

President urges unity, praises women's role in national development

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Iran's strengths, weaknesses in 12-day war with Israel

By Hossein Alaei
Former IRGC Navy commander

O P I N I O N

During the 12-day war, Israel targeted the core components of Iran's national power—namely, its defense capabilities, nuclear infrastructure, and scientific assets. The war began with the assassinations of senior Iranian military commanders and nuclear scientists.

Israel has long relied on assassination as its primary method for neutralizing opponents and adversaries. It has developed the world's largest assassination apparatus and remains the only regime where targeted killings are a routine policy tool. Over the years, thousands of innocent individuals in Palestine and other countries have been assassinated by Israeli operatives. Israel possesses advanced equipment and vast experience in executing various forms of assassination and mass killing. While all Israeli prime ministers have been criminals, terrorists, and murderers, Benjamin Netanyahu stands as the most vile, ruthless terrorist in the world—the blood-thirstiest creature on earth. From its inception, the Zionist regime has functioned as a fundamentally terrorist entity. Its officials have derived gratification from murder and bloodshed.

Israel has utilized the latest technologies and the most advanced intelligence-gathering tools to plan and carry out operations—ranging from assassinations to direct strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, air defense systems, missile bases, and even civilian targets, including Evin Prison, residential neighborhoods, and hospitals. These attacks were carried out with intelligence support from the CIA and NATO networks.

One of Iran's key vulnerabilities, in retrospect, was the lack of preparedness within its own intelligence and security services to counter such a large-scale and constantly active Israeli intelligence apparatus—namely, Mossad, Israeli military intelligence, and other aligned spy agencies.

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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) addresses Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad (2nd R) and his deputies during a visit to the Oil Ministry in the capital Tehran on July 13, 2025.
● president.ir

Potential changes in Russia's Mideast diplomacy after Bogdanov's departure

By Tahmina Abdul Vase
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& lead expert on Asia

O P I N I O N
EXCLUSIVE

Mikhail Bogdanov's resignation from his position as Russia's deputy foreign minister and special envoy to the Middle East and Africa marks a pivotal moment in Russian foreign policy. As one of the key architects of Russia's strategy in the region, his departure introduces uncertainty regarding how Russia will pursue its interests in the Middle East moving forward.

With over 50 years of diplomatic service, Bogdanov played a major role in establishing and strengthening Russia's relationships with key regional players, including Syria, Iran, and the Gulf States. His efforts to advance

Russia's interests, through military-political alliances or economic cooperation, helped position Russia as a central actor in regional conflicts and political processes. Bogdanov was one of the primary figures regional leaders turned to; his authority and experience not only served as the basis for decision-making but also as a symbol of stability in Russian policy.

What will change after his departure?

Bogdanov possessed a unique ability to forge personal connections and build trusted relationships with leaders from Arab countries, Iran, and other key players. He was the individual with whom open and direct negotiations were possible. His departure may make it more difficult to maintain these trusted relationships, especially amidst the ongoing instability in the region. His re-

placement may be a diplomat with a different approach, and their influence will depend on whether they can establish the same level of trust Bogdanov had built.

Russia will undoubtedly remain an active player in the Middle East, but its strategy may undergo changes. Bogdanov was a strong proponent of a multipolar approach, countering Western influence, and maximizing Russia's presence through diplomatic channels, military alliances, and involvement in peace processes. In his absence, this trajectory will likely continue, but with a potential shift in focus—perhaps towards increased economic cooperation with certain regional countries or a deepening of relations with China and India, which could also affect how Russia's foreign policy is perceived in the Middle East.

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Araghchi: Tehran not to resume negotiations unless own rights secured

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Saturday that it is the Islamic Republic that will determine when, under what conditions, and in what manner will return to the negotiating table with the US.

"Our purpose in negotiations is nothing other than to secure the rights and interests of the Iranian people; whenever we feel that these interests can be secured, we will engage in negotiations, and when no such benefit exists, it is natural that we will not go ahead with it," the Iranian foreign minister said in an interview on the sidelines of a meeting with foreign diplomats in Tehran.

"Our enemies, the Americans and the Zionist regime, tried a military attack, and it became clear that they could not break the will and resistance of the Iranian people in this way, and they could not stop Iran's nuclear program. Therefore, there is no solution other than a negotiated solution," he added.

The Iranian top diplomat noted that science and technology cannot be wiped out by bombing.

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,



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) speaks in a meeting with foreign diplomats in Tehran on July 12, 2025.
● mfa.gov.ir

which was announced on its behalf by US President Donald Trump.

During his meeting with foreign diplomats, Araghchi said that Tehran is "ready" for diplomacy to resolve Iran's nuclear issue.

"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 that diplomacy serves as a cover for their own objectives," Araghchi said.

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 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."

New freedom flotilla vessel leaves for Gaza to defy Israeli blockade

International Desk

A new freedom flotilla boat departed a port in southern Italy for Gaza on Sunday to "break Israel's illegal blockade" on the Palestinian territory.

The Gaza-bound vessel is carrying pro-Palestinian activists and humanitarian aid supplies left Sicily, over a month after Israel detained international activists aboard a different vessel that had made a high-profile attempt to break the blockade on the Gaza Strip.

The Handala vessel, named after the iconic Palestinian child symbol of resistance, left the port of Syracuse shortly after 12 p.m., carrying about 15 activists. It is operated by the Freedom Flotilla Coalition, which also dispatched the earlier boat, the Madleen, on a mission to challenge Israel's blockade on the Strip.



Freedom Flotilla ship Handala departs the Syracuse port in southern Italy for Gaza to break Israel's blockade on the Palestinian territory on July 13, 2025.
● [GIOVANNI ISOLINO/AFP](http://Giovanni.Isolino/AF)

ade on the Strip.

Several dozen people, some holding Palestinian flags and others wearing keffiyeh scarves, gathered at the port to cheer the boat's departure with cries of "Free Palestine."

The former Norwegian trawler — which activists say is carrying medical supplies, food, children's equipment and medicine for Gaza — will sail for about a week in the Mediterranean, covering roughly 1,800 kilometers

(1,120 miles), in the hope of reaching Gaza's coast.

The boat will make a stop at Gallipoli, in southeastern Italy, where two members of France's hard-left La France Insoumise party are expected to join.

"This is a mission for the children in Gaza, to break the humanitarian blockade and to break the summer silence on the genocide," said Gabrielle Cathala, one of the two La France Insoumise members set to board the boat

on July 18.

"I hope we will reach Gaza but if not, it will be yet another violation of international law" by Israel, she claimed.

The initiative comes six weeks after the departure of the Madleen, another ship that left Italy for Gaza transporting aid and activists, including prominent climate activist Greta Thunberg and French-Palestinian European Parliament member Rima Hassan.

Israeli forces attacked the Madleen on June 9, about 100 185 kilometers west of Gaza's coast and detained the activists.

Iran's strengths, weaknesses ...

While Israel runs one of the most powerful and experienced spy apparatus in the world, human intelligence operatives have largely been replaced by modern surveillance technologies. Today, information is gathered in real time via satellites, drones, and reconnaissance aircraft, and is immediately relayed to fighter jets and strike drones, enabling targeted assassinations, missile strikes, or aerial bombardments.

On another front, Israel sought to weaponize Iran's internal social dynamics for its own gain during the military campaign. However, this strategy backfired entirely. One of Iran's greatest strengths during the war was the overwhelming support it received from the public—both at home and overseas. Political figures, academics, artists, various political parties, and even political prisoners stood in defense of Iran's territorial

integrity and condemned the Israeli-American military offensive.

Israel had hoped the Iranian public would at least remain neutral—if not indifferent—in the face of its brutal campaign. But instead, the smart people of Iran viewed the aggression as an cruel war and stood firm against it. They resisted the bombardments and helped derail Israel and the United States' strategic objectives.

Another major strength was Iran's swift and authoritative military response. Despite the targeted killings of senior IRGC and armed forces commanders, the country managed to retaliate within hours, hitting precise military targets in occupied territories. These retaliatory strikes continued unabated until the cease-fire took effect.

Even though the full scope of American, Israeli, and NATO air defense systems—including the Iron Dome

and missile shield platforms—had been mobilized, a significant number of Iranian missiles, manufactured domestically under the weight of harsh sanctions, managed to strike their targets. Among them was the American Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. Israel, for the first time in years, felt the bitter reality of war firsthand.

Iran's most significant shortcoming was being caught off guard at the onset of the Israeli assault, leading to the assassinations of distinguished IRGC commanders and renowned nuclear scientists—some alongside their families.

The performance of Iran's government and foreign policy during and prior to the war deserves a separate and detailed assessment. Now is an opportune moment for the Islamic Republic to draw lessons from the 12-day conflict and prevent Israel from initiating another round of aggression.

'Dirty politicized campaign': Russia raps anti-Iran report on zero enrichment plan

International Desk

Russia's Foreign Ministry on Sunday described as a "dirty politicized campaign" a report claiming that President Vladimir Putin had encouraged Iran to accept a "zero enrichment" agreement on its nuclear program.

US news outlet Axios reported on Saturday, citing three anonymous sources familiar with the matter, that Putin had "encouraged" Iran to accept a deal with the United States that would prevent the Islamic republic from enriching uranium. The article "appears to be a new political defamation campaign aimed at exacerbating tensions around Iran's nuclear program," the Russian Foreign Ministry said on Sunday.

"Invariably and repeatedly, we have emphasized the necessity of resolving the crisis concerning Iran's nuclear program exclusively through political and diplomatic means, and expressed our willing-



ness to help find mutually acceptable solutions," the statement read. Moscow has defended Tehran's right to use nuclear technology for civilian purposes but in recent months, Putin has also drawn closer to US President Donald Trump. Iran and the US began negotiations in April to resolve a decades-old dispute over Tehran's nuclear program. They held five rounds of talks mediated by Oman, which were described as constructive by both sides. However, the talks faced an obstacle over the US demand for Iran to stop enriching uranium under any new deal. Washing-

ton says uranium enrichment must be brought to zero while Tehran maintains its nuclear program is exclusively for civilian purposes and views its enrichment industry as a red line.

The sixth round of US-Iran nuclear talks, originally planned for June 15, were cancelled. These talks, scheduled to take place in Muscat, Oman, were called off following Israeli aggression against Iran. While the talks are off the table, the US has stated it remains committed to dialogue with Iran that has also declared that it is ready for resumption of negotiations.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Pezeshkian calls for proactive steps to attract oil, energy investment

Iran’s victory against Israel ascribed to defense power, national unity

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian underlined the importance of increasing investment in the oil industry, stating that the country must act more proactively to attract and utilize the potential investment interest expressed by numerous entities in the field of energy production. In an unannounced visit to Iran’s Oil Ministry on Sunday, he appreciated the diligent efforts of the ministry’s managers and staffers to prevent shortages and challenges in the energy supply during the 12-day Israeli-imposed war (launched on June 13), as reported by IRNA reported. The president emphasized the importance of increasing investment in the oil industry, stating, “Numerous individuals and entities have expressed readiness and interest in investing in the field of energy production and consumption management. We must act more proactively to attract and utilize this potential.” He also described the development of clean energy infrastructure, particularly accelerating the construction of solar power plants, as a complementary measure in energy production and consumption management.

Furthermore, he noted it creates cost-efficiency for attracting investors to the sector. Pezeshkian had granted all administrative departments a deadline - effective June 21 - to supply part of their required electricity from solar energy. “Expanding solar power plants will reduce the need to supply subsidized gas and diesel for electricity production, which will free up the Oil Ministry’s capacity for investment and increase the attractiveness for private sector investors,” Pezeshkian said. He instructed the officials at the ministry to formulate and present solutions for optimal management of energy production and particularly consumption. The president directed them to conduct precise studies, utilize all existing experience, and incorporate expert opinions. Expressing hope that the country will not face energy shortages this winter, adding, “In this process, consider all opportunities, threats, and possibilities, and make the necessary forecasts.”

Defense power, national unity
Elsewhere in his remarks, Pezeshkian credited Iran’s tri-



President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) meets with Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad (2nd L) in an unannounced visit to Iran’s Oil Ministry on July 13, 2025. ● SHANA

umph in the 12-day war against Israel to the nation’s robust defense capabilities and unwavering cohesion, emphasizing their significance in overcoming the Israeli regime’s aggression. “It was you, along with people from various walks of life, who, with the right understanding

and timely wisdom, thwarted the enemy’s plots to destabilize the country,” the Iranian president said. “If it weren’t for the people’s unity and active engagement on the ground, alongside our Armed Forces’ capabilities and missiles that dismantled Israel’s repu-

tation, our triumph and victory would have been unattainable.” Pezeshkian also emphasized the administration’s commitment to promoting diplomacy as a means to prevent future wars and conflicts. “War benefits no one and never has a winner,” he asserted.

“We are dedicated to fostering peace, tranquility, and stability, driven by our motto and strategy of national unity, internal solidarity, and fostering amicable relationships with our neighbors and global community. “We do not engage in aggression and have no intention to do so; however, we will steadfastly resist any attempts at intimidation or coercion,” he concluded. On June 13, Israel launched a blatant 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.

Record 600 mines revived in Iran last year: IMIDRO

Economy Desk

A senior official from the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation announced that in the last Iranian calendar year 1403 (began on March 20, 2024) nearly 600 mines were revived, activated, or developed, which “represents the highest figure in mine revitalization.” The head of IMIDRO’s Board of Directors, Mohammad Aqajanlu, made the announcement on Sunday, adding that based on the performance of the small-scale mine revitalization, activation, and development plan, from its inception (2018) until the end of last Iranian year, 2,373 small-scale mines were revived, and developed, IRNA reported. The deputy minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade added that of the number, 594 mines pertained to the year 1403.



Given the target program (150 mines), the move resulted in a 296% increase in the performance of the small-scale mine revitalization, and development plan. This is while during the year 1402, the number of revived, and developed mines was 493. Reporting a 20% growth in last year’s performance compared to the year 1402, the head of IMIDRO’s Board of

Directors stated that the performance of the year 1403 shows that 96 investment packages were introduced under the small-scale mine revitalization, activation, and development plan. Furthermore, in the winter of that year, five tender winners were identified with the aim of preparing feasibility studies to complete the value chain. Iran Mineral Processing and

Production Company (IMPASCO), a subsidiary company of IMIDRO, acts as the executor and coordinator of the small-scale mine revitalization and activation plan. Iran’s diverse mineral reserves are considered a national treasure. According to Alireza Shahidi, chairman of the Board of Directors of Iran Mineral Production and Supply Company, announcing at a mining exhibition in May,

“Iran boasts diverse mineral resources, with 81 types of minerals.” The country is the 15th-largest mineral-rich country globally, and Iranian officials call mining the backbone of industrial development and say it should replace oil as the primary revenue generator. However, at the exhibition in May, Abbas Taqdisinejad, CEO of Shahr-e Aftab Exhibition Center, criticized the failure in achieving the goal, stating, “While 26% of Iran’s exports come from minerals, the sector has grown only 1–2% annually in recent years.” Citing outdated equipment and underutilized domestic and foreign investment potential, he stated, “The 7th Development Plan forecasts 13% growth for mining. Achieving this requires greater coordination among stakeholders to attract investment.”

Potential changes in...

Impact on Russian policy in Syria and Iran

Page 1 > One of Bogdanov’s main achievements was his role in supporting the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad and strengthening ties with Iran. These two directions will likely remain priorities for Russia, but in his absence, the methods of pursuing policies in these countries may be reassessed. On a practical level, this could mean a shift in cooperation formats, the development of new diplomatic channels, or a reevaluation of military or economic engagement strategies.

Succession issues
A key factor will be how Russia chooses to fill the vacuum left by Bogdanov. He occupied a unique position within the Russian diplomatic apparatus, and his departure is likely to lead to internal changes. His successor will probably be tasked with maintaining the course but may introduce new approaches and priorities in Russia’s strategy for the Middle East. This could impact both Russia’s external image in the region and the efficiency of its diplomatic decision-making processes.

Future of Russian diplomacy in Middle East

The future of Russian diplomacy in the Middle East will depend on how Russia adapts its strategy to new realities. Russia will continue to seek to strengthen its role against growing competition from the United States, China, and regional powers such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. It will be important for the new direction to not only preserve the successes already achieved but also remain flexible in responding to changes in the political situations of countries in the region, such as Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and, of course, Syria. It is possible that in the coming years, Russia will become more actively involved in diplomatic efforts to resolve regional conflicts, as the void left by Bogdanov may require new approaches and fresh leadership in Russian diplomacy.

Smart projects outlined at Iran's cotton research institute

Economy Desk

Head of the Cotton Research Institute of Iran announced the implementation of smart projects in the cotton sector, stating, “Two smart projects in the cotton field have been formulated.” Qorban Qorbani Nasrabad said that two smart projects have been formulated for cotton, one of which focuses on “stress memory and related mechanisms in transferring drought tolerance and stress in cotton plants,” IRNA reported.

The head of the research institute said the project pertains to the screening of drought-tolerant varieties. He also mentioned the project on “machine learning algorithms to identify physiological and biochemical mechanisms of drought resistance in commercial cotton varieties,” noting it represents “a novel step for targeted breeding and smart management of cotton plants under environmental stress conditions.” “The machine learning algorithms proj-

ect for identifying physiological and biochemical mechanisms of drought resistance in commercial cotton varieties will ultimately enable us to develop a model for predicting cotton lint yield under drought conditions,” Nasrabad continued. He also announced joint projects with the Animal Science Research Institute and the Fisheries Science Research Institute regarding “the use of cottonseed for livestock feed and cold-water fish nutrition,” adding, “We have prioritized

a feasibility project to estimate cotton cultivation area and yield.” “The aforementioned project, using satellite imagery to estimate cultivation area, yield, and zoning of cotton lint in the country’s farms, is currently underway,” he said. Nasrabad concluded that the institute has “joint projects with the Animal Science Research Institute and Fisheries Science Research Institute concerning the use of cottonseed for livestock feed and cold-water fish nutrition.”

Securitization of Iran's nuclear program amid recent conflict



The illustration shows Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi juxtaposed next to a picture of Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant.

● THE CRADLE



President Trump's claims suggest that Iran's capacity to pursue a military nuclear program has been eliminated. Consequently, further sanctions, IAEA Board of Governors resolutions, or inspections of the destroyed sites appear redundant.



By Sasan Karimi
Adjunct professor at
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OPINION

Following a 12-day military conflict involving Iran, Israel, and the United States, marked by the US strikes using heavy ordnance, including bunker-busting bombs, on Iran's nuclear facilities, a renewed phase of securitization targeting Iran's nuclear program has emerged. This escalation, driven primarily by the United States, European nations, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), follows a series of attacks on Iranian military, scientific, and civilian targets, culminating in strikes on three key nuclear sites, including the Fordow facility. US President Donald Trump, on June 26, 2025, announced that these facilities were "completely and totally obliterated," a claim reiterated at the NATO summit on June 25, 2025, where he described the strikes as "very, very successful". These assertions, purportedly supported by classified intelligence, suggest the destruction of Iran's enriched uranium stockpiles and nuclear infrastructure. Despite these claims, IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi has emphasized the need for inspections to assess the damage and ensure nuclear safety. On June 13, 2025, Grossi noted that initial reports indicated no elevated radiation levels following Israeli attacks. However, by June 22, 2025, he briefed the UN Security Council, highlighting a "sharp degradation in nuclear safety and security" due to the risk of radiological release, urging diplomatic engagement to stabilize the situation. On June 23, 2025, he estimated "very significant" damage at sites like Fordow, noting craters from ground-penetrating munitions, and on June 25, 2025, suggested that Iran's enriched uranium might have survived by being relocated. Iran, however, views these inspection demands as an

attempt to validate the efficacy of US and Israeli strikes, particularly given the closure of its airspace and the context of what it perceives as unprovoked aggression. The conflict began amid ongoing negotiations between Iran, the United States, and the E3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom), disrupted by Israel's strikes on Iranian nuclear scientists and military personnel during nighttime operations. The legality of these actions remains contentious, with Iran arguing that Israel's attacks violate international law and regional stability, potentially warranting a Chapter VII resolution under the United Nations Charter. The international community's failure to address these alleged violations has drawn criticism, particularly as Israel, a non-signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), maintains a significant nuclear arsenal without IAEA oversight. The narrative framing Iran's nuclear program as an imminent threat, purportedly to delay its breakout capability, is undermined by reports of destroyed infrastructure. President Trump's claims suggest that Iran's capacity to pursue a military nuclear program has been eliminated. Consequently, further sanctions, IAEA Board of Governors resolutions, or inspections of the destroyed sites appear redundant. However, Grossi's insistence on verification, coupled with suggestions that enriched uranium may remain intact, sustains pressure on Iran for greater transparency. This demand is problematic as the destroyed sites are reportedly inaccessible, rendering inspections impractical. European leaders have advocated for diplomacy to de-escalate tensions. On June 19, 2025, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas and E3 foreign ministers planned talks with Iran to ensure its nuclear program remains civilian-focused. Follow-

ing the US strikes, Kallas urged all parties to return to negotiations on June 22, 2025, while UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy called for Iran to consider de-escalation options on June 24, 2025. These efforts reflect Europe's normative role, contrasting with the US's military approach and Grossi's focus on verification. The IAEA's persistent calls for access, led by Grossi, risk being perceived as politically motivated, aligning with the interests of specific states, notably Israel and the United States. Israel's exemption from NPT obligations and lack of IAEA inspections contrasts sharply with Iran's scrutiny, which accounts for approximately one-fifth of global IAEA inspections without verified evidence of diversion to military purposes. Grossi's approach, diverging from the expected impartiality of a UN

watchdog, may undermine the IAEA's credibility as an international institution. Continued pressure on Iran, framed as addressing its nuclear "threat," could serve as a pretext for further military or political actions, which lack legitimacy given the reported destruction of Iran's nuclear capabilities. Iran is not the sole victim; International law is eroded by selective enforcement, with a "rules-based order" supplanting established norms. This trend threatens global stability, increasing the costs of self-defense for nations perceiving themselves as vulnerable to arbitrary aggression. Europe's acquiescence to US and Israeli interests has diminished its global influence. Despite advocating diplomacy, leaders like Kallas and Lammy have struggled to assert relevance in crises such as the Gaza conflict, India-Pakistan tensions, and

the Ukraine-Russia war. This marginalization underscores Europe's shift from a normative power to a peripheral actor in global politics. The international community must act to preserve global peace and stability. The selective application of international law, as evidenced in this conflict, sets a dangerous precedent, potentially destabilizing the non-proliferation regime and regional security. If unchecked, this erosion of norms could compel states to prioritize self-protection in an increasingly anarchic environment, undermining the legacy of international law as a cornerstone of 20th-century global governance. Consistent and impartial implementation of legal frameworks is essential to maintaining their legitimacy and efficacy.

The article first appeared on Nuclear Watch.



Participants place radiation signs during a simulated nuclear emergency drill in Tehran, Iran, on November 5, 2015.

● MOHAMAD ALI NAJIB/
AFP



Spying on Iran

How MI6 infiltrated IAEA

By Kit Klarenberg
Investigative journalist

INVESTIGATION

Leaked confidential files indicate the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was infiltrated by a veteran British spy who has claimed credit for sanctions on Iran. The documents lend weight to the Islamic Republic's accusation that the nuclear watchdog secretly colluded with its enemies. A notorious British MI6 agent infiltrated the International Atomic Energy Agency on London's behalf, according to leaked documents reviewed by The Grayzone. The agent, Nicholas Langman, is a veteran intelligence operative who claims credit for helping engineer the West's economic war on Iran.

Langman's identity first surfaced in journalistic accounts of his role in deflecting accusations that British intelligence played a role in the death of Princess Diana. He was later accused by Greek authorities of overseeing the abduction and torture of Pakistani migrants in Athens. In both cases, UK authorities issued censorship orders forbidding the press from publishing his name. But Greek media, which was under no such obligation, confirmed that Langman was one of the MI6 assets withdrawn from Britain's embassy in Athens. The Grayzone discovered the résumé of the journeyman British operative in a trove of leaked papers detailing the activities of Torchlight, a prolific British intelligence cutout. The bio of the longtime MI6 officer reveals he "led large, inter-agency teams to identify and defeat the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons technology, including by innovative technical means and sanctions."

In particular, the MI6 agent says he "worked to prevent WMD proliferation through... support for the [IAEA] and Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons [OPCW] and through high-level international partnerships".

Langman's CV credits him with playing a major role in organizing the sanctions regime on Iran by "[building] highly effective and mutually supportive relations across government and with senior US, European, Middle and Far Eastern colleagues for strategy" between 2010 and 2012. He boasts in his bio that this achievement "enabled [the] major diplomatic success of [the] Iranian nuclear and sanctions agreement".

The influence Langman claimed to have exerted on the IAEA adds weight to Iranian allegations that the international nuclear regulation body colluded with the West and Israel to undermine its sovereignty. The Iranian government has alleged that the IAEA supplied the identities of its top nuclear scientists to Israeli intelligence, enabling their assassinations, and provided critical intelligence to the US and Israel on the nuclear facilities they bombed during their military assault this June.

On June 12, under the direction of its Secretary General Rafael Grossi, the IAEA issued a clearly politicized report recycling questionable past allegations to accuse Iran of violating the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The next day, Israel



attacked the country, assassinating nine nuclear scientists as well as numerous top military officials and hundreds of civilians.

Iranian former vice president for strategic affairs Javad Zarif has since called for the IAEA's Grossi to be sacked, accusing him of having "abetted the slaughter of innocents in the country". This June 28, the Iranian government broke ties with the IAEA, refusing to allow its inspectors into the country. While Iranian officials may have had no idea about the involvement of a shadowy figure like Langman in IAEA business, it would likely come as little surprise to Tehran that the supposedly multilateral agency had been compromised by a Western intelligence agency.

Under official UK censorship order

In 2016, Langman was named a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, the same title bestowed on fictional British spy James Bond. By that point, the supposed secret agent held the dubious distinction of being publicly "burned" as an MI6 operative on two separate occasions.

First, in 2001, journalist Stephen Dorril revealed that Langman had arrived in Paris weeks prior to Princess Diana's fatal car crash in the city on August 31, 1997, and was subsequently charged with conducting "information operations" to deflect widespread public speculation that British intelligence was responsible for her death.

Then, in 2005, he was formally accused by Greek authorities of complicity in the abduction and torture of 28 Pakistanis in Athens. The Pakistanis, all migrant workers, were suspected of having had contact with individuals accused of perpetrating the 7/7 bombings in London, July 2005.

Brutally beaten and threatened with guns in their mouths, the victims "were convinced their interrogators were British". When Greek media named Langman as the MI6 operative who oversaw the migrants' torture, British news outlets universally complied with a government D-notice — an official censorship order — and kept his identity under wraps when reporting on the scandal.

London vehemently denied any British involvement in torturing the migrants, with then-foreign secretary Jack Straw dismissing the charge as "utter nonsense". In January 2006, though, London admitted MI6 officers were indeed present during the Pakistanis' torture, although officials insisted the

operatives played no active part in their arrests, questioning, or abuse.

Following his withdrawal from Athens, Langman returned to London to head the UK Foreign Office's Iran Department, a shift which highlights his importance to MI6 and suggests the British government had no qualms about his allegedly brutal evidence-gathering methods.

Britain's Foreign Office collaborates closely with MI6, whose agents use it as cover just as the CIA does with State Department diplomatic postings.

Taking credit for 'maximum pressure' strategy

While leading the Foreign Office's Iran Department from 2006–2008, Langman oversaw a team seeking to "develop understanding" of the Iranian government's "nuclear program".

It's unclear exactly what that "understanding" entailed. But the document makes clear that Langman then "generated confidence" in that assessment among "European, US, and Middle Eastern agencies" in order to "delay programme [sic] and pressurise Iran to negotiate". The reference to "Middle Eastern agencies" strongly implied MI6 cooperation with Israel's Mossad intelligence service.

In April 2006, Tehran announced it had successfully enriched uranium for the first time, although officials denied any intention to do so for military purposes. This development may have triggered Langman's intervention.

The Islamic Republic has rejected any suggestion it harbors ambitions to possess nuclear weapons. Its denials were corroborated by a November 2007 US National Intelligence Estimate expressing "high confidence that in fall 2003, Tehran halted" any and all research into nuclear weapons. This assessment remained unchanged for several years and was reportedly shared by the Mossad, despite Benjamin Netanyahu's constant declarations that Iran was on the brink of developing a nuclear weapon.

Langman's IAEA support work

International governmental attitudes towards Iran changed abruptly between 2010 and '12. During this period, Western states and intergovernmental institutions initiated an array of harshly punitive measures against the country, while Israel ramped up its deadly covert operations against

Iran's nuclear scientists.

This period precisely overlapped with Langman's tenure at the Counter-Proliferation Centre of the UK Foreign Office. His bio implies he used this position to influence the IAEA and other UN-affiliated organizations to foment a campaign of global hostility towards Iran. In June 2010, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1929, which froze the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' assets and banned overseas financial institutions from opening offices in Tehran. A month later, the Obama administration adopted the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. This set off a global chain of copycat sanctions by Washington's vassals, who often imposed even more stringent measures than those levied by the UN and US.

In March 2012, the EU voted unanimously to cut Iranian banks out of the SWIFT international banking network. That October, the bloc imposed the harshest sanctions to date, restricting trade, financial services, energy, and technology, along with bans on the provision of insurance to Iranian companies by European firms.

BBC reporting on the sanctions acknowledged European officials merely suspected Tehran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons, but lacked concrete proof. And behind the scenes, the MI6 operative Langman was claiming credit for helping legitimize the allegations against Iran.

Nuclear agreement lays foundations for war
Following the Western-led cam-

aign isolation of Iran from 2010–2012, over its purported nuclear weapon program, the Obama administration negotiated a July 2015 agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Under the JCPOA's terms, the Islamic Republic agreed to limit its nuclear research activities in return for sanctions relief. In the years that followed, the IAEA was granted virtually unlimited access to Tehran's nuclear complexes, ostensibly to ensure the facilities were not used to develop nuclear weapons.

Along the way, IAEA inspectors collected vast amounts of information on the sites, including surveillance camera photos, measurement data, and documents. The Iranian government has since accused the Agency of furnishing the top-secret profiles of its nuclear scientists to Israel. These include the godfather of Iran's nuclear program, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, who was first publicly named in a menacing 2019 PowerPoint presentation by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The following year, the Mossad assassinated Fakhrizadeh in broad daylight with a remote-controlled machine gun. Internal IAEA documents leaked this June indicated that IAEA Secretary General Rafael Grossi has enjoyed a much closer relationship with Israeli officials than was previously known, and suggested he leveraged his cozy ties with Tel Aviv to secure his current position.

During a June 24 interview with Fox News' war-crazed anchor Martha MacCallum, Grossi did not deny making the inflammatory claim that "900 pounds of potentially enriched uranium was taken to an ancient site near Isfahan." Instead, the IAEA director asserted, "We do not have any information on the whereabouts of this material."

Well before Grossi rose to the top of the IAEA with Western and Israeli backing, the agency appears to have been penetrated by a British intelligence agent who took responsibility in his bio for engineering the West's economic attack on Iran.

The IAEA has not responded to an email from The Grayzone seeking clarification on its relationship with Langman and the MI6.

The article first appeared on The Grayzone.

The influence MI6 agent Nicholas Langman claimed to have exerted on the IAEA in his CV adds weight to Iranian allegations that the international nuclear regulation body colluded with the West and Israel to undermine its sovereignty. The Iranian government has alleged that the IAEA supplied the identities of its top nuclear scientists to Israeli intelligence, enabling their assassinations, and provided critical intelligence to the US and Israel on the nuclear facilities they bombed during their military assault this June.



A banner in Tehran, Iran, shows pictures of some of the Iranian nuclear scientists (R), top military commanders (C), and children who were killed in Israeli strikes.
● WSJ



Volleyball Nations League:

Iran coach Piazza wary of tough job in Week 3

Sports Desk

Iran head coach Roberto Piazza said his team will have to brace for “a tough week ahead” as they resume action at the Volleyball Nations League on Wednesday.

Sitting 10th in the 18-team table on a 4-4 record, Piazza’s men will take on European powerhouse Poland in their first outing in the third and final week of the preliminary round in Gdansk.

The two sides met in a warmup game in the Polish city of Olsztyn on Saturday, with the home side – second in the VNL table with six wins – coming out victorious in straight sets (26-24, 25-20, 25-21) before Iran won an additional fourth set 25-20.

“We had an average first set and were close to them, though I still believe we have a lot to learn from the Polish team. They’re truly among the world’s elite

and can instantly find the right solutions throughout the game,” Piazza said after the game.

“We were aware of some of these challenges beforehand. But now we truly understand how much work lies ahead and, of course, our goal is to put in that hard work,” added the Italian.

A second game in Week 3 for Iran will come against China on Thursday, followed by an encounter against Olympic champion France on Saturday.

Iran will hope to be in contention for a top-seven finish in the table and a place in the VNL Finals when squaring off against Bulgaria in the final round of the preliminaries on Sunday.

“We’ll have to prepare differently for each game, as our first game against Poland will be played at 8:00 p.m. and the second one will come on 4:30 p.m. the following day – leaving us with little recovery time be-

tween the two games.

“So, we’ll need to completely reset our mindset. We’ll have one day to rest, then play again at 8:30 p.m. against France before the final match at 5:00 p.m. against Bulgaria the next day.

“Overall, we have a tough week ahead. We know exactly what we want. Our fate is in our hands – if we want it, we can achieve it. But we need to take it day by day, not think about the whole week at once. So, our first challenge is the match against Poland,” Piazza said.

Looking to progress to the Finals for the first time since 2022, Iran got off to a slow start in the competition under the new Italian coach, suffering successive defeats against Brazil (3-0), USA (3-2), and Slovenia (3-2), before salvaging a five-set win against Ukraine in the final Week 1 game in Rio de Janeiro. The Asian powerhouse, however, delivered much-improved



Iran (white) and Poland play in a warmup game in Olsztyn, Poland, on July 12, 2025.
● volleyball.ir

displays in the second week of action, defeating Serbia in four

sets in Belgrade, before claiming victories against Argentina (3-1)

and the Netherlands (3-2) either side of a 3-1 loss to Germany.

Asian U20 Wrestling Championships:

Iranians snatch double golds on Day 1 of freestyle event



Sports Desk

The first day of the freestyle contests at the Asian U20 Wrestling Championships saw Iranians collect four med-



Iran's Ebrahim Elahi (L) and Erfan Alizadeh won the gold medals in the freestyle 70kg and 97kg contests, respectively, at the Asian U20 Wrestling Championships.
● IAWFIR

defeating Ariya Yoshida of Japan 8-3 for the ultimate prize of the 70kg division.

Erfan Alizadeh doubled Iran's gold tally later on Saturday, enjoying an emphatic run in the 97kg contests.

The Iranian hammered Uzbekistan's Mukhammadjon Ismoiljonov (11-0) and Indian Vishal (11-1) for a place in the

final showpiece and then rounded off his campaign with a 5-0 victory over Kamil Kurugliyev of Kazakhstan.

Elsewhere, Abolfazl Shamsipour had to settle for a silver medal after a 5-4 loss to Amit of India in the 79kg final, while Arshia Haddadi bounced back from a last-four defeat against Kazakhstan's Nurdanat Aitanov to beat Kabe Matjanov of Turkmenistan 11-0 for a consolation bronze in the 57kg class.

Sajjad Pirdayeh, meanwhile, finished his 65kg campaign empty-handed following a second-round setback (2-0) against the host's Omurbek Asan Uulu.

The freestyle competitions came after the Iranian Greco-Roman squad bagged a remarkable four golds and five bronzes in 10 classes to win the team title in the Kyrgyz capital with 185 points – followed by Kyrgyzstan (166pts) and Uzbekistan (151pts).

Payam Ahmadi (55kg), Ahoura Bouveiri (77kg), Mohammad-Hadi Seydi (97kg), and Abolfazl Fat'hi (130kg) were the Iranian gold medalists, with Seyyed Iman Hosseini (60kg), Mohammad-Javad Talebi (63kg), Gholamreza Abdevali (67kg), Amir-Mahdi Saeidinava (72kg) and Hamdireza Keshkar (87kg) adding five bronzes to the medal haul.

Qayedí agrees permanent four-year deal with Kalba: **Report**

Sports Desk

Iran international winger Mahdi Qayedí has agreed a permanent contract with Ittihad Kalba



FC, extending his career at the Emirati top-flight side until 2029, according to Dubai-based newspaper Emarat Al Youm.

Qayedí, 26, joined Kalba FC on loan from Shabab Al Ahli for the start of the 2023/24 season before bagging 34 goals, while providing teammates with 14 assists, in 60 appearances across all competitions.

Qayedí scored 16 in 23 outings to jointly finish second – alongside Al Whada's Syrian striker Omar Khribin – in the ADNOC Pro League's leading marksmen chart, following Al Ain's Kodjo Fodoh Laba, who had 20 strikes.

The Iranian also registered seven assists as Kalba FC finished ninth in 14-team table of the Emirati league.

The report comes as a blow for Esteghlal fans, who were hoping to reunite with the wizard winger ahead of the new Persian Gulf Pro League season.

Meanwhile, Emarat Al Youm added that Kalba is also in talks with Al Wahda skipper Ahmad Nourollahi in an effort to lure the Iranian midfielder to the Ittihad Kalba Stadium. Nourollahi, who is also under the radar of former club Persepolis, registered six goals and assists apiece in 26 games to help Al Wahda finish third in the UAE Pro League table last season.

Arsenal target Gyokeres faces Sporting disciplinary action

BBC – Arsenal target Viktor Gyokeres is facing disciplinary action by his club Sporting after failing to report for pre-season training, says the Portuguese club's president Frederico Varandas.

Varandas added that any potential transfer was now becoming “more complicated”.

BBC Sport reported last week that Arsenal sporting director Andrea Berta held face-to-face talks with Sweden international Gyokeres in Portugal.

Sources have told BBC Sport that talks are ongoing with Arsenal, who are still hopeful of striking a deal, with their most recent proposal for the 27-year-old totalling about 70m euros (£60m) including add-ons.

Last month Sporting president Varandas said there was no ‘gentleman's agreement’ for Gyokeres to leave for 70m euros but added that the club would not demand his full release clause of 100m euros (£85m).

Gyokeres, who scored 54 goals

in 52 games last season, has yet to publicly explain why he has not turned up for pre-season.

Varandas told Portuguese news agency Lusa that “no one is above the interests of the club”.

“We're calm. Everything can be solved with the closure of the market, a hefty fine and an apology to the group,” Varandas said. “If they don't want to pay Viktor's fair market value, we'll be very comfortable with that for

the next three years.

“If the geniuses who are devising this strategy think that this puts pressure on me to make it easier for him to leave, not only are they completely wrong, but they are also making it more complicated for the player to leave.”

Gyokeres has scored 97 goals in 102 matches during his two seasons in Portugal, firing Sporting to two league titles.



● PEDRO ROCHA/REUTERS

Significance of Khorramabad Valley’s UNESCO registration for Iran’s heritage, tourism

Iranica Desk

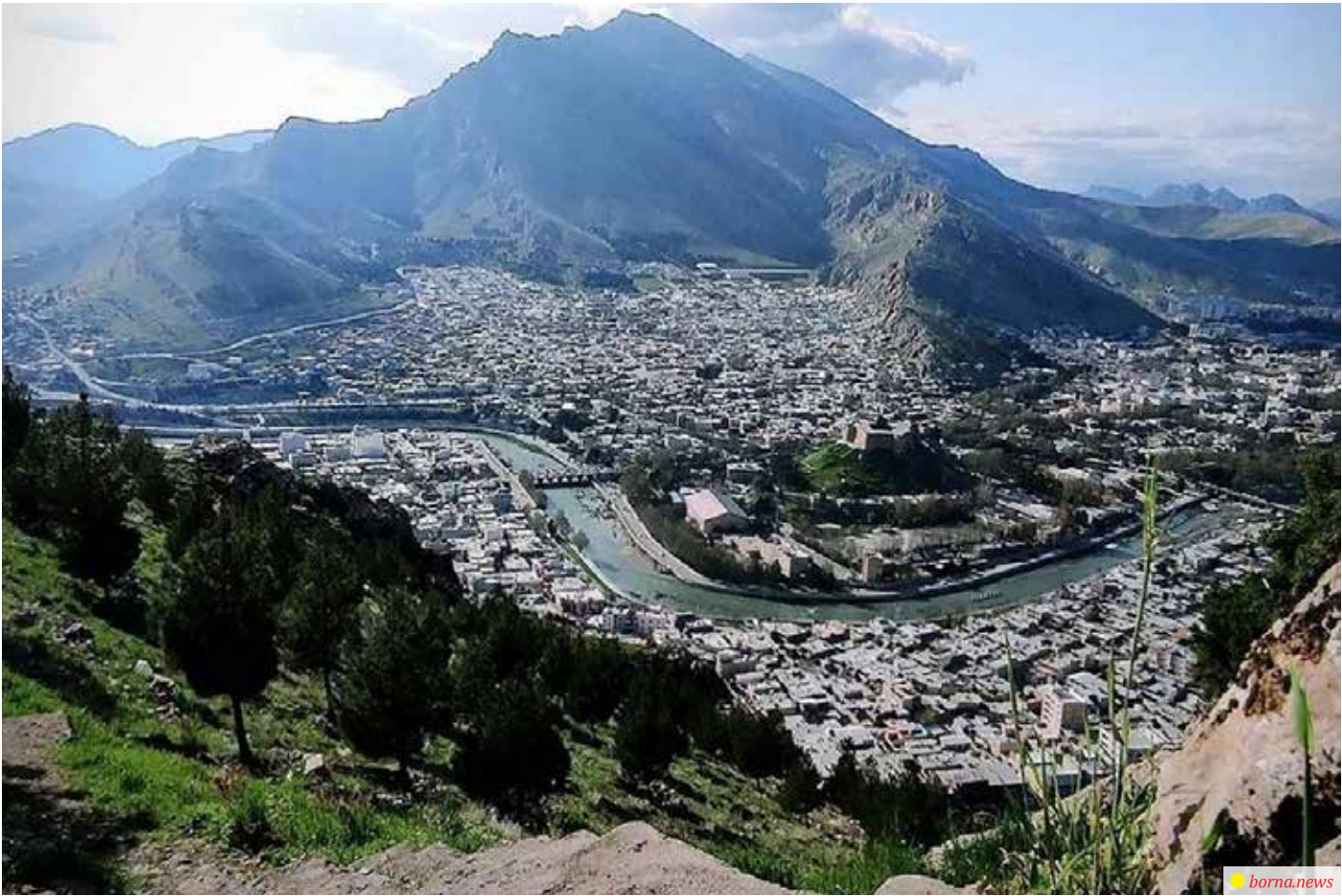
The international registration of the Khorramabad Valley will play a significant role in boosting tourism in Lorestan Province, said Saeed Pourali, a faculty member of the Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies at the Iranian Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research (ACECR). In a detailed note published by ISNA, he highlighted the importance of this achievement for both national and regional development: The global registration of Khorramabad Valley and its Paleolithic caves as Iran’s 29th UNESCO World Heritage Site, during the 47th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Paris, marks a major milestone in Iran’s efforts to protect and promote its rich historical heritage.

Historical and cultural value

This momentous event not only underscores the unparalleled historical and archaeological value of Khorramabad Valley and its prehistoric caves but also signifies a landmark achievement in the cultural, social, and tourism history of Lorestan Province and Iran as a whole. Khorramabad Valley, with its ancient roots spanning thousands of years and its archaeological treasures, stands among Iran’s most valuable civilizational and cultural heritage sites. Situated in Zagros Mountains, the region has historically attracted diverse peoples due to its unique ecological and historical features. The prehistoric caves of Khorramabad are natural and archaeological marvels, dating back thousands of years, and serve as critical evidence of human life in prehistoric times as well as the early development of cultures in this region.

UNESCO evaluation

UNESCO experts have evaluated these caves as possessing distinct biological and cultural structures, which confer them with widespread significance. The assessment conducted by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), documented in report number 1744, confirmed that the prehistoric caves of Khorramabad possess a unique cultural and scientific identity, warranting their inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This positive evaluation, which did not require substantial reforms, was officially approved by ICOMOS and subsequently recommended to the World Heritage Committee for final endorsement. The international recognition of Khorramabad Valley affirms the



extraordinary values inherent in this region and demonstrates that Iran’s cultural heritage has the capacity to achieve global acknowledgment and active engagement. It stands as a testament to scientific management, effective conservation practices, and the diligent protection of Iran’s historical treasures.

Economic, social and diplomatic benefits

Beyond its intrinsic cultural significance, this achievement carries notable economic, social, and diplomatic benefits. It provides a valuable platform for Iran to enhance its presence on the global stage, potentially increasing the influx of tourists, researchers, and scholars interested in exploring Iran’s rich heritage. Furthermore, it acts as a catalyst for regional development, fostering opportunities for tourism expansion, educational initiatives, and scholarly research. This landmark event signifies a decisive turning point in Iran’s strategic efforts to establish and elevate its position within the realm of global cultural heritage and tourism. By attracting cultural and historical tourists, investing in infrastructure, creating employment opportunities, and elevating the overall standard of living for local communities, it can contribute both directly and indirectly to the economic growth of the entire region and the nation. In essence, this recognition not only preserves Iran’s historical

identity but also paves the way for sustainable development, social progress, and international cultural diplomacy, ensuring that Khorramabad’s rich history continues to be celebrated on the world stage for generations to come.

Cultural tourism

Lorestan Province and Khorramabad, renowned for their rich natural landscapes and cultural heritage, are widely recognized as key centers of cultural and historical tourism. The international registration of Khorramabad Valley is expected to significantly elevate tourism levels in this region, opening new opportunities for economic and cultural development. It has been proposed that, following the completion of comprehensive archaeological and interdisciplinary research at the Falak ol-Aflak Hill, this historic site should also be officially included as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Such a designation would play a pivotal role in attracting more domestic and

international tourists and in fostering the growth of the region’s tourism industry. Alongside tangible cultural heritage, the development of cultural tourism in Lorestan Province is deeply interconnected with the creative economy, traditional arts, handicrafts, and modern technological innovations. These activities contribute to increasing the region’s economic diversity and, both directly and indirectly, generate numerous employment opportunities for local residents, supporting livelihoods and encouraging the sustainable development of future generations.

Powerful symbols

The impact of global recognition extends beyond economic benefits; it also significantly enhances the cultural and social fabric of the region. The heritage sites serve as powerful symbols of the identity, history, and collective memory of the local community and the nation. They foster a sense of pride and belonging among the residents, inspiring



community cohesion and national unity. Moreover, such recognition highlights the importance of safeguarding, conserving, and educating the public about cultural heritage. These efforts strengthen the collective sense of responsibility, reinforce national identity, and bolster patriotic feelings. Creating research and educational opportunities around these sites will also expand both local and national knowledge. Educational programs targeted at youth, students, and researchers will foster a greater understanding of the region’s cultural and historical assets, ensuring the preservation of knowledge and promoting further scholarly engagement.

Management strategies

While the international registration presents a valuable opportunity, it also comes with inherent challenges. Ensuring sustainable protection and preservation of these sites requires meticulous planning and scientific management. Securing adequate financial resources, training skilled specialists, addressing environmental considerations, and cultivating a widespread culture of awareness and appreciation are essential components of this process. All management efforts must be aligned with broader objectives of economic, social, and cultural development. Achieving this requires effective coordination across various government agencies and fostering strong

international cooperation. In this context, the active participation of local communities, cultural authorities, and researchers is vital. When the rights and needs of local populations are woven into the protection and development strategies, the likelihood of achieving meaningful and lasting results increases. The outcome will be a sustainable model of heritage preservation that benefits all stakeholders and ensures the enduring legacy of these invaluable sites.

The global registration of Khorramabad Valley provides a rare and valuable opportunity that, if managed properly, can serve as a catalyst for sustainable development and help shape the region’s cultural and historical identity. Through strategic planning and the implementation of integrated conservation and development policies — based on interdisciplinary approaches and inclusive stakeholder participation — this region can transform into a prominent hub for tourism and become a symbol of national cultural pride.

Future outlook

In the long term, this recognition will contribute to strengthening Iran’s cultural diplomacy, enhancing its international profile, and establishing sustainable cultural and tourism attractions in the region. Future generations will see Khorramabad and Lorestan Province not only as premier tourist destinations but also as exemplary models of intelligent and scientific management within UNESCO World Heritage projects.

The international recognition of Khorramabad Valley and its prehistoric caves is more than a campaign for preservation; it symbolizes a collective commitment — both national and international — to safeguarding the natural and cultural heritage of this land. This milestone provides Iran and Lorestan Province with a significant opportunity to fulfill their roles as custodians of some of the world’s most prestigious historical sites. It can serve as a guiding light for the development of sustainable tourism, cultural awareness, and social progress within the region.

By wisely leveraging this opportunity, Iran can envision a future rooted in sustainability, pride, and cultural excellence — one that celebrates its heritage while actively protecting it against the rapid changes of the modern world. This initiative will help preserve invaluable heritage sites and serve as a powerful model and symbol of Iran’s dedication to safeguarding its deep-rooted values and cultural identity for generations to come, reinforcing Iran’s place on the global stage.





President urges unity, praises women's role in national development

Social Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday made an unannounced visit to the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs in Tehran, calling for stronger public engagement in national development and emphasizing the "pivotal" role of women in social participation. In remarks to senior officials from the Women's Affairs office and the National Population Headquarters, Pezeshkian said women possess "stronger motivation" and "better capacity" for social involvement, president.ir reported.

He warned against excluding voices based on ideology or identity, saying, "We must stop dividing people into insiders and outsiders. This country belongs to all Iranians." His comments mark a shift toward more inclusive rhetoric just weeks after assuming office. Pezeshkian criticized current policies for falling short despite heavy spending, especially in culture and population planning. "When the results don't match the input, it's time to rethink the way we operate," he said, urging officials to act on data rather than "rushing into structural overhauls."

Touching on his war-era experience, he recalled how public solidarity had helped the country pull through both the 1980s Iran-Iraq War and the recent 12-day conflict with Israel. "People stood their ground so shortages wouldn't spark unrest," he said. "Some even set aside personal frustrations to deny the enemy a chance to exploit them." He praised women's influence at home and in society, calling them "a cornerstone" in shaping future generations and national resilience. "As mothers and wives, their impact is serious. And they've shown greater



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd R) attends a meeting with officials from the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs and the National Population Headquarters in Tehran on July 13, 2025. ● president.ir

drive when it comes to social engagement," he said, challenging the notion that their role should be limited. He concluded by calling for "unity of purpose" across divides. "The only way to build this country is by embracing diversity, fostering solidarity, and pooling every ounce of national potential."



Tehran faces worst drought in six decades, minister warns



Social Desk

Iran's Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi on Sunday said Tehran is going through its driest period in 60 years, with drinking water reservoirs serving the capital sharply depleted.

In a high-level meeting hosted by the Iran Water and Power Resources Development Company in Karaj, senior officials including Tehran and Alborz governors and top water managers reviewed the urgent progress of the Taleqan-to-Tehran water pipeline. The pipeline, which is set to transfer 150 million cubic meters of water annually from the Taleqan River to treatment plants in Tehran and Karaj, is seen as a critical medium-term fix as the capital grapples with shrinking reserves and dwindling rainfall. "We are in one of the toughest years in decades," Aliabadi said during the meeting. He called the current drought "unprecedented" and stressed the need for immediate action. Recent data shows a 47% drop in precipitation

across the Tehran and Alborz provinces, which has triggered a sharp decline in dam levels. Despite the water crunch, the government says infrastructure work is moving faster than before. According to Aliabadi, the second phase of the Taleqan pipeline project has progressed more in the past six months than it had in the previous two years. The project has now reached over 60% completion, up from 40% at the start of the current administration in 2023. He also noted that this leg of the pipeline is expected to connect soon to the Bileqan treatment facility near Karaj. Once operational, it will help supply both cities and parts of Qazvin Province with treated water. While underscoring the urgency of technical

upgrades, Aliabadi said public cooperation remains vital. "We need people to cut water use—even small savings will go a long way," he said, warning that ignoring conservation could lead to "serious consequences." Beyond the Taleqan pipeline, other short-, mid-, and long-term water supply projects are also underway, though Aliabadi admitted that overcoming the summer ahead will require "more than engineering." He stressed that better distribution networks, upgraded transfer systems, and increased purification capacity are part of the solution, but so is a national culture of water-saving. "This project isn't just about today," the minister said. "It's about securing the water future of Tehran and Alborz."

Iran's 'Dandelions Girl' wins Audience Award at Tokyo festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian short film 'Dandelions Girl' won the Audience Award in the Asian competition at the 27th Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2025, the festival's organizers confirmed on Sunday. Directed by Azadeh Masihzadeh and produced by Razieh Gholami, 'Dandelions Girl' beat dozens of contenders to emerge as the crowd favorite in screenings across Tokyo cinemas and the festival's online platform. The annual Oscar-qualifying festival is one of Asia's short film events, celebrating both es-



tablished and emerging voices in filmmaking. The 15-minute film follows a young girl breaking into the world of soccer despite social constraints. With a symbolic take on "truth versus

lies," the story paints a picture of honesty and defiance among youth. "She disturbs the balance," said Masihzadeh, describing the character's impact on the field. Actors Tara Soroush, Binyam Afrangheh, and Abdollah Bahadori lead the cast. International distribution is managed by AtoZinema, headed by Masihzadeh. The Audience Award is based on public votes across the "International," "Asia," and "Japan" sections. 'Dandelions Girl' topped the Asian category with the highest viewer votes, reflecting its emotional resonance and timely themes.

Iranian short film awarded at Ecuador's Cuenca Festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian filmmaker Nasrin Mohammadpour received a special jury mention for her short film 'Twenty-One Weeks Later' at the 24th Cuenca International Film Festival, which wrapped up earlier this month in Santa Ana de los Ríos de Cuenca in Ecuador. The festival, originally slated for June 25-30 but held with a slight delay, showcased dozens of international films, with a particular spotlight on human rights issues, including environmental and social concerns. 'Twenty-One Weeks Later,' written, directed, and produced by Mohammadpour, competed in the short film section and was singled out by jurors for its emotional weight and cinematic precision. Held annually for over two decades, Cuenca's festival has drawn global talent including Laurent Cantet, Isaki Lacuesta, Goran Paskaljevic, and Eduardo Noriega. Mohammadpour's work now joins the legacy of award-winning films to emerge from the event, praised for capturing "the depth of human conflict in minimal time." This is not the first time 'Twenty-One Weeks Later' has turned heads on the global circuit. The film previously won the Special Jury Prize at Spain's Taboo Nikaah Film Festival, Best Asian Short at South Korea's 28th Bu-



san International Short Film Festival, and a Jury Award at Turkey's Golden Boll International Film Festival. It has also screened at major festivals in the UK (Raindance), Germany (Hof), the Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo), and Colombia (Santander), among others. The film's international distribution is handled by Cinerama, under the management of Neshat Bagheri. The cast includes Banafsheh Riazi, Leila Hosseinzadeh, Soudabeh Bahraminejad, and Parisa Asgari.



Notice of tender for export sale No. Z/1404/08
Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70.000 metric tons of Iron Ore Concentrate (%Fe:66.50 ave) on basis of F.O.B at Rajaei 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 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.

| Analysis % | |
|---------------|------------------|
| %Fe Ave | 66.50 |
| %FeO | Min 24 Max 28 |
| %P Max | 0.05 |
| %S Max | 1.1 |
| %SiO2 Max | 3.0 |
| %Al2O3 Max | 0.7 |
| %CaO Max | 0.9 |
| %MgO Max | 2.5 |
| %Moisture Max | 5.0 |
| Size ave | 80%<0.48 mm |

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