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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) and Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi (C) attend a meeting on tackling the country's water crisis in Tehran, on July 20, 2025. [president.ir](#)

Sidelining ethnic minorities will fan flames of war in Syria

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OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The situation in Syria, shaped by multiple variables and a turbulent history, cannot be understood through a single lens. Ethnic complexity, identity struggles, and regional and international forces have woven a dense web—making every event here a launching point for a chain reaction.

To properly address Syria's current state, it must be viewed within a broader structural context. The downfall of Bashar al-Assad's government sowed the seeds of today's societal fractures. In effect, its collapse opened a Pandora's box of long-simmering ethnic and religious grievances. In the present climate, the Sunni and Salafi fundamentalist factions—long opposed to Assad—have seized the moment to exact historical retribution on other groups, including Alawites and Druze.

Meanwhile, the existing political leadership in Syria lacks genuine decision-making power, as power was effectively handed to it by external forces. Though formally recognized and even supported by some nations, the current government has been unable to stabilize the country.

Ahmad al-Sharaa's government lacks legitimacy. It has failed to unify Syria's diverse people under a single governing canopy or to secure the rights of its various communities. As a result, different ethnic and religious groups now find themselves in limbo. The Kurds, for instance, are caught in a precarious state, uncertain about their future under Sharaa's rule, and buying time as they calculate their relationship with Damascus.

The Druze share that fate, constantly anxious about their place in Syrian society. Tribal and sectarian lines continue to fracture too—rivalries and competing demands tearing communities apart. Even traditionally dominant Alawite regions, once central to Assad's rule, are now gripped by fear over their future, as threats against them have steadily escalated. Sharaa ascended to power backed by foreign patrons and underpinned by an informal regional and global consensus. Though he campaigned on national sovereignty, he has consistently acted late to emerging crises. Even if his intentions were to resolve issues, his government has shown itself so ineffective that it has emerged from the start unable to handle multiple conflicts. From his first days in office, clashes involving armed factions erupted across Syria, and more recently a major crisis broke out in Suwayda Province. The root of these crises lies in Sharaa's flawed approach: rather than tackle Syria's complex, deep-seated internal problems through inclusion of all ethnicities, tribes, and religious groups, he has leaned heavily on external powers—Israel, Turkey, the US, and Europe—to solve them. That approach has left him outmaneuvered and incapable of resolving Syria's internal issues. [Page 2 >](#)

As long as this one-track strategy defines Sharaa's governance, such flare-ups will continue.



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