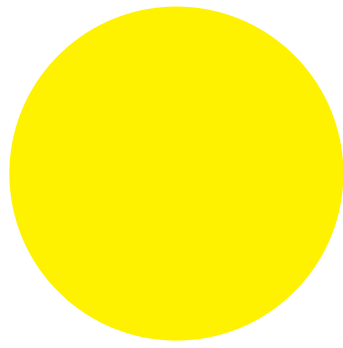


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Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) holds a meeting with foreign ambassadors in Tehran, Iran on July 12, 2025.
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Bogdanov's plan to redefine Middle East power



By Albert Naryshkin
Chairman of Middle East
Club at MGIMO

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

Mikhail Leonidovich Bogdanov, who has over fifty years of diplomatic experience in the Middle Eastern direction, belongs to the ranks of outstanding Soviet and Russian diplomats and enjoys unwavering authority among his colleagues and associates. The role of politician Bogdanov in strengthening Russian influence in the Middle East and protecting Russia's foreign policy interests is indisputable. Under the highly professional guidance of Mikhail Leonidovich Bogdanov, the contours of modern Russian-Arab and Russian-African friendship have been formed, driven by a common aspiration to build a polycentric world order based on the principles of equality and mutual respect. Key powers in Africa and the Middle East, such as Ethiopia,

Egypt, the UAE, and Iran, have joined BRICS, which, in turn, promotes the strengthening of multipolarity and inclusivity in global politics and economics and advocates for the dismantling of American hegemony. During Mikhail Bogdanov's tenure as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Special Representative of the President of Russia for the Middle East and African countries, the Arab world, with Russia's support, became a new center of influence and decision-making on the global stage. Mikhail Leonidovich, more than anyone else, keenly feels the danger of nuclear escalation in the Middle East. He has repeatedly condemned Israel's unlawful aggression against Iran. Ambassador Bogdanov has often acted as an organizer of negotiations between the authorities of Turkey and Syria to develop a "roadmap" for the return of Syrian refugees in Turkey to their homeland, including the development of guarantees for their safety and social protection.

Mikhail Bogdanov also plays a significant role in Russia's cultural diplomacy in the Middle East and Africa. As the Deputy Chairman of the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society, one of the oldest foundational structures facilitating humanitarian cooperation between Russia and the peoples of the Middle East, Mr. Bogdanov has contributed to addressing humanitarian issues in Syria, organized Orthodox pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and built schools for the local population. Mikhail Bogdanov has made an invaluable contribution to the preservation of Orthodoxy in the Middle East. The country has highly appreciated Bogdanov's merits, awarding him the Orders of Friendship, Honor, Alexander Nevsky, and for Merit to the Fatherland of the 3rd and 4th classes. The conclusion of Bogdanov's long-standing activity as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia in no way signifies the end of his fruitful and multifaceted work in the interests of the Russian Federation and its people.

President hails Mobarakeh Steel for building largest solar power plant in Iran

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Araghchi: Iran poised for diplomacy if other sides favor confidence building

Uranium enrichment, military capabilities 'not up for negotiations'

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Saturday that Tehran is "ready" for diplomacy to resolve a decades-long tension over its peaceful nuclear program despite a last month unprovoked aggression by Israel and the US against the Islamic Republic. "The Islamic Republic of Iran remains ready to build confidence through diplomacy but, before that, other sides must first instill confidence in us that they genuinely seek diplomacy — not the diplomacy that serves as a cover for their own objectives," Araghchi told foreign diplomats in the Iranian capital, Tehran. Araghchi underlined that there is no other way but to return to diplomacy and a negotiated solution to resolve the issue, adding that the recent conflict proved this even more. "As you know, we were negotiating (with the US) when Israel attacked Iran with the coordination of the United States and in the



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaks in a meeting with Tehran-based foreign diplomats in the Iranian capital on July 12, 2025.
● IRNA

next stage, the United States itself directly targeted Iran's nuclear facilities. The Americans betrayed diplomacy and the negotiating table, and if they are now seeking to resume negotiations, it must be ensured that such a thing will not happen again and we will not witness such actions from them." The Israeli regime launched an aggression on Iran's military and

civilian infrastructure on June 13 that killed nearly 1,100 people, including women and children, as well as a dozen top military brass. The US, which had been in talks with Tehran about its nuclear program since April, joined the war on June 22 by targeting several key nuclear sites. Iran struck a major US military base in Qatar in retaliation.

In response to the strikes, the Iranian Armed Forces launched a retaliatory campaign against the Israeli regime by targeting key military, intelligence, industrial, energy facilities across the occupied territories. The Iranian Armed Forces also targeted the US largest military base in the Middle East in Qatar with a barrage of missiles. Following Iran's retaliatory attacks, the Israeli regime was forced on June 24 to declare a unilateral halt to its aggression, which was announced on its behalf by US President Donald Trump.

Cooperation with IAEA

Tehran also suspended its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) after an earlier report by the UN agency against Iran's nuclear program became a lightning rod for the Israeli aggression. The Iranian foreign minister said on Saturday that Iran's cooperation with the IAEA "will take on a new form."

"Our cooperation with the agency has not stopped, but will take on a new form," said Araghchi, adding that requests to monitor nuclear sites "will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis... taking into account safety and security issues." The top Iranian nuclear negotiator added that the country is a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has been cooperating with the IAEA. Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) will study every IAEA's request for the continuation of cooperation with Iran on a case-by-case basis and will make decisions based on safety and security concerns, he explained.

Resumption of nuclear talks

Regarding a possible resumption of talks with the US, Araghchi said that Tehran is reviewing the details of the negotiations. "We are examining its timing, its location, its form, its ingredients, the assurances it requires" from Iran for possible negotiations, said Araghchi.

However, he said that Iran's right to enrich uranium and its military capabilities will not be the subject of any negotiation. "We emphasize that in any negotiated solution, the rights of the Iranian people on the nuclear issue, including the right to enrichment, must be respected. We will not accept any agreement that does not include enrichment. Enrichment is one of the great scientific achievements of Iranian scientists. To preserve this achievement, great pressure was exerted on Iran and the recent war was imposed on us", Araghchi said. "If negotiations are held... the subject of the negotiations will be only nuclear and creating confidence in Iran's nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions," Araghchi told diplomats in Tehran. "No other issues will be subject to negotiation." Iran is currently under the "maximum pressure" by the US government, which has imposed the most intensive sanctions ever on the country.

Veep affirms Tehran opts for negotiations from 'position of strength'

National Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref on Saturday said that the Iranian leadership's position on nuclear negotiations with the United States remains unchanged and opts for negotiations from a "position of strength." He made the remarks in a meeting with several professors from Sharif University in Tehran. Aref also underlined that there is no difference between the country's diplomatic apparatus and Armed Forces in this regard. His remarks came as the country's officials are considering the resumption of nuclear talks following the last month aggression by the Israeli regime and the US on Iran just days before a the six round of negotiations between Tehran and Washington. Ali Larijani, a senior advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, has told Al-Jazeera TV Channel that Iran has received messages from the US on the resumption of talks, saying Tehran is studying them. "After the [Israeli-US] war, we have no trust in the US at all," Larijani said in an interview with Al-Jazeera TV Channel. "The theory of the US, led by [President Donald] Trump, is based on the principle that you either surrender or enter into war," Larijani said. He added that a new "Middle East" is emerging, which would be a "resilient and indepen-



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (3rd R) meets several professors from Sharif University of Technology in Tehran on July 12, 2025.
● IRNA

dent" region. On a separate occasion, Larijani said on Friday the US president and Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu are pursuing a reactionary theory of "peace through strength" and noted, "This is the same perspective that all the bloodthirsty individuals in history have had, and it is nothing new." Larijani said the US has inflicted damage and caused massacres in the international scene, but the people of Palestine and Gaza did not surrender. "Iran, under the wise leadership of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, responded decisively and did not allow this theory to manifest in our country. Therefore, Trump's theory has failed," he added.

Israeli forces killed 800 Palestinians seeking aid in Gaza, UN says



Palestinians transport victims to a Red Cross clinic in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip after they were shot as they waited to receive food parcels at a distribution point on July 12, 2025.
● AFP

International Desk

Ten Palestinians were killed Friday while waiting for rations in Gaza, adding to nearly 800 similar deaths in the last six weeks, according to the UN. The UN rights office said on Friday it had recorded at least 798 killings within the past six weeks at aid points in Gaza run by the US- and Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation and near convoys run by other relief groups. "(From May 27) up until the seventh of July, we've recorded 798 killings, including 615 in the vicinity of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation sites, and 183 presumably on the route of aid convoys," UN rights office (OHCHR) spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani told a media briefing in Geneva. Gaza's more than two million

residents facing a dire humanitarian crisis of hunger and disease amid the grinding conflict. Israel began easing a more than two-month total blockade of aid in late May. Since then, a new US- and Israel-backed organization called the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) has effectively sidelined the territory's vast UN-led aid delivery network. There are frequent reports of Israeli forces firing on people seeking aid, with Gaza's civil defense agency saying 10 Palestinians were killed Friday while waiting at a distribution point near the southern city of Rafah. The UN, which refuses to cooperate with GHF over concerns it was designed to cater to Israeli military objectives, said Friday that 798 people have been killed seeking aid between late May and July 7, including 615 "in the vicinity of the GHF sites".

"Where people are lining up for essential supplies such as food and medicine, and where... they have a choice between being shot or being fed, this is unacceptable," UN rights office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani told reporters in Geneva. Israel's military did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday's deaths, but has previously accused Hamas fighters of firing at civilians in the vicinity of aid centers. GHF called the UN report "false and misleading", claiming that "most deadly attacks on aid sites have been linked to UN convoys". Mahmud Bassal, spokesman for Gaza's civil defense agency, told AFP that Israeli forces killed 45 people overall in the territory on Friday. Israel's onslaught on Gaza has killed more than 57,800 Palestinians, most of them civilians, since October 2023.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Positive balance of \$3b posted in last year’s agriculture: Minister

Economy Desk

Iran’s Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri announced on Saturday that the negative balance of the country’s agricultural sector had turned positive by 3 billion dollars, citing a 31% increase in exports and a 5% decrease in imports last year.

Nouri also said the agricultural trade balance in the Iranian calendar year 1403 improved from 11% to 8% compared to 1402, meaning it saw a growth of 3 billion dollars, which is significant and a big step towards a positive trade balance in the agricultural sector.

“Under sanctions and a shortage of capital formation, the agricultural sector in 1403 saw a 31% increase in exports and a 5% decrease in imports compared to

the previous year,” he added.

While commemorating the martyrs and pointing to Iran’s recent victory against the Israeli regime in the 12-day war, he praised the efforts made to preserve the country’s food security in war-time conditions.

Referring to the empathy and cooperation of the people with the Armed Forces and the government at the tough time, he stated, “Our colleagues in the Ministry of Agriculture, through constructive and efficient inter-agency and inter-branch cooperation, were able to fulfill their duty regarding food security.”

Emphasizing that despite the enemy’s planning to jeopardize the security and peace of the people in terms of food, Nouri said with the measures taken, there has been no shortage in the supply

of essential goods across the country.

“Even with demand exceeding needs in some provinces due to population displacement, more than one-third of the dispatched goods remained unused,” he noted.

Thanking producers, suppliers, and guilds, especially cattle breeders and poultry farmers, the agriculture minister stated that the recent war further highlighted the importance of food security.

“Despite the scarcity of water resources and soil erosion, we are able to produce the country’s needs domestically and become self-sufficient, relying on scientific knowledge and the research of scholars and scientists,” Nouri underlined.

On June 13, Israel launched a bla-

tant and unprovoked aggression against Iran, assassinating many high-ranking military commanders, nuclear scientists, and ordinary civilians.

More than a week later, the United States also jumped on the bandwagon and bombed three Iranian nuclear sites in a grave violation of the United Nations Charter, international law, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In response, Iranian armed forces targeted strategic sites across the occupied territories as well as the al-Udeid air base in Qatar, the largest American military base in West Asia.

On June 24, the regime declared a unilateral ceasefire without any preconditions, a sign of its defeat in the face of powerful and unwavering Iranian retaliation.



Gholamreza Nouri

Iran’s trade attaché casts Hungary as gateway to EU market



Iran’s Embassy in Budapest

Economy Desk

Iran’s commercial attaché in Hungary described the central European state as a gateway to the EU market that plays a crucial role in the economic inter-connection of the eastern and western part of the continent.

Hassan Argi made the statement in a ceremony held in the Hungarian capital of Budapest on the occasion of the centennial celebrations of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

“Trade between Hungary and Iran is of particular importance. As a member of the European Union, Hungary plays a significant role in economic

relations between the east and west of the continent. This country can be considered a gateway to the EU market, especially given its geographical location and economic ties with Iran,” Argi said.

“Furthermore, economic cooperation between Iran and Hungary continues through the only country whose joint economic commission with Iran has remained active in the European Union, which demonstrates the strategic importance of these relations for both countries. In early 2024, this commission held its meetings in Tehran, and we hope that the conditions for holding it in 2025 will also be provided.”

The Iranian commercial attaché underlined that Hungary is the only EU member state with which Iran’s joint economic commission is active within the European Union and “this holds special significance for the long-term development of economic relations between Iran and the EU.”

Argi said the last meeting of the commission was held in early 2024, and he hopes such sessions will reconvene in 2025.

Budai Lóránt, the mayor of Jászberény, who attended the ceremony in Budapest, pointed to the critical situation in the region and expressed sympathy with the people of Iran regarding the recent Is-

raeli war of aggression on the Islamic Republic.

“Participation in joint programs, especially in the areas of trade and culture, can help form deeper and multifaceted relations between the two nations,” Lóránt said.

The mayor emphasized that the presence of his city’s reputable holding company, as per arrangements made, at the Iran Expo 2025 in Tehran, which was held to commemorate the anniversary of diplomatic relations and following recent interactions between Yazd and Jászberény, is considered a successful example of private sector cooperation within the framework of urban diplomacy.

Unemployment rate drops to 7.3% in three months: SCI

Economy Desk

The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced on Saturday that the results of its labor force survey in the first three months of the Iranian calendar year 1404, and the examination of the unemployment rate for individuals aged 15 and over showed that 7.3 percent of the active population (employed and unemployed) were unemployed.

The examination of the trend of changes in the unemployment rate indicates that the index had decreased by 0.4 percent compared to the same period last year.

In Spring 1404, 41.2 percent of the population aged 15 and over were economically active, meaning they were either employed or unemployed.

The employed population aged 15 and over in the period was 25,123,000, which is an increase of approximately 377,000 compared to the same time last year. Also, the economically inactive population (including students, homemakers, those with income without work such as retirees, etc.) was 38,739,000, which is an increase of approximately 510,000 compared to the same period last year.

An examination of employment in major economic sectors showed that in Spring 1404, the services sector accounted for the largest share of employment with 52.4 percent. The industry sector followed with 33.0 percent, and agriculture with 14.6 percent.


The youth unemployment rate for those



aged 15 to 24 indicates that 19.7 percent of the active population in this age group were unemployed in Spring 1404. An examination of seasonal changes in the unemployment rate for these individuals showed that this rate has decreased by 0.3 percent compared to the same season last year (Spring 1403).

An examination of the unemployment rate for the 18 to 35 age group also showed that in Spring 1404, 14.5 percent of the active population in this age group were unemployed. This is while seasonal changes in the unemployment rate for these individuals showed that this rate has decreased by 0.5 percent compared to Spring 1403.

An examination of the share of the under-employed population aged 15 and over indicated that in Spring 1404, 6.6 percent of the employed population worked less than 44 hours per week for economic reasons (off-season, business slowdown, inability to find more hours, etc.) and were ready to do additional work. This is while 40.1 percent of employed individuals aged 15 and over worked more than 49 hours per week.



Notice of tender for export sale No Z/1404/07

Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70,000 metric tons of Pellet (%Fe:65.00) on basis of F.O.B at Barco Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: www.geg.ir. All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 09:00 A.M. on 22. Jul.2025 to Golgohar complex in sirjan (50 km in shiraz road). Bidders are invited to the transactions commission department of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 09:00 A.M. on 22.Jul.2025 at the office of the Seller.

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.

Analysis %		
Fe	65.00	Min
FeO	1.0	Ave
P	0.05	Max
S	0.01	Max
SiO2	3.5	Max
Al2O3	0.7	Max
CaO	0.9	Max
MgO	2.5	Max
CCS (kg/p)	Ave 250	
8-16 mm%	Min 90	
-6 mm%	Ave 5	
A.I%	Max 3.8	
T.I%	Min 95	
Prosity%	19-24	
Reducibility%	Min 90	



IOEC
Iranian offshore
Engineering & Construction

Second Announcement

Call for Tender 1st Announcement for Purchase of Piping Material for POGC Spare Parts Project, Tender No. 987418

Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company intends to purchase the Tender of Piping Material POGC Spare Parts Project through a public tender. Therefore, the applicants are allowed to have 14 days after the date of 1st publication of the tender notice in the newspaper to participate in this tender. To download the tender documents, please visit the tender’s section of the IOEC’s website: WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS, and Please do not hesitate to contact with Transaction Committee office with Tel: +9821-82842740 under sign for any inquiries and more information.

Investigative journalism in Iran: An insider's perspective

Media deserves more 'tolerance' from authorities



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Today, the media, given their duty to shed light on public opinion and reflect the realities of society, are regarded as the clear voice of the people in the fight against economic corruption and the advancement of social justice. One of the public's constant demands is for the media to bring to light corruption and misconduct lurking beneath the surface of society.

In today's world, the ever-increasing growth of economic corruption is a serious problem for societies and lies at the root of other forms of corruption — including ethical, social, and even political. The greed of opportunists, who go after wealth through illicit means and take advantage of their influence, privileges, and connections, lies at the heart of much of the injustice and problems facing humanity. The scope of corruption is spreading in societies these days as people drift away from morality and spirituality, and it is creeping up to the highest levels of management.

This is where investigative journalism, as a form of watchdog journalism, steps in to monitor actions, abuses, corruption, mismanagement, and deviations. Journalists, in this way, prevent the covering up of truths in society and put a stop to the activities of wrongdoers.

To get to the bottom of the state of investigative journalism in Iran and the obstacles it faces, Iran Daily conducted an exclusive interview with Hossein Moslem, a seasoned journalist and editorial board member of Iran newspaper.



Hossein Moslem, the seasoned journalist working for Iran Newspaper, sits down for an interview.
● IRAN DAILY

IRAN DAILY: Could you briefly tell us about your background and how you got into journalism?

MOSLEM: I was born in 1968 in Tabriz. From childhood, I loved reading books, and during high school, I got hooked on reading newspapers. In the 1980s, a newspaper called Mahd-e Azadi was published in Tabriz. I would buy it every day and read it with great enthusiasm. I always had a feeling deep inside that one day I would write for that paper. And that's exactly what happened. After a while, I started sending in short literary pieces to the newspaper office, and my work would get published — even though my name was never mentioned. Back then, there was no expectation for a newcomer's name to make it into the paper. After my final exam in the fourth year of high school, as summer vacation began and before I even thought about university entrance exams, I was invited to work at the newspaper, given my previous experience. Interestingly, for the first two or three months, I was not recognized as an official member of the team — I didn't even have a stool to sit on. Sometimes, standing for so long would leave me so exhausted that my legs would be screaming in pain. Out of sheer fatigue, I would go sit down on a step in the yard and massage my legs. Only after three months did they finally give me a chair and a tiny desk, where I would sit and transcribe the Friday prayer sermons every week. Even so, I did this work with passion. I should add that the first time my name appeared above one of my pieces, I was so thrilled I couldn't sleep all night. First thing in the morning, I rushed out and bought the newspaper from the nearest newsstand. On the way back, I felt like I'd become Gabriel Garcia Marquez and was now one of the world's top writers. These were, after all, the dreams and feelings of my youth. In any case, I kept at it until I moved to Tehran. Since 1996, I have worked steadily at various newspapers, right up to now. Since 2012, I have been working in different sections of the Iran newspaper.

There have been many definitions of investigative journalism. Based on your experience, how would you define it, and how important is it?



Investigative journalism, as the name suggests, is a form of journalism rooted in discovery. Typically, the project an investigative journalist takes on to uncover the truth is a continuous, long-term, and grueling endeavor. If I were to give a historical example: In 1872, a journalist named Julius Chambers was working in New York, and I believe the first investigative report belongs to him. He posed as a psychiatric patient to report on the dire conditions in a mental hospital. After about two weeks of being admitted, he finally published a report in the New York Tribune that brought about a huge transformation in American hospitals. The situation in 19th-century psychiatric hospitals was so dire that people could be admitted for the slightest reason, but after the report was published, 12 people who had been wrongly institutionalized were released, and major changes were made to the management and even the laws governing psychiatric hospitals across America.

Usually, an investigative journalist kicks off their work by relying on available data, then digs into research and information gathering. Investigative journalism is so important that the world's top newspapers are measured by the track record of their investigative reports. This line of work is fraught with danger, however. That's why, in 1997, investigative journalists set up a consortium by the name of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), which at the time included about 70 countries and 200 newspapers. In 2017, this consortium became an independent organization that stands up for investigative journalists facing threats and dangers from, for example, drug cartels, military cartels, arms deals, money laundering, and government corruption. Still, the media itself must support investigative journalists not only legally but also in terms of job security and finances since preparing an investigative report can take more than a year. A criminal case may end with the

arrest of the criminal or murderer, but in investigative reporting, the end of such a case is only the beginning — or the continuation — of a story that uncovers deeper corruption and leads to even bigger legal cases.

How influential do you think new communication platforms have been in boosting the status of investigative journalism in the fight against corruption? For example, to what extent has the rise of social and virtual networks made it easier for journalists to put together investigative reports?

Tremendously so. These days, the internet and virtual messaging platforms open up an ocean of information in various fields and languages, making research and data gathering far easier than before. Of course, navigating this vast ocean of information requires a special skill: knowing how to sort out information by importance and fact-check it since you're faced with a flood of data online, much

of which lacks accuracy or credible sources.

Naturally, new communication tools have gone a long way toward helping journalists in all areas. In the past, you had to rely solely on library resources, but now, with a simple search, you can get your hands on a wealth of information. This has greatly smoothed the path for journalists, and with the imminent arrival of smart web technologies and bots, the job will only get easier. As Marshall Howard Berman, the American author, says in his remarkable book "All That Is Solid Melts into Air," modernity is a "double-edged sword". In other words, while modernity is essential and has made life easier, it also comes with its own pitfalls. Currently, tools like messaging apps and artificial intelligence have come to the aid of journalism, but the flip side is that such tools often call into question the authenticity of data. For instance, distinguishing a genuine news photo from one generated by AI is now so difficult that even experts can be thrown off.

In terms of laws and legal matters, what challenges do investigative journalists face in our country? To what extent do the higher institutions or the media itself have their backs? Frankly, under current conditions, if an investigative journalist digs into many of the sensitive issues society is grappling with, even if they uncover something significant and want to bring it to light, they will have to shoulder the costs themselves. There's no denying that we face obstacles in political, economic, and even social spheres that have, in effect, put a damper on investigative journalism in many areas. I'm not saying investigative journalism is impossible in Iran, but it must be said that selecting stories freely and seeing them through is extremely difficult.

In our country, and generally in places labeled as the Third World, if you zero in on any topic, it can easily be spun as political, and you may be branded as having a political agenda. Naturally, this means the groundwork for investigative reporting is lacking. However, at lower levels and with less sensitive topics, investigative work can be done — provided the journalist feels secure and knows they'll



Journalists Carl Bernstein (L) and Bob Woodward, whose reporting on the Watergate incident won a Pulitzer Prize, make phone calls in New York City, the US, on June 17, 1974.

● WARING ABBOTT/GETTY IMAGES



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Journalists work alongside other staff members in the newsroom of Iran Newspaper.

● HOSSEIN NAGHIZADEH/IRAN DAILY

be backed by supporting institutions and the media itself, both legally and professionally. This, of course, requires proper legislation. While there are protective laws in the press code and elsewhere, we still need supplementary regulations, since the lack of support remains palpable. As a result, a journalist who follows up on a story to the fullest and even manages to dig up solid evidence may find their work goes nowhere because of the risks that publishing such material would pose to the media outlet. All in all, in my view, right now in our country, the conditions are more favorable for analytical journalism than for investigative or exposé journalism. Analytical journalism helps get to the root of issues.

What role do organizational structures play in elevating investigative journalism, and to what extent do media outlets in our country make use of their resources for investigative reporting?

Preparing investigative reports, given their sensitive and complex nature, usually takes up a lot of time. One successful example is the exposure of child abuse in a Catholic church in Massachusetts by a group of journalists, which won them the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service and was depicted in the acclaimed 2015 film, *Spotlight*. This report was the result of months of teamwork by the Boston Globe journalists who holed up in a basement and put aside their daily duties to focus solely on this story. Or take the Watergate scandal, a major political scandal in US history that ultimately brought down president Richard Nixon. Two young Washington Post reporters, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, pieced together the elements of the spying and intelligence-gathering on Nixon's rivals, eventually revealing that Nixon himself was aware of the break-in and illegal wiretapping at the Democratic headquarters. In the end, Nixon was forced to resign. These two journalists stepped away from their usual newspaper work for months and poured all their energy into this investigation. Naturally, if our own media managers come around to the idea that investigative reporting can be so impactful, they might be persuaded to set up dedicated teams for such work.

Do current financial conditions in the media — especially print media — allow journalists to step away from their daily routines for extended periods and take on such assignments?

At present, only a handful of our media outlets have the means to take on special projects. That said, these projects don't necessarily call for massive financial resources. For instance, a four- or five-person team could handle such a task, needing only a dedicated room and workspace. But when some newspapers struggle to fill up their pages due to staff shortages, or when journalists are working on three- or six-month contracts, and outlets can't even keep up with monthly payroll, it's clear they're in no position to take on these kinds of assignments. On top of that, media managers need to be convinced that when journalists break away from their usual duties, they'll pour all their energy into the mission and deliver the expected results.

My next question is about the educational groundwork needed to raise the bar for investigative journalism. Do our media outlets put much stock in on-the-job training and boosting the scientific know-how of their journalists?

All in all, a range of factors must come together to set the stage for a healthy journalistic environment, in general, and for investigative journalism, in particular. These include social, political, and economic conditions, as well as both internal and external training. Of course, recruiting talented individuals should also be on the agenda since investigative journalism, beyond training and resources, calls for a special temperament and behavioral traits. Many skilled journalists may not be cut out for investigative work as it demands persistence, tenacity, courage, willpower, and tirelessness. You might knock on doors dozens of times with no answer, but you can't lose heart; You must stick with it and even put yourself in harm's way to get results. Training certainly helps build up the necessary skills, but it's not enough — journalists themselves must be naturally inclined and possess the right traits.

How familiar do you think our journalists are with investigative journalism? If you asked members of a newsroom to define it and its capabilities, how many could come up with a solid answer?

Naturally, those with an academic background in the field are certainly familiar with investigative journalism and its required steps. But those who have actually rolled up their sleeves and participated in such work are very few. How well others know the field comes down to their personal interest in studying it, but in my view, not many in the newsrooms are truly up to speed.

Does this mean that many of our journalists lack the necessary expertise for their profession?

Yes, this issue has been rearing its head since the late 2000s and early 2010s, with a noticeable drop in the recruitment of capable staff in newsrooms. A newsroom is like a football team: Success depends on a mix of seasoned veterans and energetic newcomers. A newsroom needs an experienced, supportive team so that when a newcomer comes on board, they can draw on the knowledge of the old hands — ensuring that as veterans bow out, their experience is passed down to the next generation. Unfortunately, in recent years, we've gradually seen a drop-off



in experienced, capable staff in newsrooms. I'm not saying the entire generation of seasoned professionals has vanished, but many have gradually drifted away from journalism for other careers, while some have simply thrown in the towel due to tough working conditions and left the country altogether. As these experts and veterans move on, the two-way relationship between newcomers and experts breaks down, which inevitably takes a toll on the work. At the same time, I believe that in recent years, the recruitment of new journalists has become somewhat careless. The reason is clear: When society gets hit by economic and social shocks, every sector feels the impact. One factor is the weakened financial backbone of the media, which hampers their ability to bring in skilled professionals. Another is the rise of favoritism over merit in hiring; In the past, few were hired thanks to personal connections, but now, some are brought in simply because they know the right people. While some of these hires may find their footing and stick around, the odds of a true standout emerging from this group are slim. These are just some of the reasons behind the weakening of our newsrooms.

As a seasoned veteran in the news and media profession, what advice would you give to build up a two-way relationship between the government and the media so that we can see through issues clearly and bring about social and economic justice?

In my view, the government must cut some slack and show more tolerance toward the media because the media are a cornerstone of democracy and justice in society. Every government

can lean on them to root out the ills and corruption that can even harm the government itself. In our country and worldwide — not just recently but always — those in power and wealth, when they have vested interests, will naturally push back against any journalism that tries to poke into their affairs and call out their corruption. Those who hold the reins of power and cash in on illicit gains simply cannot stand losing their position, and they strike back at any perceived threat. So, under such circumstances, few journalists are willing to step into such a dangerous arena. Even if they take on the risks and accept responsibility, the powers that be will stand in their way. Now imagine an investigative journalist who, with stealth and professionalism, unearths the schemes of economic corruptors so well that they cannot shut him down. Even then, which media outlet would be willing to take the plunge and publish such a report without fear of repercussions?

We live in an age where social and virtual networks have carved out a major role in spreading news and events, and citizen journalists have broken into the information scene. To what extent can these citizen journalists pitch in as investigative reporters and help blow the whistle on corruption?

Naturally, with the internet's expansion and new media tools like social networks available to the public, any ordinary person can now turn themselves into a mobile media outlet and put out photos and news in no time. But how accurate and impactful their work can be is another matter. If you think, however, that social media and citizen journalists can fill in for official media and

professional reporters, I haven't bought into that yet. I can accept that such individuals can play a part in the news puzzle, but their reports cannot be counted on as official, precise, and credible sources by society. Right now, if you put out a piece of news on social media and simultaneously a widely circulated newspaper prints another story with a different angle and conclusion, which one would you put your trust in? Naturally, official media can tap into social networks and citizen journalism to their advantage and use them as backup for newsroom staff, but they cannot take over the role of professional media and reporters.

What do you think is the ethical boundary for journalists when digging into individuals' private lives to dig up information on a story or case — how can they stay out of private spheres while still getting to the bottom of necessary facts?

This issue has been brought up since journalism began some 400 years ago, and it took on a more serious shape from the late 19th century when journalism became professionalized. The line journalists can cross into individuals' private lives for news gathering has always been debated. To me, privacy means exactly where your pursuit no longer serves the public interest. That's the key point: Sometimes a person's behavior can impact millions, and that's where journalists step in. But where it's about personal reputation and unrelated to the public good, journalists should back off. Knowing this boundary comes down to the journalist's own wisdom. Of course, laws now largely spell out these limits.

Overall, it seems there is a connection between investigative journalists and the police. How much can these two team up and lend a hand to each other?

In some cases, the work of police and investigative journalists overlaps. The police, with judicial authority, have much more room to dig into the truth and get involved in matters than investigative journalists do. Our journalists lack broad legal tools to penetrate institutions and scrutinize their performance. So, if the legal framework opens up for journalists, they can certainly collaborate closely with the police in many cases, and both sides' work will mesh together more effectively.



The Boston Globe won the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for this 2001–2002 investigation into the priest abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. ● BOSTON GLOBE

At present, only a handful of our media outlets have the means to take on special projects. That said, these projects don't necessarily call for massive financial resources. For instance, a four- or five-person team could handle such a task, needing only a dedicated room and workspace. But when some newspapers struggle to fill up their pages due to staff shortages, or when journalists are working on three- or six-month contracts, and outlets can't even keep up with monthly payroll, it's clear they're in no position to take on these kinds of assignments.

Jeremy Loffredo, an American investigative reporter, poses next to remnants of an Iranian-made missile headed for Israel. He was detained in solitary confinement in the West Bank by the Israeli authorities for reporting the extensive damage that Iran's retaliatory attack inflicted on the military bases near Tel Aviv. ● SOCIAL MEDIA

Ma'soumi attends Azerbaijan training despite IAWF warning



Iranian wrestler Amirreza Ma'soumi (L) faces Amirhossein Zare' in the freestyle 125kg final at the International Takhti Cup in Isfahan, Iran, on May 9, 2025.

● FARSHAD RANDANI/LAWFIR

Sports Desk

Iranian freestyle wrestler Amirreza Ma'soumi has shared a photo of himself alongside his father and personal coach, Fardin Ma'soumi, in a training session with Azerbaijan's national team in Baku – hinting at plans to continue his international career overseas.

The controversial photo emerged just days after Alireza Dabir, the chairman of the Iranian Wrestling Federation, had warned the 20-year-old sensation against further absence in the Iranian training camp.

"Every wrestler must know his place. If Ma'soumi skips the next national camp, he will be axed from the under-23 squad as well. The national team interests come first. I like him like my own son, and I just hope he is given the right advice," Dabir said in an in-

terview on Tuesday.

Ma'soumi has been the dominant force of the superheavyweight class across different age groups in recent years, grabbing six world gold medals – including last year's junior and U23 titles.

He was also part of the Iranian seniors' team in February's Ranking Series event in Zagreb and then represented the country at the Asian Championships in March, cruising to the 125kg gold on both occasions.

However, Ma'soumi, who fell short against compatriot Amirhossein Zare' in the Iranian Olympic trials last year, saw his hopes of a place in September's World Championships dashed after a second setback against the reigning world champion in May's International Takhti Cup final in Isfahan.

Dejected by some referring decisions in the 8-2 defeat, Ma'soumi

visited Yerevan in June for talks with the Armenian wrestling officials, including national team head coach Abetnak Kurginyan, about the prospect of representing the European country at international competitions.

Under the United World Wrestling rules, Ma'soumi would require a letter of consent from the Iranian federation before switching citizenship – a request that has been firmly rejected by Dabir.

"We've always granted approval for lower-ranked wrestlers [to represent other countries], but Ma'soumi is a top-notch asset for us, and already a favorite for world and Olympic golds. He has just been unlucky to have Zare' as a domestic opponent, though I believe the rivalry will push both wrestlers to new heights. I'm sure they are by far the world's top two in their weight class," Dabir said.

Asian Men's U16 Volleyball Championship: Iran rallies past Indonesia in opener

Sports Desk

Iran came from behind to beat Indonesia in four sets and get off to winning start at the Asian Men's U16 Volleyball Championship in Thailand.

Having arrived at the host city of Nakhon Pathom on the eve of their Pool B opener, Iranian boys suffered a 25-21 defeat in the first set before coming out victorious in the following sets by 25-21, 25-19, and 26-24 scorelines, respectively.

"Lack of preparation and the long trip clearly had an impact on our team, and the players could only unleash 20 percent of their true potential today," Iran head coach Arash Sadeqiani said after the game. "We're here to defend our title, and we will work hard to accomplish that despite all the problems we've had to deal with," added the Iranian.

Elsewhere in the group Kazakhstan



Iranian boys celebrate a point during a 3-1 victory over Indonesia at the Asian Men's U16 Volleyball Championship in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand, on July 12, 2025.

● VOLLEYBALL.IR

defeated Hong Kong in straight sets (25-16, 25-17, 25-22) to sit above Iran on top of the group table.

Iran will be back in action today against Hong Kong, before taking on Kazakhstan on Monday in what promises to decide the top spot of the pool.

The top two teams in each of the

four groups will progress to the next round, where eight teams will be split into two groups, with the top two advancing to the semifinals.

The top three teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2026 FIVB Boys' U17 World Championship in Doha, Qatar.

Iranian Ghandipour signs for Emirati champion Shabab Al Ahli

Sports Desk

Iranian teenage striker Reza Ghandipour joined UAE Pro League champion Shabab Al Ahli on a four-year contract on Friday.

Ghandipour, 19, spent last season at Malavan FC on loan from Paykan, bagging eight goals and four assists in 23 top-flight appearances to help the northern Iranian club finish seventh in the league.

He also has a remarkable 20 goals under his belt in 22 age-group caps, including two in February's AFC U20 Asian Cup in China, as Iran was knocked out in the quarterfinals after a shootout defeat against Japan.

Ghandipour was heavily linked with a move to Persian Gulf Pro League club Esteghlal but decided to continue his career overseas, where he will team up with fellow-Iranians Sardar Azmoun and Saeid Ezzatollahi at Shabab Al Ahli.



● AFC

Ghandipour is the second Iranian teenager to move to the Emirati ADNOC Pro League in recent days, following 19-year-old midfielder Mobin Dehqan who left Khaybar to sign a three-year deal with Al Wahda SC on Tuesday.

Alcaraz expects wiser Sinner in Wimbledon final

REUTERS – Carlos Alcaraz resumes his fast-growing Grand Slam rivalry with Jannik Sinner in the Wimbledon final but the second seed said on Friday that his epic win over the Italian in the French Open title clash last month did not give him the mental edge.

Defending champion Alcaraz quelled the challenge of American fifth seed Taylor Fritz 6-4 5-7 6-3 7-6(6) to secure his spot in a third consecutive title clash at the All England Club, before Sinner humbled seven-times winner Novak Djokovic 6-3 6-3 6-4.

Alcaraz saved three match points to beat Sinner in a shade under 5-1/2 hours at Roland Garros in one of the most memorable finals of all time, but the Spaniard expected his opponent to be a lot wiser after that heart-breaking defeat.

"Whatever Jannik has, (it is) because he has learned from everything as a huge champion, from the losses, from the matches he's playing, he just gets better after every match, every day," Alcaraz told reporters.

"I'm pretty sure he's going to take a lot of things from the French Open final, he's going to be better physically, be better mentally. He's going to be prepared on Sunday to give 100%.

"I'm not thinking I have an advantage mentally on Sunday because of that match."

Alcaraz, who will be eyeing his third successive title at Wimbledon to match the feat of Bjorn Borg, Pete Sampras, Roger Federer and Djokovic, said he had not

revisited his big battle with Sinner on the red dirt of Paris.

"But I still think about that moment, sometimes. Yeah, it was probably the best... I mean, not 'probably' no, it was the best match that I have ever played so far."

"I just hope it's not to be 5-1/2 hours on court again," he smiled. "If I have to, I will. I think it's going to be great."



● REUTERS



● FIVB

Iranian outside-hitter Esfandiar joins InPost ChKS in Polish PlusLiga

Sports Desk

Iranian international volleyball player Amirhossein Esfandiar left Foolad Sirjan to sign for newly-promoted InPost ChKS Chełm in the Polish PlusLiga.

The 26-year-old outside-hitter is part of the national team at the ongoing Volleyball Nations League, where he has contributed 34 points in six games – including 19 in the 3-1 defeat

against Germany in the second week of the preliminary round in Belgrade, Serbia.

Sitting 10th in the 18-team table of the preliminary phase, Iran will be back in action against Poland for the start of Week 3 in Gdansk, Poland, on Wednesday before taking on China, France, and Bulgaria.

A former player of Kaleyh Mazandaran and Chinese club Tianjin Food Group, as well as Belgian

side Greenyard Maaseik and Ural Ufa in Russia, Esfandiar is a two-time Asian champion with the national team and picked up the gold medal with the country at the rescheduled Hangzhou Asian Games in 2023.

Esfandiar was also named the Most Valuable Player of the tournament when he captained Iran to the title at the FIVB U21 World Championship in Riffa, Bahrain, in 2019.

Shahkuh Kharabeh; a place of history, beauty, potentialities

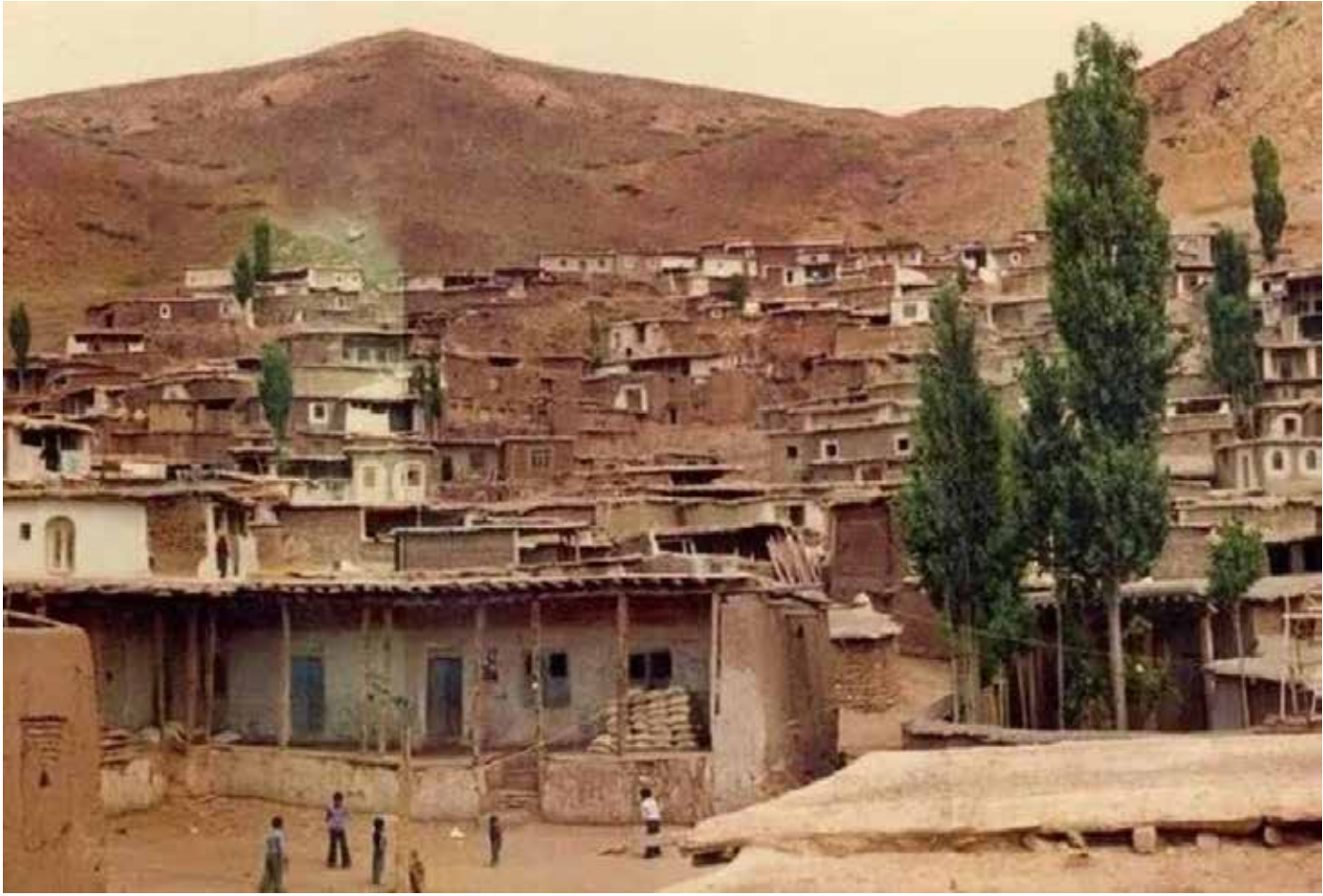
Iranica Desk

In the heart of the majestic, towering mountains of Golestan Province, along the winding and serpentine paths of Shahkuh-e Oliya village, lies a silent and mysterious spot filled with stories untold: Shahkuh Kharabeh (which roughly translates to "Ruined Shahkuh"). This place is where stone walls whisper echoes of prosperous days gone by, and where its colorful soil remains a vivid symbol of life, resilience, and beauty.

Shahkuh Kharabeh is a hidden corner of history, where time seems to have stood still, murmuring its thousand-year-old stories in majestic silence. It is a village rich with history — some researchers and local residents believe it dates back thousands of years, serving as a relic from an era when humans preferred the mountains over the plains to forge a living and establish their homes.

Many years ago, families made their homes here. They built houses with the strong, skillful hands of mountain folk, using stones and earth from the surrounding terrain. These dwellings once echoed with the sounds of daily life — children's laughter and play, the quiet whispers of cold mountain nights, and the enduring warmth of a tight-knit community. Over time, however, and with shifting living conditions, these settlements gradually fell into disuse. The reasons were numerous including the harsh cold of winter, difficult access roads, migration to bustling cities in search of better opportunities, and water shortages that made sustenance increasingly difficult.

Not long ago, Shahkuh Kharabeh was alive with activity. Its houses — constructed from sturdy stone and clay — embodied traditional architecture,



● asriran.com

standing as testaments to a harmonious relationship with nature and the surrounding natural resources. The inhabitants persevered through hardships, creating a life woven with resilience and hope. Winters were cold and exhausting, yet life in Shahkuh's ruins bore sweet memories, and summers brought blessings and bounty. It was a place where many generations grew up, forging their identities amidst these rugged surroundings, creating stories and memories that endured.

But gradually, economic hardships, inadequate infrastructure, and the migration of young people seeking better oppor-



tunities caused the village to decay. What once was a lively community became a silent relic. The walls crumbled, and

the narrow alleyways echoed only with echoes of the past — ghosts of a vibrant life. Despite these silent ruins, Shah-

kuh has never truly lost its spirit. Today, when you step into this land, the tranquil silence of the mountains and the endless vistas of natural beauty transport you into another world. The soil itself, a testament to the region's unique environment, presents an extraordinary palette: in some parts lush with mountain vegetation, in others grayish or reddish hues, creating a vivid tapestry of colors that shimmer in the sunlight. From atop its hills, the view is breathtaking: surrounding forests and mountains stretch like a verdant, undulating wave across the expansive horizon, while the vast, limitless sky

above awakens the soul of every nature lover. The place of Shahkuh Kharabeh is not merely an abandoned site but a canvas of potential — an opportunity for sustainable and responsible tourism in northern Iran.

With proper attention and care, this area could evolve into one of the country's most attractive destinations for lovers of nature, history, and adventure alike. It is ideal for mountain climbing, overnight camping, nature photography, and experiences of tranquility amidst the mountains' silent embrace. In this untouched, pristine environment, visitors can connect with authentic rural and mountain life — something increasingly rare in today's fast-paced world.

Furthermore, Shahkuh holds the potential to become a hub for eco-tourism, environmental research, and historical studies. It could serve as a captivating location for filmmaking and documentaries that explore the beauty of nature and the depths of history. Envision a future where life is reborn amidst the remnants of stone houses and dirt pathways — families returning to the village, tourists respecting and preserving its environment, all contributing to a brighter tomorrow rooted in the deep soil of history.

Now, more than ever, Shahkuh Kharabeh calls for careful stewardship and heartfelt attention — an outlook that, amidst its silent ruins and whispering stones, recognizes not only a glorious past but also a future brimming with hope, revitalization, and prosperity.

Perhaps it is time for the life of this remarkable place to flow once again in this part of the eastern Alborz Mountains — a life that honors both its storied history and the delicate beauty of nature, forging a harmonious tomorrow.

Majesty of Khosrogerd Minaret in Khorasan Razavi Province

Iranica Desk

Not very long ago, minarets — often called guide towers — were solemn human-made structures placed in the heart of deserts. They were built to serve as visual guides for caravans, helping them avoid losing their way. Today, these minarets still act as guides for travelers who visit them, reliving the history embedded within their stones.

The Khosrogerd Minaret is located ten kilometers east of the city of Sabzevar, in Khorasan Razavi Province. It dates back to the twelfth century and is among the few minarets that have preserved their grandeur until today.

Undoubtedly, the ancient travelers who passed along the Silk Road recorded many memories of the Khosrogerd Minaret. In fact, it can be said that the min-



aret was an integral part of the Silk Road itself. In recent years, after the separation of the two lanes of the Tehran-Mashhad route, the minaret now stands between the two roads, visible from both directions.

The Khosrogerd Minaret dates back approximately nine hundred years. It was constructed in 1112 by order of Taj-o-Dowleh Ab-ol-Ghasem-

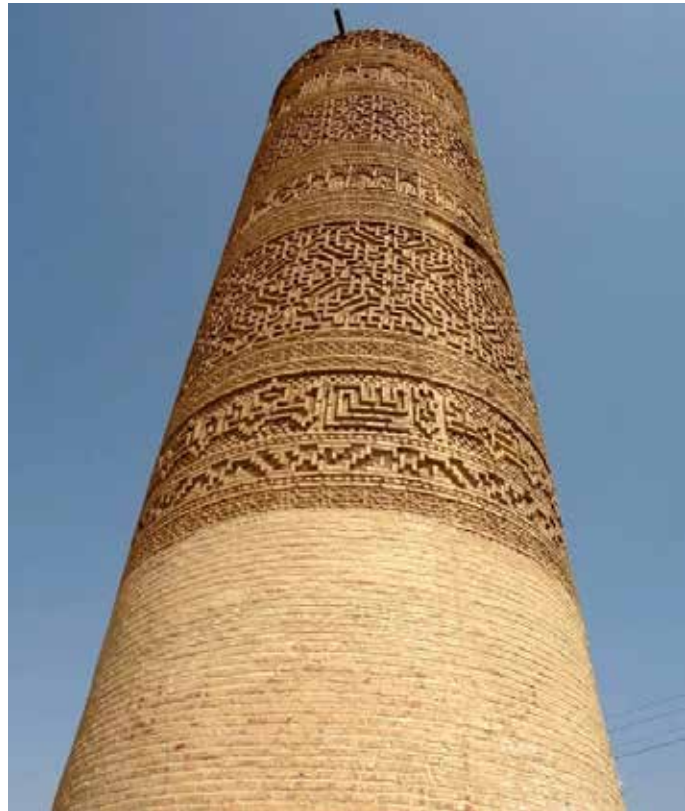


● yjc.ir

ibn-e-Saeed, during the Seljuk dynasty. Its total height from the base to the highest point is just over thirty-two meters. Compared to other buildings, it remains the tallest historic monument in Razavi Khorasan Province.

The main material used in the construction of the Khosrogerd Minaret is brick. These bricks are supported by oth-

er compounds such as wood and a mortar mixture of mud, limestone, sand, and clay. The structure is composed of four parts: the base, the main body, the body, and the head. The base is square-shaped, while the main body is a tall cylinder. To access the upper part of the minaret, two stairways have been built on the eastern and western sides, each consisting



of six stairs. At the top of the minaret, two inscribed tablets written in Kufic script can be seen, along with decorative patterns in diamond

shapes. According to archaeologists, the Khosrogerd Minaret is a unique, standalone structure, independent of any other construction.



Iran's first Paleolithic World Heritage site UNESCO inscribes 60,000-year-old caves on World Heritage List

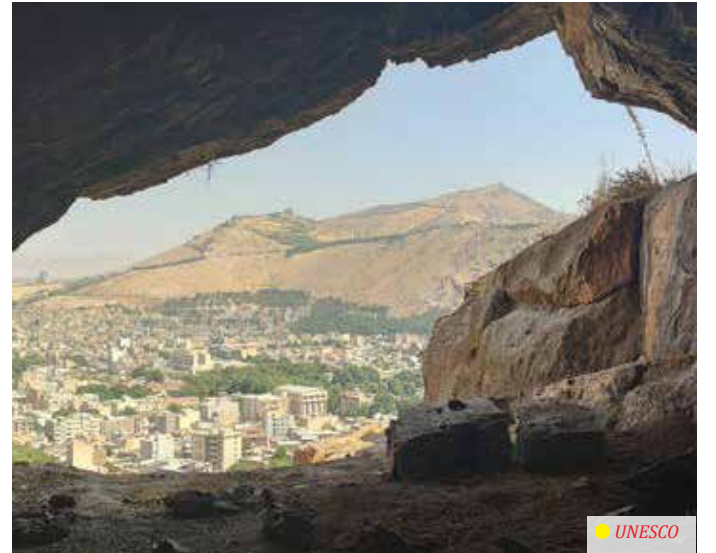
Arts & Culture Desk

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee on July 11 inscribed Iran's prehistoric Khorramabad Valley in the Zagros Mountains as the country's 29th World Heritage Site, marking the country's first-ever Paleolithic-era inscription. The decision was announced during the committee's 47th session in Paris. The site, located in western Iran's Lorestan Province, documents over 60,000 years of human history through a series of caves and rock shelters, IRNA reported. It includes five archaeologically verified sites, Yafteh, Ghamari, Kunji, Gilvaran, Kalder, and Gar Arjeneh, each offering clues into

the evolution of human behavior, from Neanderthals to early Homo sapiens. UNESCO experts called the cultural record "unparalleled" for its depth and continuity. The caves lie in the rugged karst terrain of the Zagros Mountains, along what scientists call a critical prehistoric corridor linking Africa with Eurasia. "This inscription gives Iran its first foothold in global Paleolithic heritage," said Sonia Shidrang, a Paleolithic archaeologist at Shahid Beheshti University and scientific lead on the nomination dossier. Shidrang's research at Yafteh Cave helped redefine the Baradostian tradition (ca. 40,000–25,000 years ago), revealing marine shell

beads, hematite pendants, and perforated deer teeth, early examples of symbolic behavior. "These are not just ancient tools. They speak of thought, memory, identity," she said. Her work was central to meeting UNESCO's "Outstanding Universal Value" criteria. The nomination involved years of collaboration between Iranian and international experts. John D. Speth, a University of Michigan anthropologist who co-directed excavations at Kunji Cave in 1969, welcomed the news. "This recognition is long overdue," he said. "Khorramabad preserves a record of Homo sapiens' dispersal and contact with Neanderthals, one of the world's most

compelling evolutionary stories." Beyond its scientific merit, the valley's inscription was celebrated in Iran as a diplomatic and cultural milestone. Minister of Cultural Heritage Reza Salehi Amiri described it as "a response to international misunderstanding" about Iran, adding that the move reflects a national commitment to history over hostility. "Even in difficult times, we choose to send the voice of culture, not the sound of explosions," he said. The region is also being positioned for broader tourism and investment. Ata Hassanpour, Director General of Lorestan's Cultural Heritage Department, noted that barriers to investment



have largely been cleared, calling the province "safe and ready" for both domestic and international visitors. With this recognition, Iran joins a select group of countries, including France, Spain, China, and Indonesia, whose prehistoric sites are formally part of

the global narrative of human origins. For archaeologists and cultural historians, Khorramabad Valley is now "a bridge across continents and species," as one official put it, bearing witness to tens of thousands of years of human endurance and innovation.

ADVERTORIAL

President hails Mobarakeh Steel for building largest solar power plant in Iran



The first phase of Mobarakeh Steel's 600-megawatt solar power plant, with a capacity of 120 megawatts, was inaugurated on Thursday, July 10, via video conference by Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, with the presence of the Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade (IMT), the Governor-General of Isfahan, deputies of the Ministry of IMT, the representative of Mobarakeh in the Parliament, the CEO of Mobarakeh Steel Group, the Director-General of IMT in Isfahan, the Governor of Kuhpayeh, and a group of deputies and managers from the Mobarakeh Steel Group.

Iran's largest solar farm financed by Mobarakeh Steel

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian during the inauguration ceremony of the first phase of Mobarakeh Steel's solar power plant, expressed appreciation to Mobarakeh Steel for investing in the construction of the largest centralized solar power plant in Iran before issuing the official order to launch the plant. "I also thank Minister of Energy Abbas Aliabadi and Minister of IMT Mohammad Atabak, the honorable Minister of IMT, as well as the managers, contractors, and the Mobarakeh Steel team who took the lead in this project and made this investment," he added.

IMT Minister: Mobarakeh Steel's solar park, symbol of national will toward sustainable development, use of clean energy



Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad Atabak, stated during the inauguration, "This project will enhance access to energy and goes beyond electricity production. The Aftab-e Shargh (Sun of the East) solar

power plant by Mobarakeh Steel is a key step toward reducing dependence on fossil fuels, cutting greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthening national energy

security, building a cleaner future for the next generations." Emphasizing that this project, with a final capacity of 600 megawatts, is a symbol of national determination for sustainable development and the use of

clean energy, he added, "In the first phase, a 120-megawatt capacity has come online thanks to the efforts of engineers, workers, and managers of the Mobarakeh Steel Group, in collaboration with Daneshmand Engineering Company and the project's contractor." He noted that about 40% of the equipment used in this power plant has been localized, reflecting the country's domestic engineering and technical capabilities. According to the minister, the project is being inaugurated in the year designated by the Leader of Islamic Revolution Seyyed Ali Khamenei as the "Year of Investment for Production" and will benefit the Isfahan Province. Beyond electricity production, the plan also aims to increase employment at Mobarakeh Steel, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, cut greenhouse gas

emissions, and enhance energy security.



Mobarakeh Steel imposes no pressure on national power grid: CEO

During the commissioning of the first phase of the 600-megawatt solar power plant, CEO of Mobarakeh Steel Group Saeed Zarandi expressed gratitude for the support of the Minister of IMT, especially during the recent 12-day imposed war and the backing provided to the industry. He also thanked all officials who supported the industry under such tough conditions. "Before discussing today's inauguration, I must appreciate the managers and workers of Mobarakeh Steel who, even during the 12-day imposed war, tirelessly and valiantly continued their production efforts, maintaining sustainable output," he said.

240 megawatts of Mobarakeh's solar electricity to come online by October

Zarandi stated on the sidelines of the inauguration of the first phase of the country's largest solar power plant, "The total investment for this project was 305 million euros. Today marks the start of the first phase. Also, about *50 trillion rials (approx. \$100 million) has so far been invested in part of the second phase." "During this time, power outages and energy imbalances created serious challenges for Mobarakeh Steel. We hope that through the measures we've taken and by using solar energy, we can

move toward green steel production. This strategy is among Mobarakeh's core goals and is a promising achievement for the nation," he added.

Over \$2.3b invested by Mobarakeh Steel to protect environment

Zarandi emphasized that during this time, they developed and implemented various strategies and approaches, "despite the difficulties, we gained valuable experiences." "Mobarakeh Steel aims to operate on a global level. In all fields, especially in environmental areas, it has consistently acted as a responsible company and has made many investments. To date, the company has invested over \$2.3 billion in the environmental sector and has set a goal to produce green steel with the lowest possible carbon footprint. Thankfully, today we are witnessing the fruition of another great achievement," he added.

DoE chief: Government focused on developing green energy, Mobarakeh Steel on frontline

Shina Ansari, vice president and head of the Department of Environment (DoE), speaking on the opening of the first phase of Mobarakeh Steel's 600-megawatt solar power plant, stated, "The 14th administration's focus is on the development of clean energy, and Mobarakeh Steel is on the front line of this effort." "One of the government's key strategies to tackle energy imbalances and protect the environment is the expansion of renewable energy, especially solar power plants," she added. According to Ansari, the 600-megawatt Aftab-e Shargh solar power plant by Mobarakeh Steel aligns perfectly with this strategy and is consistent with the upstream policies and the objectives of Iran's Seventh De-



velopment Plan. She expressed hope that after the first phase comes online, the other phases will be completed on schedule. "The full implementation of this project can play a significant role in reducing fossil fuel consumption and cutting greenhouse gas emissions," Ansari added.



Governor-general of Isfahan: Mobarakeh Steel contributed greatly in launching seawater transfer pipeline to Isfahan

Governor-General of Isfahan Mehdi Jamalinejad also expressed appreciation for the CEO and employees of Mobarakeh Steel Group for launching the Aftab-e Shargh solar power plant. He emphasized, "it's important to note that Mobarakeh Steel has also made remarkable efforts toward the operation of the seawater transfer pipeline to Isfahan." "July 10, water from the Sea of Oman reached the Isfahan refinery, and in about a month, it will reach Mobarakeh Steel, this will greatly benefit Isfahan's industry. The province has 10,000 active industries, making up roughly one-tenth of the country's industrial base. These industries stood firm and resilient during the 12-day imposed war," he added.