it. But what lies behind his black-and-white aesthetic, and why is "error" his most powerful creative tool? In an interview with Iran Daily, he talks about the metaphysics of disruption, and the challenges of pioneering a digital movement in a landscape still catching up. See page 8 >



#### Iran's largest rooftop solar farm launched in Alborz Province

3 >



What was Trump's signal to the PKK?

#### End of an era, new chapter for Kurds

INTERVIEW

4 >



#### AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup: Consolation as Iran beat host to book World Cup ticket

6 >

#### Collaboration in books, publishing to cement Iran, Oman ties

INTERVIEW  
EXCLUSIVE

3 >





# Trump lying about using power to establish regional peace: *Leader*

## International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei asserted on Saturday that US President Donald Trump was lying about using power to establish peace in region. "He (Trump) and American officials, US administrations, used power in order to massacre Gaza, to wage war wherever they could, and to support their own mercenaries," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a meeting with a group of teachers and educators from different cities and provinces across the country. Ayatollah Khamenei added that the US uses its power to give "10-ton bombs to the Zionist (Israeli) regime to drop on the

heads of Gaza's children."

The Leader underlined that power, nevertheless, could be used to foster peace and security, and that explains why Iran is striving every day to boost its national might.

The Leader's comments came the day after Trump concluded a four-day tour of Persian Gulf countries – Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates – which was followed quickly by the start of a new Israeli military offensive in the Gaza Strip.

"None of the statements made during the US president's visit to the region are worthy of a response at all. The level of Trump's remarks is so low that it is a source of embarrassment for the

speaker and a source of disgrace for the American nation," the Leader said. Elsewhere in his remarks, Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the US president is offering regional Arab states a model that, in his own words, these countries cannot live without the US for even ten days.

"This model has definitely failed," the Leader noted. "With the efforts by regional nations, the US must and will leave this region."

"Undoubtedly, the source of corruption, war, and conflict in this region is the Zionist regime – a dangerous, deadly cancerous tumor that must be uprooted; it will be uprooted," he said at the event in Tehran.

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addresses a group of teachers and educators from different provinces across the country in Tehran on May 17, 2025.

● khamenei.ir



## Pezeshkian says Iran favors negotiation, not afraid of threats



Masoud Pezeshkian  
● president.ir

### International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday reiterated that the Islamic Republic favors negotiation and dialogue and is not afraid of threats.

"We are not seeking war, we favor negotiation and dialogue, but we are not afraid of threats either, and we will in no way retreat from our legal rights," Pezeshkian told a gathering of navy officers.

Praising Iran's valuable gains in various fields, the president said, "It is not the case that they imagine if they threaten us, we will retreat from our human and irrefutable rights. We will not back down and not abandon our proud military and academic, scientific, and nuclear achievements."

Since April 12, Iran and the US have held four rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program, with US President Donald Trump threatening Iran with military attack if no agreement is reached.

Negotiations have gotten into the expert level – meaning the two sides are trying to see if they can reach any agreement on the details of any possible deal. But one major sticking point remains Iran's enrichment of uranium, which Tehran insists

it must be allowed to do and the Trump administration insists the Islamic Republic must give up.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Friday reasserted the Islamic Republic's non-negotiable position on uranium enrichment, emphasizing its commitment to exercise legal rights under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) while maintaining a logical stance.

"Iran, a longstanding Non-Proliferation Treaty member and initiator of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in West Asia, has demonstrated unwavering commitment and good faith through engaging in indirect negotiations with the United States," Araghchi said.

### No compromise on legal rights

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to build confidence regarding the continued peaceful nature of its nuclear program, but it cannot compromise on the inalienable and legal right of the Iranian nation to benefit from peaceful nuclear energy, including enrichment, which is granted to every member state under the NPT," Araghchi added.

The Iranian diplomat also denounced the US officials' conflicting statements about the nuclear talks. US top negotiator in the nuclear talks Steve Witkoff at one point suggested that Iran could enrich uranium at 3.67%, then later began saying that all Iranian enrichment must stop. The US president and secretary of state have also said that Iran should abandon its uranium enrichment program.

### Trump's threats

The Iranian president said on Saturday that Iran is not intimidated by the US president's threats and will not forgo its legitimate nuclear rights under pressure.

"No one but Trump himself believes his words against the Iranian nation; on the one hand, he speaks of peace and stability, and on the other hand, he threatens with the most sophisticated tools for homicide, and with contradictory statements, he simultaneously sends messages of peace, bloodshed, and insecurity," Pezeshkian said.

In his latest remarks about the ongoing negotiations between Tehran and Washington, Trump said on Friday that Iran had a US proposal about its nuclear program and knows it needs to move quickly to resolve a decades-long dispute.

"More importantly, they know they have to move quickly or something bad — something bad's going to happen," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One after departing the United Arab Emirates on Friday, according to an audio recording of the remarks.

However, Araghchi in a post on X said Tehran had not received a US proposal. "There is no scenario in which Iran abandons its hard-earned right to (uranium) enrichment for peaceful purposes..." he said.

Araghchi warned on Saturday that Washington's constant change of stance prolongs nuclear talks.

"It is absolutely unacceptable that America repeatedly defines a new framework for negotiations that prolongs the process," Araghchi said.

## West denounces Israel's deadly strikes on Gaza

### International Desk

Israel's relentless strikes on the Gaza Strip even prompted Western countries to react as the regime has killed hundreds of Palestinians over the past days.

Palestinian health authorities said on Saturday that at least 146 people had been confirmed killed in the third day of Israel's latest bombing campaign, one of the deadliest waves of strikes since a cease-fire collapsed in March. Many hundreds more wounded were being treated in hospital, and countless others were still buried under rubble.

Israel says it is mobilizing to seize more ground in Gaza in a new campaign, dubbed "Operation Gideon's Chariots", which follows a visit this week to the Middle East by US President Donald Trump. It has halted all supplies entering Gaza since the start of March, leading to rising international concern over the plight of the territory's 2.3 million residents.

Israel's military said it was conducting extensive strikes and mobilizing troops with the aim of achieving "operational control" in parts of Gaza.

Gaza health authorities said most of those killed on Saturday were in towns on the northern edge of the territory, including Beit Lahiya and the Jabalia refugee camp, as well as in the southern city of Khan Younis. They said 459 people had been injured.

Germany's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Saturday that Berlin is "deeply concerned" about the situation in Gaza. The offensive "could put the lives of the remaining hostages, including those of German hostages, in danger," said the ministry statement.

"A broad military offensive also risks worsening further the catastrophic humanitarian situation for Gaza's population and the remaining hostages," it added.



● AFP

### 'Enough with the attacks'

Also on Saturday, Italy urged Israel to stop its military strikes, with Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani saying, "Enough with the attacks."

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Tuesday that Israel's withholding of aid to Gaza is "shameful" and suggested that US President Donald Trump should threaten a weapons embargo in order to pressure the Israeli officials. Israeli forces had told people to leave the northern areas on Friday. At an Arab League summit, Egypt's President Abdel-Fatah al-Sisi, whose country mediates Gaza peace talks alongside Qatar, said Israel's actions aimed at "obliterating and annihilating" the Palestinians and "ending their existence in the Gaza Strip."

### Halt massacre in Gaza

Appearing at the summit as a guest, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez appealed for increased pressure "to halt the massacre in Gaza".

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres told the summit that "we need a permanent cease-fire, now."

Guterres said he was "alarmed by reported plans by Israel to expand ground operations and more."

"We reject the repeated displacement of the Gaza population, along with any question of forced displacement outside of Gaza." Since the beginning of Israel's attacks on Gaza in October 2023, at least 53,000 Palestinians, mostly civilians, have been killed.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi

Cartoonist

## Iran FM: Armenia-Azerbaijan peace deal to beget lasting stability

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the speedy implementation of the peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan would help establish lasting stability and security in the region.

"Iran calls for the acceleration of the conclusion of a peace agreement between the two countries to stabilize lasting stability and security and assist in the process of comprehensive development and progress in the region," Araghchi said in a meeting with Secretary of Armenia's Security Council Armen Grigoryan in Tehran on Saturday, Press TV reported.

The Islamic Republic would spare no effort to expedite the signing and implementation of the document between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as it enjoys good relations with both sides, he added.

Armenia and Azerbaijan in March agreed on the text of a peace agreement to end nearly four decades of conflict between the South Caucasus countries, with Yerevan agreeing to surrender its claim to Karabakh.

The long-disputed region of Karabakh was at the center of two costly wars between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2020 and the 1990s. The region has always been internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, whose troops retook it in a 24-hour offensive.

Grigoryan, for his part, pointed to very good and positive ties between Armenia and Iran and expressed his country's firm determination to promote all-out relations with Tehran, particularly in the economic and trade sectors. He elaborated on the latest develop-



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) and Secretary of Armenia's Security Council Armen Grigoryan meet in Tehran on May 17, 2025.  
● IRAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

ments regarding the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty and commended Iran's stance on support for Armenia's national security and territorial integrity and the peace agreement.





# National communication projects unveiled

Minister: Major space industry projects to be completed by yearend

**Economy Desk**

Three national projects in the fields of smart communications, technological innovation, and digital equity were unveiled during a ceremony commemorating World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, attended by President Masoud Pezeshkian. The projects, which focused on communication infrastructure, innovation support and expanding connectivity equity, were inaugurated and put into operation, as reported by IRNA.

The event, held at the Space Research Institute of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology on Saturday morning, also marked the beginning of Artificial Intelligence Week and was attended by Minister of Information and Communications Technology Sattar Hashemi.

Addressing the ceremony, the communication minister announced significant progress in Iran's space industry this year, stating, "Major projects such as the Chabahar Spaceport, and Salmas and Chenaran infrastructures will reach completion this year."

He emphasized that the rapid growth of the space sector has not slowed but "gained even greater momentum."

Highlighting advancements in satellite development and project upgrades, Hashemi cited Chabahar, Salmas, and Chenaran as key initiatives set to achieve

milestones this year.

**Expanding national network capacity**

The three projects unveiled on Saturday — ranging from infrastructure development to fostering tech ecosystems and enhancing rural connectivity — outline a roadmap for the country's digital future. The first project significantly boosted Iran's core network capacity to 28 terabits per second across 285 locations in 31 provinces, leveraging domestic expertise. This marks a 62% increase in national transmission capacity, from 45,000 to 73,000 gigabits per second, enabling faster, higher-quality connectivity. The upgrade also lays the groundwork for IT, AI, and 5G technologies. Since the current administration took office in July, international internet traffic has risen by 28%, while data transit and international collaborations surged by 50%, reflecting strides in data diplomacy.

**Fava Galaxy a platform for tech innovation**

The second project, the integrated Fava Galaxy platform, aims to drive technological leaps by offering financial support, specialized resources, investment partnerships, and market stimulation to startups, tech teams, and knowledge-based companies. Designed to align with the Seventh De-



velopment Plan, the platform delivers such services through a transparent, agile, and intelligent framework.

**Bridging rural connectivity gap**

The third initiative targets underserved rural areas, providing communication

access to 1,478 villages as the development of communication equity, with a focus on deprived and rural areas, was prioritized. Since July, access to communication services has been provided in 1,478 villages, and in the last few months alone,

155,088 households and over 525,000 people in rural areas have gained access to high-speed mobile internet. Over the past eight months, internet coverage in rural areas has increased by 4%, narrowing the digital divide and advancing communication equity nationwide.

## Kharg's renovated tanks raise crude storage capacity by 2m barrels



**Economy Desk**

The official commissioning of renovated Tanks No. 25 and 26 at Iran's southern Kharg Island oil terminal increased the country's crude oil storage capacity by two million barrels.

The two one-million-barrel tanks, after completing reconstruction and modernization of safety and environmental systems, were returned to service on Saturday in the presence of the heads of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and the Iranian Oil Terminals Company (IOTC), IRNA reported.

During the visit of Hamid Bovard, the NIOC head, to Kharg Island,

the completion of renovation and overhaul operations for Tanks No. 25 and 26 was announced, marking their formal inauguration. Each tank has a capacity of one million barrels of crude oil, and their return to service adds a total of two million barrels to the country's oil storage capacity.

At the commissioning ceremony, Abbas Asadrouz, CEO of IOTC, described the project as "a symbol of the expertise of domestic specialists and a strategic step in developing oil industry infrastructure," emphasizing its full compliance with safety and environmental standards.

Officials stated that commissioning these two tanks "not only strengthens export stability but also enables flexible production management and enhances Iran's position in the global energy market."

Asadrouz also highlighted the strategic role of Kharg Island in Iran's oil export chain, affirming the company's readiness to support maximum oil exports.

"Iranian oil terminals, with their specialized, infrastructural, and logistical capabilities, play a central role in achieving the oil industry's key objectives," he said.

"Kharg Terminal, as Iran's largest and most advanced oil export hub, is the beating heart of the country's oil exports, with over 90% of exported oil shipped to global markets through this terminal," he added.

He further noted, "Kharg's geopolitical position in the Persian Gulf, proximity to major oilfields, sufficient water depth for ultra-large crude carriers (ULCCs), and advanced storage, loading, and export infrastructure make this terminal unrivaled in the region."

Asadrouz emphasized the terminal's operational readiness, "Despite challenges, Kharg Terminal — with its storage tanks, export jetties, precision measurement systems, and smart control systems — can support simultaneous loading of multiple tankers, ensuring export stability under all conditions."

## Iran's largest rooftop solar farm launched in Alborz Province

**Economy Desk**

A one-megawatt rooftop solar power plant, one of the largest of its kind in Iran, was inaugurated in the industrial town of Nazarabad, Alborz Province, during a ceremony attended by the vice president.

Amid ongoing energy shortages, the expansion of industrial-scale solar power plants has become vital for sustainable industrial production. In line with the objective, Alborz Province's largest rooftop solar facility — with a one-megawatt capacity — has been installed by private investors on the roof of a food processing factory in Nazarabad industrial town and connected to the national power grid, Tasnim reported.

The plant was officially commissioned at a ceremony

presided over by Shina Ansari, the vice president and head of Department of the Environment, alongside provincial officials and industry executives.

During the event, Ansari underscored the government's commitment to reducing fossil fuel consumption, stating, "Expanding renewable energy, particularly solar power, is a top government priority. Over the past year, Iran's solar power capacity has grown from 1,300 to over 1,700 megawatts."

She also highlighted the significant importation of solar equipment into the country and announced streamlined environmental permitting processes for such projects.

Government offices have been required to source at least 20% of their electricity from renewable energy, with President Masoud

Pezeshkian having issued a two-month compliance period for government agencies to install solar panels, effective June 21.

According to Babak Amiri, the deputy head of the company specializing in large-scale solar installations, "The procurement, installation, and grid connection of this rooftop facility were completed within two months, adhering to the highest quality standards."

He discussed the project's execution, adding, "The goal was to balance aesthetic considerations with optimal use of the rooftop space. This project leverages technical expertise imported from Germany and refined domestically over the past decade. The plant employs 700-watt solar panels and the most advanced inverters available in the market."

## Collaboration in books, publishing to cement Iran, Oman ties

**By Sadeq Dehqan**  
Staff writer

### INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

A representative of Oman's Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth announced expanded cooperation between Iran and Oman in the printing and publishing sector, stating, "Collaboration in the field of books can strengthen relations between the two countries."

Fahd Al-Rahbi told Iran Daily that, "Oman has been among the active participants in the international section of the Tehran Book Fair in recent years. We believe attend-

ing this exhibition can enhance cultural exchanges between Iran and Oman."

"This year, Oman has brought over 55 titles in literary, cultural, and historical subjects to the Tehran Book Fair. A significant portion of our books focus on children's literature and introducing Omani customs and culture," he added.

Rahbi described Iran and Oman as "culturally close due to their profound similarities," emphasizing, "Our goal in participating in this exhibition is to further introduce Oman to the Iranian people and familiarize them with our culture."

Referring to Oman's efforts to promote peace and friendship in

the region, he said, "The message of peace and friendship lies at the heart of Omani culture. We desire all people worldwide to live in harmony, prosperity, and with strong mutual relations."

"Significant developments are planned in book publishing and bilateral cooperation. Many books will be translated from Arabic to Persian and vice versa. As a first step, a collection of Omani poetry and literature has been translated from Arabic to Persian, followed by translation of Persian-language poets' works into Arabic," he noted.

Regarding Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi's recent visit to Oman, he said, "During this visit, Araghchi unveiled the Arabic

translation of his book The Power of Negotiation (Qowat al-Tafawudh in Arabic) at the Muscat International Book Fair."

The 36th Tehran International Book Fair opened May 7 and ran through May 17. This edition featured 2,363 domestic publishers showcasing their works across 75,000 square meters of covered space. The fair included sections for general publishers, children/young/ adult books, educational and academic publications, digital publishers, and an international section. Countries participating in the international segment included Iraq, Turkey, Qatar, the UAE, Yemen, Tajikistan, Venezuela, Kazakhstan, and others.



Fahd Al-Rahbi  
● IRAN DAILY



What was Trump's signal to the PKK?

# End of an era, new chapter for Kurds

## INTERVIEW

Apparently, the secret negotiations between representatives of the Kurdish movement in Turkey and Abdullah Öcalan, the imprisoned leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), finally paid off. These talks led to an earlier statement from Öcalan and now the disarmament and dissolution of the PKK.

Following this announcement — welcomed by the Erdoğan government — the topic of disarmament and dissolution quickly became a major political talking point in Turkey. The official news of the party's dissolution, which had been founded to carve out an independent Kurdish homeland, grabbed headlines worldwide.

The main question is: How does a political-militant party, nearly 47 years old and engaged in armed struggle since 1984, suddenly call it a day?

Mohammad Ali Dastmali, a researcher on Turkey, Syria, and Kurdish affairs, speaks about the reasons behind the dissolution.

**How do you assess the dissolution and disarmament of the PKK? How significant is what's happened?**

**DASTMALI:** The PKK has long since lost its grip inside Turkey and no longer poses a serious security threat to the country. So, from a security perspective, it's not a game-changer. But symbolically, socially, and historically, we're looking at a scene where words like "dissolution" and "disarmament" are front and center. These are no small matters. Remember, even before World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the first Kurdish armed movements — led by Abdul Salam Barzani and others — kicked off over 115 years ago. Now, with one of the oldest and most significant armed movements pulling down the shutters, it signals that this model has run its course and we're unlikely to see another armed group spring up in its place. This marks a new chapter in the Middle East.

**Why did this group, after nearly 50 years, make such a decision?**

Öcalan himself addressed part of this in his statement, "The PKK's raison d'être and meaning have ended, and its time is up." He also noted that, "the PKK emerged under two main influences: first, the post-Cold War environment and the spread of socialist ideas from the Soviet Union; second, the harsh policies of the Turkish state, which denied Kurdish existence and identity." These are key points, but, in my view, another crucial factor is the unprecedented and rapid rise of Turkey's military and security forces in countering the PKK's guerrilla tactics. Turkey, as NATO's second-largest army, locked horns with the PKK for years. Yet, guerrilla warfare and Iraq's unique geography and politics allowed the PKK to hold out. However, advances over the past decade in aerial surveillance and drone technology tipped the scales. More than a hundred senior PKK commanders and fighters were taken out by Turkish drones and a robust intelligence network, pinning down the PKK and making it impossible to carry on as before.

**How important is the role of external actors, such as the US, in this matter?**

Without a doubt, outside players have been instrumental, especially Trump's America. There's no question that the US, in Syria, openly encouraged the Kurds close to Öcalan to sit down with the new Damascus government. Trump's signal to the PKK likely said: "The situation in Syria and the region has turned upside down. If Turkey and the new Syrian government come after



Mohammad Ali Dastmali

you, there's nothing we can do to back you up — we have bigger fish to fry." Of course, the US isn't the only player, and broader Middle Eastern developments have also come into play.

**Are you referring solely to events in Syria, or do earlier developments factor in?**

Specifically, I mean events after October 7, 2023. If Operation Al-Aqsa Storm hadn't happened, if Assad's government hadn't fallen, and if things hadn't become so tough for Hamas, Jihad, Hezbollah, and the Ansarullah (Houthis), the PKK wouldn't have

moved so quickly toward dissolution and disarmament. All these events played a part.

**Why haven't the details of the agreement been made public?**

Turkey is a unique case in many respects. Shadowy, violent groups are active, infiltrators of the Turkish Army and National Intelligence Organization have a high capacity for sabotage, and nationalist associations known as the Turkish Idealist Hearths are all armed and dangerous — each could throw a spanner in the works. Even within the PKK, it's not out of the question that some might refuse to go along with the new reality. So, the government has opted to keep the details under wraps to keep spoilers at bay.

**So, you believe concessions were made to Öcalan and the PKK, but it's not expedient to announce them yet?**

Absolutely. There are conces-

sions, but they don't match the PKK's previous demands. I'd call them "minimal concessions". You might ask: Why did they settle for less? The reality on the ground left them no other choice. Still, Öcalan's move was bold. Now, we'll have to see whether, in his new office on Imrali Island, he lets younger and middle-aged Kurdish political cadres take the reins, or if he insists on calling the shots himself. Time will tell.

**Who is the real winner in this process?**

Bringing the old cycle of violence and military conflict to a close is undoubtedly in the Kurds' best interest and can be seen as a positive achievement in peace studies. But if we're to be precise about the "winner," it's really a Turkish quartet: President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, head of the ruling AK Party; İbrahim Kalın, head of

the National Intelligence Organization; Hakan Fidan, foreign minister; and Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the far-right Nationalist Movement Party and Erdoğan's key political partner for the past 11 years.

With the ongoing economic crisis making life tough for many Turks, nothing could have come to Erdoğan's rescue like a media blitz touting his "successful leadership in ending a 50-year threat." Now, he has a new ace up his sleeve to show that his party and government aren't out of their depth. This is nothing short of a victory.

There's also a chance that Kurdish civilian politicians like Selahattin Demirtaş, İdris Baluken, Fırat Anlı, and others will now have more room to make their mark politically and socially. In the past, they had to toe the line set by PKK leaders, but now they'll have more freedom.

**What's in store for Erdoğan's opponents?**

We're looking at a complicated equation. With Ekrem İmamoğlu, the former mayor of Istanbul and Erdoğan's strongest rival, behind bars, things have gotten tougher for the opposition, especially the Republican People's Party. If Erdoğan's government offers concessions to the Kurds to secure their votes for constitutional reforms and the 2018 elections, the opposition will find it harder to keep up. Still, it's not all smooth sailing for Erdoğan. The PKK's dissolution is great news fodder and PR for Erdoğan's base, but it's not a lasting achievement. If he can't pull Turkey out of its economic tailspin and if the AKP government's inefficiency isn't resolved, his opponents still stand a good chance of taking power.

The article first appeared in Persian on KhabarOnline news agency.



Members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) begrudgingly raise their hands during the PKK's 12th Party Congress, where the group's dissolution was announced, at an undisclosed location in Northern Iraq on May 12, 2025.

● X

“

It appears that Trump's message to the PKK was clear, "The situation in Syria and the region has turned upside down. If Turkey and the new Syrian government come after you, there's nothing we can do to back you up — we have bigger fish to fry."



Four women members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) are seized along with six others (not pictured) during a massive attack by Turkish troops on PKK mountain hideouts in the eastern Tunceli province on April 17, 1995.

● REUTERS





# Turkey at crossroads

## General amnesty impossible

**INTERVIEW** *Peace does not mean the absence of war, but rather a transformation of relationships. This sentiment sums up the current state of affairs between Turkey and the PKK, highlighting that a change in relations can be construed as progress in the peace process even when war has been absent for some time. Many analysts argue that the announcement of the Kurdistan Workers' Party's (PKK) dissolution does not spell the end of the conflict altogether, but rather marks a turning point in the group's relationship with Ankara — one that could pave the way for further developments down the line. The dissolution of the PKK must now be seen as a major development on the Middle Eastern political and security stage. This move, which has sparked widespread reactions from governments and various institutions, has given rise to numerous questions about the group's future and its impact on the Kurdish situation. Key issues crop up regarding the legal process behind the dissolution and its consequences for the PKK's leaders and members. Shifts in political relationships and structures could, in turn, bring about new dynamics in Kurdish society and politics, calling into question the very notions of peace and security in the region. In the following interview, Turkish legal expert Cüneyd Altıparmak provides critical insights that shed light on the issue.*

As you know, the PKK has announced its dissolution. Does this mean the conflict is over? What legal steps will follow from here?

**ALTIPARMAK:** The PKK's move is significant not only for Turkey but also for our neighbors, as Turkey has launched the "terror-free Turkey" initiative. The aim has been to wipe out terrorism from Turkey, and we can say this has largely paid off. It's crucial to look back on the steps that led us here. Turkey's anti-terror campaign has picked up steam, especially after the July 15, 2016, coup attempt, and the country has even taken the fight beyond its borders. As a result, the PKK and its affiliates have found themselves hemmed in from all sides, leaving them with no option but to call it quits — which is exactly what happened. The organization, which has lost its grip over the past five years, is no longer capable of mounting a serious fight or hitting back effectively. This weakness forced the PKK to back down. From here on out, there's no need for additional legislation. The current legal framework sets the stage for wrapping up this process. However, this situation signals that Turkey's political landscape will open up, giving us the chance to draft a constitution fit for this century. In this light, these days stand out as a genuine turning point for Turkey. Turkey wants this process to play out not just for itself, but for the whole region since its spiritual borders stretch beyond its physical boundaries.

Since the peace process began between the PKK and Ankara, there's been talk of "the right to hope" for Abdullah Öcalan. What does this mean, and is it possible for Öcalan to benefit from it? When we talk about the right to hope, the first thing that springs



Cüneyd Altıparmak

to mind is the issue of execution. In this context, the right to hope concerns those serving life sentences. It refers to a situation where "a prisoner" — regardless of their sentence — can, after a certain period, get a shot at returning to society and reassessing their behavior. This right does not apply across the board. It may only kick in for those who meet certain conditions. The first requirement is that the sentence must be served out in line with regulations. In Turkey, the maximum time anyone can

spend behind bars — regardless of their sentence — is set by law. For aggravated life sentences, it's 36 years; for standard life and fixed-term sentences, it's 30 years. However, the European Court of Human Rights, in its ruling on the Vinter and Others vs. the UK cases, ordered that all "whole-life" prisoners would be entitled to a review of their sentence within 25 years of being sentenced. Looking at this issue solely through the lens of Öcalan's case would be a mistake as others in his position may also push for the right to hope. Without a specific legal framework, this issue cannot move forward. Moreover, according to statements from the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), there are no such expectations — no one has gone out on a limb for Öcalan's freedom. I think the fact that this

issue has come up at this stage should be seen as symbolic, showing that the government is making a genuine effort.

**What legal process awaits PKK leaders and members in Qandil? Can they return to Turkey? What will happen to the PKK's weapons?**

Article 221 of Turkey's Penal Code covers this issue. Those who have committed terrorist crimes are more likely to be singled out from those who haven't. Leaders, as opposed to supporters, and those who are armed, as opposed to those not involved in fighting, may benefit from the repentance provisions in Turkey's constitution. I believe a general amnesty is still off the table, as these matters will only come up for discussion once the PKK's disso-

lution, with all its elements, has been fully carried out. For now, the focus is on the PKK disbanding entirely, laying down its arms, and calling a halt to its activities against Turkey. While there may be some changes in how punishments are handed down, there will be no legal leniency. The repentance provisions include measures for reduced or waived sentences, but these do not extend to all offenders. In particular, the legal status of the leadership will stand apart. There are various formulas for the PKK to give up its arms — these could involve abandoning weapons in Syria and Iraq or destroying them under government supervision. We will see how this plays out as the process unfolds.

*The article first appeared in Persian on Mehr news agency.*



Jailed PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan (sitting) appears at his trial in 1999. ● MUSTAFA ABADAN/AP



Article 221 of Turkey's Penal Code covers this issue. Those who have committed terrorist crimes are more likely to be singled out from those who haven't. Leaders, as opposed to supporters, and those who are armed, as opposed to those not involved in fighting, may benefit from the repentance provisions in Turkey's constitution. I believe a general amnesty is still off the table, as these matters will only come up for discussion once the PKK's dissolution, with all its elements, has been fully carried out.



Turkish soldiers stand outside a courtroom at the Silivri prison and courthouse complex in Silivri near Istanbul, Turkey. ● ÜMIT BEKTAŞ/REUTERS





## AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup:

## Consolation as Iran beat host to book World Cup ticket

**AFC** — Iran overcame China in the third-place playoff of the AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup on Saturday to seal their place at the FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup in the Philippines.

The two-time champions ended their campaign on a high in front of a raucous partisan crowd at the Hohhot Sports Centre, as the 3-1 victory ensured that they will join Thailand— and Japan at the inaugural World Cup come November. Given the high stakes, it was perhaps no surprise that both teams started tentatively as they probed for openings without overcommitting.

But Iran then took the initiative as Fereshteh Khosravi, Maral Torkaman and Fereshteh Karimi went close, before Liu Danping saved efforts from Elham Anafteh and Karimi.

There was a scare when Fatemeh Rahmati nearly put the ball in her own net, with only the outstretched left leg of Farzaneh Tavasoli preventing disaster. The Iran goalkeeper then fielded Yu Ting's rasping strike as her side broke the deadlock shortly after on 11 minutes.

Liu did superbly to repel attempts from Rahmati and then Nasimeh Gholami on the rebound, but was helpless to prevent the latter from



setting up Torkaman to score her fifth goal in six games from unmissable range.

Tavasoli, the veteran, then demonstrated that she can still cut it at

this level with a brilliant stop off Zhang Rui's volley. Seconds later, the 38-year-old made a sprawling save from Ke Yaoxiang's grounder, before getting up immediately to

push the rebound away from the lurking Zhang. Silenced at the break, the home fans were on their feet within a minute of the restart.

Receiving the ball on the right, Su Jiahong pulled off a stunning piece of skill by leaving the onrushing Tavasoli for dead with a perfect Marseille turn before calmly



Iranian girls celebrate a goal during a 3-1 victory over China at the AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup in Hohhot, China, on May 17, 2025.

● AFC

picking out Cao Jiayi to tap in the equaliser.

The upper hand was with China PR now and Nastaran Moghimi made a vital intervention to prevent Ke from getting to a loose ball, while Tavasoli pulled off another top reflex save from the ensuing corner to deny Zhang.

Despite being under the cosh, it was Iran who scored next as they caught the reds shirts out at a corner. Gholami rolled the set-piece to Moghimi, who had ghosted into the area, to sidefoot a shot that came off the left post and back into goal off the unfortunate Liu on 30 minutes.

Lady Luck deserted China PR at the other end three minutes later as Zou Yinglan's attempt beat Tavasoli but not the right post.

The home side brought out the power play and threw everything in a bid to take the game to extra time, but to no avail and it was Torkaman who finished them off in the dying seconds with a long-range strike into an unguarded net.

## AVC Men's Champions League:

## Foolad undone by Osaka Bluteon in semis

## Sports Desk

Foolad Sirjan's bid for a third Asian crown in four years finished in vain as the Iranian champion suffered a 3-1 (25-19, 19-25, 25-18, 25-19) last-four defeat against Osaka Bluteon at the revamped AVC Men's Champions League in Kyoto, Japan, on Saturday. Cuban outside-hitter Miguel Angel Lopez stole the show for the home-favorites with a game-high 24 points, while Japanese sensation Yuji Nishida chipped in 18, including three aces. French superstar Earvin Ngapeth delivered his best performance yet for Foolad in Japan with 20 points, followed by middle-blocker Javier Octavio Concepcion and Iranian outside-hitter Amirhossein Esfandiar,

who finished on 11 points apiece. Awaiting the Japanese side in today's final showpiece is Qatari side Al Rayyan. Dutch opposite-spiker Nimir Abdel-Aziz contributed with a remarkable 40 points, including five serve points, to help Al Rayyan come from behind twice to beat Suntory Sunbirds Osaka 3-2 (22-25, 25-22, 23-25, 25-23, 17-15) in the other semifinal on Saturday. Slovenian Tine Urnaut played his part in the thrilling victory with 12 points. Russian opposite Dmitriy Muserskiy was Suntory's top scorer with 30 points, with Japanese duo Ran Takahashi and Taishi Onodera adding 20 and 13 points, respectively. A bronze medalist in last December's Club World Championship in Bra-

zil, Foolad will be looking to finish its campaign with some consolation when taking on Suntory in the third-place contest earlier. Foolad got off to a shaky start in the competition, laboring to a 3-2 win against Thailand's Nakhon Ratchasima QminC in their Pool C opener, and then went on to beat Taichung Bank of the Chinese Taipei to progress to the quarterfinals as the group winner. Behrouz Ataei's side rallied past Shanghai Bright of China 3-1 (24-26, 25-21, 28-26, 25-23) in the quarterfinals.

Shoma Tomita (5) of Osaka Bluteon hits a spike against Foolad Sirjan's Ali Ramezani at the AVC Men's Champions League in Kyoto, Japan, on May 17, 2025.

● FIVB



Qassem Haddadifar (R) poses for a photo after being unveiled as the new Zob Ahan head coach in Isfahan, Iran, on May 17, 2025.

● ZOBAHANCLUB.COM

## Haddadifar named new Zob Ahan coach

## Sports Desk

Qassem Haddadifar was appointed as the new head coach of Zob Ahan, the Persian Gulf Pro League club announced on Saturday. The club legend takes over from Mohammad Rabiei, who parted ways with the club following a 3-0 away victory over Nassaji Mazandaran in the final round of the Iranian league fixtures on Thursday. Rabiei spent a decent two-year spell on Zob Ahan bench, leading the club to a fifth-place finish in the league in his first season in charge, before the Isfahan-based outfit stood sixth in the newly-finished campaign, with the club tallying 42 points

in 30 games on both occasions. Haddadifar, 41, spent 18 years of his career with Zob Ahan over different spells, before hanging up his boots in July 2022.

Also a former midfielder for Tractor and San'at Naft Abadan, Haddadifar bagged 22 goals and 30 assists in 450 appearances across all competitions for Zob Ahan, leading the club to four Hazfi Cup titles and three runner-up finishes in the domestic league.

He was also part of the Zob Ahan team that reached the final showpiece of the AFC Champions League in 2010, before suffering a 3-1 defeat against Seongnam Ilhwa Chunma of South Korea.

## Son eyeing history by leading Spurs to Europa League glory

**REUTERS** — Tottenham Hotspur skipper Son Heung-min said Wednesday's Europa League final against Manchester United will be the biggest day of his life as the north London club prepare to cap a difficult season with a trophy. Spurs slumped to a 2-0 defeat at Aston Villa on Friday, their 21st loss of the season, leaving them 17th in the Premier League on 38 points, just above the three sides already relegated. Far from contending for a European berth through the league, Spurs' only path to next season's Champions League is by winning the second-tier European competition against fellow Premier League strugglers

United, who are 16th in the standings.

"It's a very disappointing result and a very poor season," the South Korean, who has recently returned to fitness after a brief spell on the sidelines, told the BBC after Spurs' defeat at Villa. "But at the end of the day, we can win a trophy, that's what we're all looking for."

A win against United in the Spanish city of Bilbao would end Spurs' 17-year trophy drought and hand the 32-year-old Son his first piece of silverware after a decade at the club. "Wednesday will be the biggest day of my life. It will be great. We will be excited, and I hope we can make history," Son said.



# Celebrate art, faith at holy shrine of Shah Cheragh

**Iranica Desk**

Amid the ancient streets of Shiraz, the luminous shrine of Hazrat Ahmad bin Musa (PBUH), known as Shah Cheragh, shines like a sparkling gem in the heart of this cultural and historic city. The sacred shrine is not only one of the most important pilgrimage sites for Shia Muslims in Iran but also plays an unparalleled role as a cultural heritage and tourism attraction, significantly contributing to national identity and drawing pilgrims and visitors alike.

Ahmad bin Musa (PBUH), the eldest son of Imam Musa al-Kazim (PBUH) and brother of Imam Reza (PBUH), traveled to Iran on his way to join his brother but was martyred by Abbasid rulers. His burial site remained hidden until the 6th century AH, when it was discovered during the reign of Atabek Abu Saeed Zangi. Thanks to his minister, Amir Maqreb al-Din Mas'ud, a shrine was built on that site.

Since then, the Shah Cheragh Shrine has undergone numerous restorations and reconstructions. Architecturally, with mirror work, tile decoration, and calligraphy, it has become one of Iran's most beautiful religious sites. The blending of Timurid, Safavid, Zand, and Qajar architectural styles in its construction reflects a continuity of artistic and religious tradition over the centuries.

According to official statistics, from March 15, 2025, to April 4, 2025, over one million domestic pilgrims visited this revered shrine. This number not only underscores Shah Cheragh's spiritual significance within Iran but also highlights its vast potential as a major religious tourism destination. During the same period, 387 international tourists from 32 countries — including Russia, Germany,



● safarmarket.com



● safarmarket.com

Spain, India, UAE, Italy, and Switzerland — visited Shah Cheragh. This significant presence of foreign tourists attests that the shrine of Ahmad bin Musa is gradually becoming a central hub for international religious and spiritual tourism in Iran.

From an artistic perspective, Shah Cheragh is a treasure trove of Islamic Iranian art. Magnificent mirror inlays, finely crafted minarets, turquoise tiles, and Qur'anic calligraphy — all are manifestations of the union between spirituality and beauty. This shrine is truly a living museum of Iran's religious and national art, inspiring not only pilgrims but anyone interested in the history of Islamic art.

Moreover, visits by foreign tourists often evoke awe and admiration for both the



● epersianhotel.com

visual and spiritual beauty. Many have officially recognized Shah Cheragh as an outstanding example of devotional architecture in Iran.

Alongside Mashhad and Qom, Shah Cheragh forms one of the three main pillars of religious tourism in Iran. What sets this shrine apart

is its geographical location in southern Iran and its placement in the city of Shiraz — a city itself renowned for poetry, literature, archi-

itecture, and history. The combination of cultural attractions (Hafezieh, Sufi sites), historical sites (Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam), and religious landmarks (Shah Cheragh) within less than an hour's reach offers a rare opportunity for creating integrated cultural-religious tourism packages. This could position Shiraz as the top destination for Muslim tourists in the West Asia region.

The presence of hundreds of pilgrims from various countries during Nowruz (Iranian New Year March 21-April 2) is a clear sign of Shah Cheragh's high capacity in the realm of cultural and spiritual diplomacy.

Introducing this shrine as a peace-promoting destination, beyond religious affiliations, can play an effective role in creating a positive

narrative about Iran at the international level. Especially in today's world, where ethnic and religious tensions dominate the image of the Middle East, presenting sites like Shah Cheragh — historically a gathering place for people of different ethnicities, nationalities, and religions — can offer a new discourse of peace rooted in spiritual heritage.

In recent years, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has paid special attention to registering, restoring, and promoting the shrine of Ahmad bin Musa (PBUH). This includes preparing a dossier for its national registration, designing cultural-religious tourism packages, and collaborating with custodial institutions to attract international tourists.

Additionally, leveraging the capacity of international media, social media, and embassies to introduce Shah Cheragh to the world has been among the successful policies of the Ministry in developing tourism diplomacy.

Shah Cheragh is not just a historical tomb. It is a shining candle in safeguarding Iranian religious, historical, and cultural identity. For centuries, the holy shrine has been a sanctuary for pilgrims' hearts, and today, with wise and cultural management, it can become a hub for developing religious tourism and strengthening Iran's cultural diplomacy.

If Nowruz 2025, with the presence of millions of pilgrims and hundreds of foreign tourists, once again emphasized the potential of this shrine, it's time for this brilliant heritage to be introduced and utilized on a global scale. Under the azure dome of Shah Cheragh, not only pilgrims but truth-seekers from every religion and culture find common peace.

# Bekhradi Mansion represents a heritage of happiness, enjoyment

**Iranica Desk**

Nothing but nostalgia can save the contemporary human's spirit from unsafety and distrust; a symbol and essence of the past without any pain that only kept its happiness and enjoyment. Many artists and craftsmen use this aspect to satisfy their audiences.

Even imagining a moment of relaxation in the rooms that are decorated with color of the past and the memorable bricks, materials, windows, curtains and porches is sweet and pleasant.

Morteza Bekhradi, the best-known professor of conservation and restoration historical monuments, used this feature of the modern man in 2000, restored and rebuilt

the historic 400-year-old caravanserai and house of Bekhradi in five years and finally prepared it for those guests who are interested in the historical spaces.

Bekhradi Historical Mansion, the memorial of the early Safavid empire, is related to the 17th century CE and placed in Sonbolstan district of Isfahan. Morteza Bekhradi believed

this house to belong to one of the astrologists in Safavid period. Based upon the Safavid architecture style, the designs and motifs depicted in the interior spaces are simple and nave and

at the same time authentic and creative. Like other contemporary buildings, Bekhradi house has a porch in the middle, two alcove halls on north and south parts and two porches

on east and west parts. The complex is among the rebuilt Safavid mansions that are currently transferred into the hotel. The necessary needs of the passengers like the bath-

room, WC, bedroom with convenient and traditional beds, kitchen, yard and the reception have been considered in reconstructing operations.

In spite of hard work for rebuilding and prosperity of this mansion, it is not deservedly known even among the residents of Isfahan. This historical house includes twelve rooms, two alcove halls and two yards, interior and exterior; stucco and mirror work along with the traditional furniture that have made this house a memorable space for those who are interested in the original and traditional atmosphere.

Bekhradi Mansion with 700 square meter area is located in Shohada Street, Ibn-e Sina Street, in Isfahan.



● safarmarket.com



● License Holder  
● ICPI CEO  
● Editor-in-chief  
● Int'l & National Desk  
● Economy Desk  
● Sports Desk  
● Iranica Desk  
● Arts & Culture Desk  
● Language Editor

Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)  
Ali Motaghian  
Mostafa Shirmohammadi  
Javad Mohammad Ali, Amir Mollaei Mozaffari  
Zohreh Qanadi, Sadeq Dehqan  
Amirhadi Arsalanpour  
Leila Imeni  
Hamideh Hosseini  
Mehdi Ebrahim

● Editorial Dept. Tel  
● Address  
● ICPI Publisher  
● Advertising Dept. Tel/Email  
● Website  
● Email  
● Printing House

+98 21 84711411  
208, Khorramshahr Ave., Tehran, Iran  
+98 21 88548892-5  
+98 21 88500601/irandaily@iranagahiha.com  
www.irandaily.ir/newspaper.irandaily.ir  
irandaily@icpi.ir  
Iran Cultural & Press Institute



> [irandaily.ir](http://irandaily.ir) | [newspaper.irandaily.ir](http://newspaper.irandaily.ir) | IranDailyWeb

Vol. 7834 ● Sunday, May 18, 2025 ● 100,000 rials ● 8 pages

# Pushing pixels, boundaries in Iran's digital art movement



By Hamideh Hosseini  
Staff writer

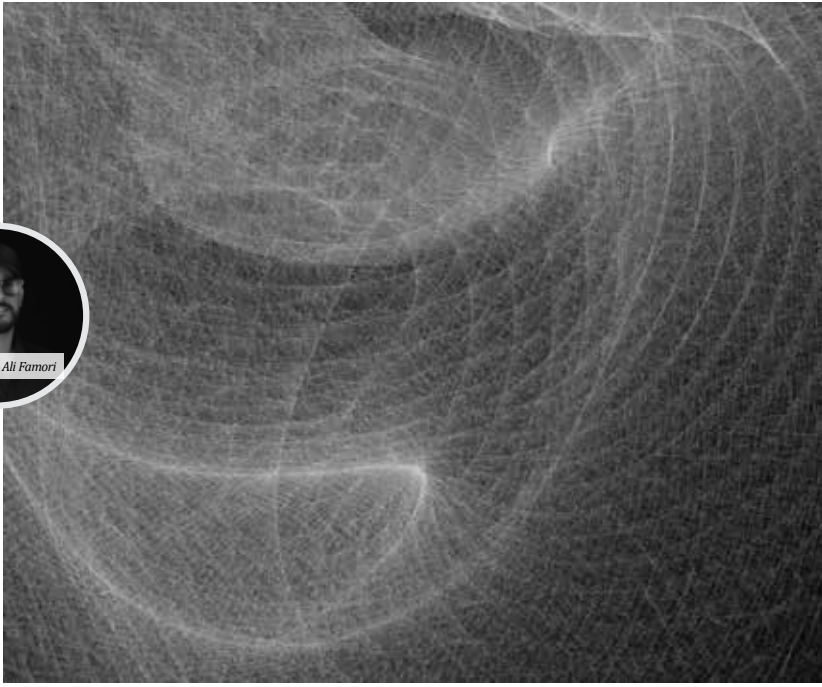
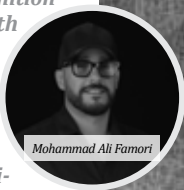
## INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Mohammad Ali Famori stands at the forefront of Iran's digital art movement, blending ancient philosophy with contemporary code. As an acclaimed digital artist, curator, and founder of the influential Platform 101, Famori has reshaped how glitch and video art are perceived both in Iran and globally. From pioneering black-and-white glitch aesthetics to leading Iran's presence at Expo 2025 in Japan, his work challenges norms while opening new creative horizons. In this exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Famori reflects on the origins of his practice, the conceptual force behind "error," and the ongoing mission to elevate Iranian digital art on the world stage.

Famori is a prominent Iranian digital artist, curator, and cultural manager

with over a decade of experience in the global art scene. Since 2006, he has participated in more than 50 international exhibitions, including the Penne Art Biennale (Italy), Glitch Art Brazil, Athens Digital Arts Festival (Greece), and Expo 2025 (Japan). His acclaimed video piece 'Infinite Realms' is in the permanent collection of the CAM Museum in Naples. Famori's 2016 solo show 'Hypnotic Zone' at Seyhoun Gallery blended sacred and visionary themes with new media. He has earned major accolades, including first prize at Iran's National Digital Arts Festival (2019) and a Silver Medallion at the 2000 Shankar Festival in New Delhi. In 2011, he founded Famori Studio, exploring geometry and fractals in design and media. In 2018, he launched Platform 101, a nonprofit institution advancing digital art in Iran. Its debut project, '101 Photos by 101 Artists: Decisive Moment,' marked Iran's first photo exhibition tour, paying tribute to Henri Cartier-Bresson. Famori authored the influential 2019 'Manifesto of Iranian Glitch Art,' promot-

ing black-and-white glitch aesthetics and conceptual depth over decoration. This led to pioneering glitch exhibitions across Iran and abroad, including 'Glitch: Pixel Language' (2020), Iran's first glitch group show; 'Pixel Aesthetics' (2021); and 'Glitch Art Is Dead' in the US (2022). Platform 101 gained global recognition through its 2023 partnership with Glitch.art.br and its participation in The Wrong Biennale 2023-24, showcasing Iranian artists internationally. In 2024, it hosted 'Geometry of Creation' at E1 Gallery, Iran's largest video art exhibition, featuring 44 artists from 12 countries. In 2025, the platform presented 'Hidden Geometry & Glitch Art' and represented Iran at Expo 2025 with 'Patagoram' (Infinite Realms), a projection-mapping piece merging Iranian knotwork with glitch art. Platform 101 continues to elevate Iranian digital art, fostering global dialogue and innovation in contemporary media.



**IRAN DAILY: You've worked across various areas of digital art. What led you to focus specifically on glitch art and video art?**

**FAMORI:** From the very beginning of my artistic journey, I saw digital art as the only medium that imposes no limitations on the artist, not in the process of creation, nor in distribution, nor in exhibition or reproduction. Glitch art, as a key genre within digital arts, played a key global role precisely because of its anti-capitalist roots and the nature of its formation and presentation. Glitch, with its focus on digital errors and disruptions, gave me the opportunity to challenge traditional artistic norms and explore aesthetics within instability and chaos. For me, this medium is a metaphor for the contemporary human condition, living in the tension between order and disorder. Glitch art invites viewers to interact with it through their subconscious. During this interaction, viewers instinctively fill in the lost or corrupted parts of the image according to their own visual capacities. Glitch thus offers audiences a chance to engage with the artwork on their own aesthetic terms.

**Where did the first spark for the 'Platform 101' come from? Was there a particular moment or event that triggered the final decision?**

The idea for Platform 101 emerged in 2017 while I was collaborating with Tehran magazine. At the time, I noticed that Iranian digital artists lacked a cohesive space to showcase their conceptual work. The true turning point came in the summer of 2018, with the touring exhibition 'Decisive Moment' held across six galleries in Tehran and Isfahan. That project demonstrated that digital art could move from the periphery to the center of contemporary Iranian art. It strengthened my resolve to launch Platform 101 as a space dedicated to nurturing this growing movement.

**Why did you choose the name "101" for the platform? Is there a specific meaning behind it?**

The name "101" draws on three core concepts: It symbolizes the range from 0 to 100, together forming 101 degrees from black to white. This black-and-white spectrum is the visual hallmark of all exhibitions curated by Platform 101.

You wrote the manifesto for Iranian

**glitch art. In your view, what makes glitch art distinct from other branches of digital art?**

Unlike other branches of digital art, glitch art embraces error, not as a flaw but as the core of its aesthetic language. It uses those errors to critique systems of digital control. This quality makes glitch a powerful tool for expressing themes like instability, resistance, and technological critique, setting it apart from other digital mediums. The 'Glitch: Pixel Language' manifesto also known as the Manifesto of Iranian Glitch Art, is a unique innovation in the Asian art scene. I wrote it in 2019 as a conceptual foundation for a namesake exhibition at Bavan Gallery. The manifesto emphasizes the removal of color from glitch video art to create black-and-white works that focus on structural and formal elements. While glitch art began as a rebellious, anti-capitalist movement, over time its visual elements, especially colorful distortions, became more mainstream. By eliminating color, we redirected both artists and viewers toward a more formalist and conceptually rich engagement with glitch aesthetics.

**Glitch art is often associated with visual errors. In your perspective, how do these "errors" become a powerful visual language?**

In glitch art, errors aren't merely flaws, they're intentional disruptions that reveal hidden layers of the image's essence. In 'Glitch: Pixel Language,' I explore three foundational concepts: Decay, interruption, and disintegration of pixels. These elements allow for a new reading of the image. For instance, in the project 'Hidden Geometry,' we intentionally distorted fractal codes to create a piece that reflected the balance between mathematical order and chaos in nature. These errors can act as metaphors for instability in life or society, turning glitch into a po-

tent visual language that compels viewers to reflect.

**How did your involvement with generative coding and tools like Touch Designer come about? Do you participate in the programming side yourself?**

As a curator and concept developer, I mainly focus on artistic statements and conceptual frameworks. However, I collaborate closely with professional programmers like Arash Masoum. My interest in generative coding began with interactive projects. Using Touch Designer for the Japan Expo 2025 project deepened that connection, there, we combined fractal code with immersive sound to create a multi-sensory experience. Occasionally, I do participate in programming to more precisely implement my artistic vision.

**Tell us more about how the 'Infinite Realms' project was selected for Japan Expo 2025. How did the idea evolve, and what challenges did you face?**

We submitted the 'Infinite Realms' projection mapping proposal in response to the open call by Japan Expo 2025 Osaka-Kansai, themed Designing Future Society for Our Lives. The project was accepted and is scheduled to be displayed on one of Osaka's iconic structures, the 'Shining Hat'. The piece explores the essence and fractal geometry of parallel and unknown dimensions, where infinite structures exist at every level. I directed the project, and the visuals were entirely generated through creative coding by Arash Masoum using Touch Designer. The sound design and composition were handled by Ehsan Masoudian and Reza Famori. Our goal was to create a work that carried both an Eastern identity and a universal language. The main challenge was translating abstract concepts into a form that could be grasped by an inter-

national audience without sacrificing authenticity. We spent months fine-tuning the synchronization of sound and image for the projection mapping. Being the only Iranian team added pressure, but it also motivated us to deliver something flawless and deeply resonant.

**What kind of feedback did you receive from the Japan Expo 2025 jury and international institutions? Why do you think your project resonated with them?**

The expo jury was genuinely surprised by the integration of tradition and technology in our project. 'Infinite Realms' wasn't just a visual display—it was a narrative exploration of cultural reflection through digital art. The projection mapping piece will be featured in the 'Shining Hat' program alongside global digital art giants like Maxin10sity, Ava Animation, and Michiyuki Ishita. Its inclusion signals a new horizon for Iranian artists to collaborate on an international scale in the realm of generative coding and digital creation.

**Platform 101 is the only Iranian team in the projection mapping section. What kind of responsibility or pressure does that put on you and your team?**

It's a tremendous responsibility. We have to represent Iranian digital art on a global stage while creating a work that can hold its own against major international studios like teamLab. But we've turned that pressure into motivation—to deliver a project that meets and exceeds global standards.

**How would you assess the current infrastructure for digital art in Iran? Have you seen any changes in recent years?**

Digital art in Iran is growing, and there's an increasing interest among the younger generation. Spaces like Rischee29 Art Gallery and the Dayhim Art Society have opened doors for showcasing video art.

That said, lack of financial support and specialized academic training remain major challenges. The rise of NFTs in recent years has been promising, but we still need more foundational infrastructure.

**Why do you think many Iranian galleries and collectors remain hesitant about digital art?**

There are two main reasons: **Fear of reproducibility:** Gallery owners often struggle with how to classify and sell a digital work as an "original." **Lack of technical understanding:** Many still don't grasp the distinctions between video art, generative art, and NFTs. This distrust largely stems from unfamiliarity with the potential and mechanics of digital media.

**What steps need to be taken for digital art to be recognized as a serious movement in Iran's art scene?**

Establishing a national digital archive to document and preserve digital works. Hosting festivals, exhibitions, and auctions dedicated to digital mediums. Creating international residency programs to connect artists with cutting-edge technologies. Training specialized curators in digital art to bridge the gap between artists and audiences.

**How do your collaborations with international artists typically begin? Are they mostly exhibition-based or more extensive?**

My collaborations go well beyond exhibitions. They include workshops, residencies, and joint projects. Over the past six years, we've invited around 30 international digital artists through the publication of three different artistic statements, which have directly led to recent exhibitions by Platform 101.

**Where do you see the future of digital art heading, particularly in areas**

**like the metaverse, AI art, or NFTs?**

Globally, digital art is clearly moving toward platforms like the metaverse, artificial intelligence, and NFTs. The challenge lies in the speed and capacity to adopt these technologies. These tools are democratizing art creation and distribution, offering unprecedented opportunities for artists. Our participation in events such as the Wrong Biennale in Spain, the 'Glitch Art Is Dead' festival in the US, the Glitch Art Brazil Festival (where Iran's glitch scene was showcased), and the re-staging of "The Language of Pixels" exhibit in Italy by curator Antonio Zimarino are examples of this momentum.

**What are your future plans for developing Platform 101?**

Yes, we plan to grow Platform 101 through international partnerships and establish branches in other countries. One major initiative is launching a gallery space for Platform 101 in the metaverse, both for educational purposes and digital exhibitions. We're also working on forming long-term alliances with similar festivals worldwide to create sustained global engagement.

**Which global artists have inspired you most? What's the most influential project you've seen?**

Albrecht Dürer and Michelangelo have had the greatest influence on my work. Among 20th-century artists, Nam June Paik, the pioneer of video art, has always fascinated me. I also draw deep inspiration from the poetic expression in Bill Viola's video installations.

**When creating, what inspires you most, nature, technology, literature?**

In fractal-based work, my primary inspiration comes from classical Iranian mathematics and literature. For instance, in the project 'Hypnotic Zone,' all the visuals were inspired by the poetry of Hafez.

**What's been the biggest challenge in your professional journey, and how did you overcome it?**

In the early years, the biggest hurdle was the widespread reluctance, even among avant-garde circles, to accept glitch as a "serious" art form. I overcame this by organizing repeated exhibitions at respected Tehran galleries and gaining international exposure for Iranian digital artists. Over time, that mindset began to shift.

