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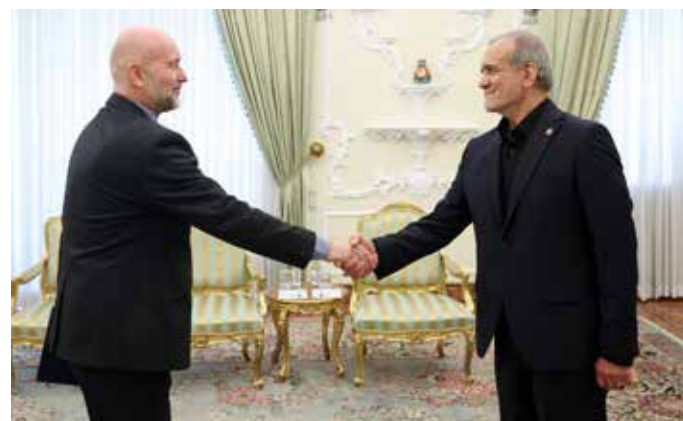
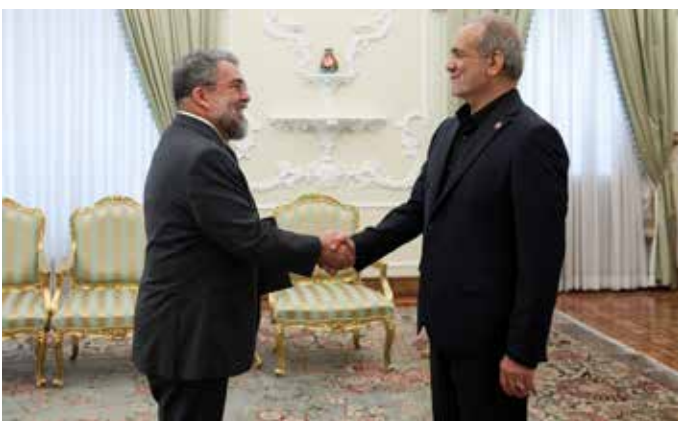
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## *Pezeshkian:* Tehran ready to work with IAEA over nuclear monitoring

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From left to right, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian receives the credentials of newly appointed ambassadors to Iran — Pierre Cochard of France, Andre Vass Gimaraes of Brazil, and Juraj Svotcak of Slovakia — during separate meetings in Tehran on July 28, 2025.  
[president.ir](http://president.ir)

## *Spox:* Iran's defense capabilities not up for negotiations with E3

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The photo shows Iranian ballistic missiles on display at an exhibition in Tehran.  
[TASNIM](http://tasnim)

### Why Iran should avoid geopolitical dead end over Zangezur corridor

By [Abdolreza Farji-Rad](#)  
Professor of Geopolitics

#### OPINION

Iran opposed the Zangezur corridor—a proposed transport link through southern Armenia (Syunik province) aimed at connecting Azerbaijan proper with its Nakhchivan exclave—on grounds that Azerbaijan, backed by Turkey and possibly Israel, might seize the route by force. Given President Ilham Aliyev's particular views on Iran and ethnic matters, such a takeover could be viewed as a direct threat to Tehran. It could create a geopolitical choke point, where Iran's truck access to Russia, Belarus or Eastern Europe would hinge on Azerbaijan's political whims, leaving Tur-

key as Iran's sole corridor to Europe and restricting Tehran's strategic options. Alternatively, if Armenia were to establish a rail or road link through its own territory under pressure from Turkey and Azerbaijan—Aliyev having repeatedly threatened to enforce the corridor by force—the strategic picture would shift entirely. There is a stark difference between a route under Azerbaijani sovereignty and one controlled by Armenia; the two scenarios are worlds apart. Currently, a territorial dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia over part of Armenian land remains unresolved.

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Global inaction enables Tel Aviv's abuses

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# Spox: Iran's defense capabilities not up for negotiations with E3

Esmaeil Baqaei  
IRNA

## International Desk

Iran said on Monday that its defense capabilities were not up for negotiations, after France called for a "comprehensive deal" with Tehran that cov-

ers its missile program and regional influence.

"Our talks with European sides are clear: they focus on lifting sanctions and the nuclear issue," he said, adding, "Raising unrelated topics sporadically

is a sign of confusion among the European parties," Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said during his weekly press conference.

"There will be absolutely no discussion on our defense capabilities," he said. On Sunday, French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot told CBS News show "Face The Nation" that Western governments were seeking a "comprehensive agreement" with Iran, in part to avert the "risk" that it could covertly pursue a nuclear weapon – an issue Tehran has consistently denied.

Barrot said such agreement would include "the nuclear dimension" as well as the "ballistic component" and what he called the regional destabilization activities that Iran has been conducting.

His remarks followed a meeting on Friday between Iranian diplomats and counterparts from France, Germany, and Britain – the first nuclear talks after an aggression by the Israeli regime, which targeted Iran's residential areas, nuclear facilities and military sites. The aggression claimed the lives of nearly 1,100 Iranians. The United States brief-

ly joined the war, striking key nuclear sites.

## Snapback mechanism

Friday's talks in Istanbul came as the three European powers, known as the E3, have in recent weeks threatened to trigger a so-called "snapback mechanism" under a 2015 nuclear deal which would reinstate UN sanctions on Iran. "Unless a new and robust and durable and verifiable agreement is reached by the end of the summer, France, Germany and the UK will have no other choice but to reapply the global embargo that were lifted 10 years ago," said Barrot. Iran has previously warned that Tehran could withdraw from the global nuclear non-proliferation treaty if sanctions were reimposed.

"One cannot expect a country to remain in the treaty while being deprived of its stated rights, particularly the peaceful use of nuclear energy."

Regarding the snapback mechanism, the Iranian official said the European countries have no legal authority to activate the mechanism.

"Such a right does not exist, and we

oppose the very essence of this issue. We have communicated our position to them," he said.

The last month aggression against Iran by Israel derailed US-Iran nuclear negotiations that began in April, and prompted Iran to suspend its cooperation with the United Nations' nuclear watchdog.

Baqaei said the UN nuclear watchdog will make a visit to Iran within the next two weeks.

## Zangezur Corridor

He also referred to the proposed Zangezur Corridor that would pass through Armenia and connect Azerbaijan to its exclave Nakhchivan.

Iran has in the past opposed the plan because it would cut off the transport routes connecting its territories to Armenia.

Baqaei said that the expansion of transportation routes should not in any way violate the national sovereignty of the countries and their territorial integrity, and should not cause changes in the geopolitics of the region or the recognized borders.

## Pezeshkian: Tehran ready to work with IAEA over nuclear monitoring

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) shakes hands with France's new ambassador in Iran Pierre Cochard during a meeting in the capital Tehran on July 28, 2025.  
president.ir

## International Desk

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday underlined that the Islamic Republic is ready to continue its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over inspection of its nuclear sites, but he said it does not mean relinquishing Iran's rights. The Iranian president made the remarks in a meeting with the new

French ambassador to Tehran Pierre Cochard while receiving his credentials. "We want our rights within the framework of international regulations and remain committed to its obligations. Just as we have previously subjected to the most extensive nuclear monitoring regime, we are now prepared to engage in this regard. However, this does not mean relinquishing the rights of the Iranian nation", Pezeshkian said.

Pezeshkian said that Iran is seeking engagement with the world. However, he said Western countries, through false propaganda and accusations that Iran is seeking to develop nuclear weapons, are disrupting this path.

On Friday, Iran, France, Germany and the UK held a meeting in Turkish city of Istanbul to discuss removal of Iran's sanctions as well as Iran's nuclear issue.

In a separate meeting with the Brazil's new Ambassador to Tehran Andre Vass Gimaraes, the Iranian president touched upon the issue of Palestine and

the Israel's atrocities in the Gaza Strip.

Pezeshkian said that the situation in Gaza contradicts all international laws.

"Unfortunately, the so-called advocates of human rights and democracy not only fail to take effective measures to prevent the crimes of the Israeli regime but also provide military support for its actions, which is truly shameful", President Pezeshkian said. Israel's onslaught on the Gaza Strip has claimed the lives of more than 59,000 Palestinians since 2023.

The two sides also discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and other international issues.

Also on Monday, President Pezeshkian received the credentials of Juraj Svotcak, the new Ambassador of Slovakia to Tehran.

## US behind terror attack on courthouse in southeast: Judiciary chief

Iran's judiciary chief, Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i, strongly condemned the terrorist attack by terrorists from the so-called Jaish al-Adl group on a courthouse in the country's southeastern city of Zahedan, stating that such acts of terror are definitely orchestrated by the United States.

"There is no doubt that the root cause and origin of such crimes and terrorist incidents is arrogant powers, with the criminal US being at the forefront," Eje'i said on Monday as he expressed his deepest condolences over the assassination of several Iranian nationals in the assault.

He added, "America is the primary sponsor of the unspeakable crimes of Zionists in Gaza, and the mastermind and architect of numerous crimes worldwide."

The top judiciary official also instructed his deputy to take necessary measures in support of the families of people who have fallen victim to the terrorist attack in Zahedan.

At least six people were killed and twenty-two others injured in Zahedan's terrorist attack on Saturday. Iranian security forces eliminated three assailants during the ensuing clashes.

A commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Basij force

Gholamhossein Mohseni Eje'i  
IRNA

was also killed in a terrorist attack in Zahedan on Sunday

Sistan and Baluchestan Province, which borders Pakistan, has witnessed several terrorist attacks targeting both civilians and security forces over the past years.

Terrorist groups carrying out attacks against Iranian interests in the southeastern and southwestern parts of the country are believed to be linked to foreign spy agencies.

On October 26 last year, ten members of Iran's law enforcement forces were killed in a terrorist attack in the Gohar Kuh district of Taftan County in the province.

The so-called Jaish al-Adl terrorist group claimed responsibility for the assault, which was one of the deadliest in the province in recent months.

## One million illegal Afghan nationals repatriated to Afghanistan, minister says

## International Desk

Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni said on Monday that one million undocumented Afghan migrants have been repatriated to their country since June.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting, Momeni said that approximately six million Afghan nationals are present in Iran, of which around two million are illegal and must leave Iran.

Many of them seek better economic opportunities or have fled conflict in their home country, especially since the 2021 takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban.

The country is four years into a fragile recovery from decades of war under Taliban authorities, who have called



IRNA

for a "dignified" return of migrants and refugees from neighboring countries. As of today, one million Afghans have returned to their country, Momeni said, adding that more than 70 percent of them voluntarily returned to Afghanistan.

The Iranian interior minister pointed out Iran does not have the capacity to

take in more migrants.

"Many of them (Afghan nationals) are living in Iran legally, working, and have settled down, which we respect them. However, every country has its own laws. Those who are undocumented must go back."

Since June, Iran has begun a plan to repatriate illegal Afghan migrants to their country.

Taliban's caretaker foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, on Sunday called for gradual repatriation of Afghan nationals from Iran.

He made the remarks during a phone conversation with Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

The Afghan official expressed concern about the process of return of Afghan nationals, urging that their dignity should be respected.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



# Iran has plans for crude sales if snapback triggered: *Paknejad*

**Economy Desk**

Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad said the country had drawn up contingency plans to maintain oil exports under any scenario that might arise from renewed international sanctions amid European powers' threat to trigger the UN snapback mechanism over Iran's nuclear program, IRIB News reported on Monday. "We are certainly not without a plan," Paknejad said, responding to the prospect of a full reimposition of UN sanctions, including those targeting crude exports. He also dismissed media speculation that Iranian oil sales had dipped following military strikes on Iranian sites by Israel and the United States in June. "Iran's oil exports continue as before", he added, rejecting recent Western media claims of a June drop in shipments as "media

hype" and "psychological warfare." His remarks come as Britain, France and Germany—the three European signatories to the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement, known formally as the JCPOA— threaten they may provoke the deal's snapback clause by the end of August unless Tehran reaches a new understanding with Washington over its nuclear work. The clause, embedded in the JCPOA, allows any party to reimpose previously lifted UN sanctions should Iran be found in breach of its nuclear commitments. The 2015 accord, which also includes China and Russia, has been on life support since the United States unilaterally walked out of it in May 2018 and reinstate sweeping economic sanctions on Iran. Iran has since gradually rolled back limits on its uranium enrichment in retaliation for US hostile measures. Irani-

an and European diplomats held talks on Friday in Turkey to discuss the looming deadline, with the snapback mechanism set to expire on October 18. The meeting followed a wave of Israeli and US airstrikes targeting Iranian nuclear and military sites, including Fordow and Natanz, last month. Despite sustained pressure from the US, Iran's oil exports have rebounded sharply in recent years—from under 200,000 barrels per day in 2020 to more than 1.8mn bpd in recent months, according to ship-tracking data. Much of this crude reportedly ends up in China. The administration of US President Donald Trump has repeatedly said it aims to drive Iran's oil exports to "zero," but new figures from international monitoring firms suggest those efforts have fallen short of the mark, with Tehran continuing to pump crude under the radar.



## Parliamentary panel gives conditional backing for removing rial zeros

**Economy Desk**

Iranian Parliament's Economic Committee has conditionally approved removing four zeros from the national currency (rial) and the possibility of changing the national currency unit, the committee's spokesman said on Monday. Hakem Mamkan, announcing the above, stated, "The Central Bank of Iran has proposed the removal of four zeros from the national currency in order to preserve its standing in international forums and to facilitate calculations and accounting within government agencies." In an interview with ISNA, the parliamentarian said that on Sunday, the parliament's committee reviewed objections raised by the Guardian Council – a body empowered to vet legislation – to the bill amending the country's Banking and Monetary Law. "The session was attended by Mohammad Reza Farzin, Governor of the Central Bank of Iran; Abbas Moradpour, Deputy Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance for Banking Affairs; and representatives from other responsible organizations," he added.

The spokesperson for Parliament's Economic Committee stated, "Considering the enactment of laws subsequent to the bill amending Article One of the Banking and Monetary Law (which pertains to the 12th government [2017-2021]), this matter has inherent objections. Nevertheless, the Economic Committee agreed with the general principle of removing four zeros from the national currency, and there are even whispers about the possibility of changing the national currency unit. Changes must now be made to the details of the bill to avoid conflict with other recently enacted laws." The lawmaker reiterated, "The Central Bank has proposed the removal of four zeros from the national currency in order to preserve the national currency's standing in international forums and to facilitate calculations and accounting within organizations; however, this matter has no relation to inflation." Mamkan added the plan also "has opponents who argue that some economic systems remove zeros from their national currency only when fundamental and infrastructural economic issues have been

resolved and stability achieved, enabling a sort of economic surgery. However, our country is grappling with inflation, and the necessary infrastructure has not been laid." Recent data indicates an increase, with the rate reaching 38.90% in April 2025, up from 37.10% in March 2025. The spokesperson concluded, "Ultimately, it was decided that the Economic Committee will conduct negotiations with the Guardian Council. If the council agrees, the changes made to the bill will be beyond the Guardian Council's objections and will not conflict with existing laws. In that case, the committee will proceed to review the Guardian Council's objections. Otherwise, the entire bill will be set aside, and the government must submit a new bill to Parliament." "The government and the Central Bank insist on this bill and the removal of four zeros from the national currency. Therefore, the Economic Committee will hold off on examining the specifics of the bill until the Guardian Council announces its opinion and the matter is resolved," he said.

## Wealth fund to invest \$2.3b in solar energy push

**Economy Desk**

Iran's Economic Council has approved a plan for the country's sovereign wealth fund to invest \$2.3 billion in solar energy, as the government seeks to diversify its power mix and ease growing strain on the electricity grid. The funding—greenlit following approval from Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei—will be channeled through the National Development Fund (NDF) and focused largely on the construction of rooftop solar farms, with a combined capacity target of 7,000 megawatts (MW). Hamid Pourmohammadi, the head of Iran's Plan and Budget Organization, signed off on the measure and forwarded it to the Energy Ministry and the NDF for implementation. Under the plan, the NDF will cover 80% of the financing for approved projects, with private partners required to shoulder the remaining 20%. Applicants may seek funding for projects of up to 1,000 MW each, with intermediaries managing the financial and

technical aspects on behalf of the fund. Iran, which receives over 300 sunny days a year, has launched a nationwide drive to ratchet up its use of renewables, especially solar power, amid soaring demand and ageing thermal infrastructure. The country aims to add 30,000 MW of renewable capacity—mainly solar—in the next three years. Iran's total electricity generation capacity hovers around 95,000 MW, over 90% of which comes from thermal and gas-fired power stations, government figures show. Renewables account for a mere 2.1%, or around 2,000 MW, of the national energy mix. Officials had warned earlier this year that power shortages during the peak summer months could reach 25,000 MW, but recent estimates suggest that energy-saving measures have helped trim the shortfall to 14,000 MW, according to state electric utility Tavanir. The government hopes the new solar initiative will help plug that gap while reducing reliance on fossil fuels and cutting emissions.

## Minister: 1,000 water, electricity projects set for inauguration by year-end

**Economy Desk**

Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi announced that 1,000 water and electricity projects will be inaugurated across the country by the end of the year (March 20, 2026), stating, "With the inauguration of solar power plants, 7,000 megawatts of electricity will be added to the national grid." Speaking on Monday at the inauguration ceremony of water and electricity projects in southwestern Tehran, Aliabadi stated that the inauguration of these projects will add 4,000 megawatts to the country's electricity generation capacity, IRNA reported. He noted that water and electricity projects will be inaugurated weekly until the end of the year and announced the commissioning of solar power plants, from which 7,000 megawatts of generated electricity will be integrated into the system. Aliabadi emphasized the equitable distribution of water and electricity, saying, "We will not witness these problems in the future." During the energy minister's visit to the west and southwest of Tehran Province, alongside the inauguration of electricity industry projects, a 10,000 cu-

bic meter water reservoir in Naimshahr was also inaugurated. Accordingly, supplying drinking water and emergency water storage are among the project's objectives, benefiting 250,000 residents through its social and environmental impacts. During the inauguration ceremony, Aliabadi pointed out that electricity consumption this year has been lower than last year, attributing this to public cooperation and the development of diverse projects in power generation and distribution across the country. The energy minister also stated that a critical condition ("red status") has been declared for the Mamlu Dam (in southeast of Tehran), adding that other dams in the country are also not in optimal condition. He expressed hope that with continued public cooperation, the country will overcome this situation. "The capacity of the country's water resources is limited, while it possesses abundant energy and minerals," Aliabadi said.

**Optimal consumption**  
Emphasizing the necessity of moving towards sustainable development, the minister added, "This will be achieved through improved productivity." He stat-



Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi inaugurates a water project in southwestern Tehran on July 28, 2025. [moe.gov.ir](https://moe.gov.ir)

ed that human resources constitute the country's main advantage, adding, "Therefore, we must place intelligent, trained, and hardworking human resources at the core of development." He stressed that the critical point is optimizing consumption, saying, "Today we are entering the fifth industrial revolution. In this context, smartification is highly important as we move into the cyber-physical era." He noted that electricity consumption will undoubtedly increase during this period, "but we must have more optimal consumption."

**Regional interconnection**  
The minister announced that the export of Iran's electrical equipment to neighboring countries is

currently underway, expressing hope that "by commissioning development projects and expanding renewable power plants, we can earn foreign exchange revenue through electricity exports for other projects." He described electrical interconnection with neighboring countries as a policy of the ministry, noting that developing power links is on the agenda. Aliabadi stated, "Despite limited capacities, we currently have power interconnections with Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Turkey, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, and Iraq, and plans to connect with Oman are also on the agenda." He added that a feasibility study for interconnection with the UAE has been underway for years and is currently being pursued.

## Why Iran should ...

Armenia has categorically rejected any cession, while Azerbaijan insists that control of the route is essential for seamless transit between its mainland and Nakhchivan. Armenia regards this demand as a violation of its national sovereignty and strongly opposes it. Armenia has floated a third option: leasing a transit corridor to an Armenian-American company. This remains at the discussion stage with no agreement signed. Claims of direct US or NATO involvement in the region are exaggerated and denied by Armenia itself. The reality is that Armenia will never relinquish sovereignty over its land, particularly to a neighbor like Azerbaijan. Armenia would only entertain the Armenian-American-controlled transit route under condition that Turkey opens access to the Black Sea through its own territory. Therefore, it is incorrect to suggest Armenia is turning over a 44-kilometer strip or that Azerbaijan is prepared to cut off Iran's routes. Nonetheless, Armenian authorities are under pressure, and Iran must maintain continuous engagement and support to prevent adverse geopolitical changes. Moreover, Azerbaijani claims to control all of Syunik could lead to future southern territorial grabs. Iran cannot remain indifferent. It must interact continuously with both Armenia and Azerbaijan, alerting both sides to the risks—not in an alarmist fashion, but with strategic prudence.

Tehran should not buy into rhetoric implying NATO has based forces on its borders—a belief once held about Afghanistan, which two decades of NATO presence failed to confirm in tangible results. Awareness matters more than exaggeration. There are already practical connections underway: Iran is building bridges linking its territory to Nakhchivan, partly on Iranian soil and partly in Azerbaijani hands, with the latter advancing more swiftly. Given the new dynamics in the South Caucasus, Iran should foster economic ties with Azerbaijan, Armenia and even Turkey. The goal is to establish a multilateral framework for regional economic and developmental cooperation. Still, vigilance is essential to avoid becoming geopolitically boxed in—without tipping into hyperbole. Change in the region is driven by governments, not Iran alone. Tehran cannot dictate Armenian decisions about its territory, but it can issue reasoned recommendations based on friendship and shared interests—such as ensuring any transit route is arranged in a way that does not jeopardize Iran's connectivity. As long as regional actors choose routes that do not effectively seal Iran off, confrontation is unnecessary. Indeed, broader economic collaboration with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey could help resolve many long-standing challenges. Iran's diplomatic outreach to Armenia should continue to secure vital transit paths and prevent blockages.



# Israel's claiming of West Bank to spark renewed conflict

Global inaction enables Tel Aviv's abuses



The photo shows a general view of a plenary session to vote on a bill for applying Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank territory, at the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), on July 23, 2025.  
● EPA



By Majid Safataj  
Palestine affairs expert

## OPINION

The Israeli parliament (Knesset) has recently given the green light to impose sovereignty over the West Bank, effectively annexing it. But first and foremost, it's crucial to note that the underpinning agreement between the Israeli regime and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to sign the Oslo Accord — which handed partial administrative control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority (PA) — came about due to a necessity felt by the Israelis because of the Palestinian Intifada. The Intifada — a widespread uprising of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza — led Tel Aviv to the conclusion that without a deal with the Palestinians, the resistance would drag on, eventually causing Israel to lose. Based on this, the Israeli regime entered the Oslo process, starting with Oslo I and progressing through Oslo II, Oslo III, and subsequent stages.

This accord was inked in 1993 by Yasser Arafat and then-Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. However, Israel has never stuck to its commitments under this

agreement. Throughout its 77 years of political existence, whenever Israel has sensed that the other side was on the back foot, it has routinely thrown peace and cease-fire agreements out the window and launched hostile actions.

Today, from Israel's viewpoint, the regime sees itself sitting pretty in a position of strength. Hence, the prediction made back in 1993 regarding the Oslo Accord has come to fruition once again. They hold that forming the Palestinian



A Palestinian Bedouin walks in a community as an illegal Israeli settlement stands in the background in the Jordan Valley in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.  
● ALI SAWAFTA/REUTERS



This move boils down to Israel's reading of the other side as weak; Just as we witness slaughter, oppression, famine, and hunger in Gaza, similar actions are being rolled out in the West Bank. Israel's most significant political step right now is its push to annex the West Bank into its occupied territories.

Authority was intended as a way to put an end to resistance and the Intifada, turning this body into an instrument for suppressing resistance movements — in other words, a Palestinian police force serving Israel's security goals.

However, the on-the-ground realities, especially in the West Bank, tell a different story. Resistance operations in the area have ramped up, and alignment with Gaza has picked up steam, despite Israel's claims that Hamas has been defeated in Gaza and resistance leaders have been assassinated in the West Bank. Still, the current situation has pushed the Israeli regime to push forward various plans and proposals to annex parts of the occupied territory and assert sovereignty over the West Bank.

This move boils down to Israel's reading of the other side as weak; Just as we witness slaughter, oppression, famine, and hunger in Gaza, similar actions are being rolled out in the West Bank. Israel's most significant political step right now is its push to annex the West Bank into its occupied territories.

In Lebanon, too, Israel is cashing in on the absence of effective air defenses to take out Resistance leaders. There is also speculation that Israel may branch out its operations to Iraq, Yemen, and beyond. All this behavior stems from Israel's revised assessment of the Resistance Axis, particularly the situation in Palestine. Many believe that Israel's sovereignty claim over the West Bank is not only a tall order but may result in escalating the conflict and tensions in the region.

Israel may well end up back where it started, prior to the Oslo Agreement — before recognizing the Palestinian Authority's existence — back when the First Intifada forced Israel to bend. Naturally, Resistance forces and the people of the West Bank are expected to push back, and Israel will have to face the music.

However, unlike in 1987 during the First Intifada, Israel now has more experience. Over the past three decades, the regime has honed its methods of suppressing popular protests and tested the waters of international indifference. Just as in Gaza — where we are witnessing the highest of atrocities, the killing of children, and the siege of defenseless people while the global community stays mute — Israel will likely turn up the heat on crackdowns in the West Bank. Still, such measures may well fan the flames of uprising once more in the occupied territories, particularly in the West Bank along the Jordan River.

The article first appeared in Persian on ILNA.

## Why Israel's push to annex West Bank could be Jordan's breaking point



By Robert Inlakesh  
Journalist, writer

## PERSPECTIVE

The Israeli parliament (Knesset) has passed a bill approving an agenda to annex the illegally occupied West Bank. The move comes as a first step towards a catastrophic move that could prove even more destabilizing to the region than the ethnic cleansing of Gaza would. Israel's lawmakers voted 71-13 on a piece of legislation that seeks to put in motion the full annexation of the West Bank. After the approval of the bill, Israeli Knesset speaker Amir Ohana commented the following:

"This is our land. This is our home. The Land of Israel belongs to the people of Israel. In 1967, the occupation did not begin; It ended, and our homeland was returned to its rightful owners. We are the original first natives of this piece of land. Jews cannot be the 'occupier' of a land that for 3,000 years has been called Judea." Ohana also called for the seizure of Gaza's territory, an opinion that is far from fringe and comes from a Likud Party MK, making it clear that such statements are not simply the sentiment of Religious Zionism Party elected officials like Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. The timing of the vote is also no coincidence, as Gaza cease-fire talks progress,

West Bank annexation is a major item on the agenda for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as he seeks to hold together his ruling coalition. If there is a cease-fire agreement implemented between the Israeli cabinet and Hamas, the promise of West Bank annexation could end up keeping dissenters in the fold of Netanyahu's cabinet.

### Will annexation work?

West Bank annexation is no longer a question of if, but when. There is a plurality in the political establishment that sees this issue as of great importance, and the overwhelming majority of Knesset Members support it.

Therefore, the timing will depend upon when it is politically viable, which is dictated by both American and Israeli politics. On the US side, Israel's richest billionaire, Miriam Adelson, gave the Trump campaign \$100 million, with the quid pro quo being that he permits West Bank annexation.

In fact, the Republican Party president's campaign was funded by a who's who of Zionist billionaires, making sense of why his administration appears ideologically as if it wouldn't be out of place running the show in Tel Aviv.

US President Donald Trump is not only an opponent of a so-called "Two-State solution" by words, but he also attempt-

ed to implement the disastrous Deal of the Century in 2020. This non-starter deal was, in essence, a plan that paved the way to Israeli annexation of vast swathes of the West Bank, while creating small Gaza-like enclaves in the rest of the territory where the Palestinian Authority would rule without any proper borders or army.

So, when it comes to the United States, there isn't likely to be much pushback. Therefore, the primary determining factor will be Israeli domestic politics.

If Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is truly entertaining a cease-fire with Gaza, this could be the perfect time to implement an annexation plot. Yet





Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks before a map of the Jordan Valley, vowing to extend Israeli sovereignty there if reelected, during a speech in Ramat Gan on September 10, 2019. ● MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP

there are a number of steps that would have to be taken in order to implement the policy correctly from the Israeli point of view. Some Israeli ministers, like Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir, may speak of imposing de jure annexation over the territory as a simple matter, yet for the more shrewd political and military actors behind the scenes, they understand the potential pitfalls involved. This is why the strategy inside the West Bank has been to impose the occupiers' domination gradually over time, which can be explained by the old adage about boiling a frog: The theory is that tossing the frog into boiling water will trigger an immediate reaction whereby it jumps out to save itself, opposed to adding the frog to water and slowly turning up the heat to the point where it traps the amphibian. The Palestinians in the West Bank have been subjected to the boiling frog strategy for decades, with the slow encroachment of settlements, seizures of land, and limited military action. If Israel simply decides to annex the entirety of the territory at once and force the people out, this will awaken a large-scale uprising and resistance. Yet, thus far, Israel has managed to successfully subdue the population of the occupied West Bank, and it would be a grave mistake from their perspective to flush all of their work down the drain in one foul sweep. Instead, there will likely be an attempt to annex portions of what is called Area C of the West Bank, constituting 60% of the total land mass there and home to 350,000 Palestinians. The other two portions of the land, constituting just a little under 40% of

it (due to settlements, the wall, and land seizures), are called Area A and B, which are home to the majority of the West Bank's 3.2 million Palestinians. For context, the Area A, B, and C model was a product of the Oslo Agreements between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel in the 1990s. Area C is under full Israeli military control, while Area B is under Palestinian Authority (PA) administrative control. Then, there is Area A, which is the smallest portion of the territory and is supposed to be under full PA security and administrative control. Of course, this is not actually the way it works in practice. The PA effectively acts as a subcontractor for the occupying army and manages its dirty work for it. In the most heavily populated area of the territory, it also exerts its power to subdue resistance. This aside, all serious annexation proposals in the past had focused on seizing the Jordan Valley region — located in Area C — while also including plans to declare the major illegal settlements as formally annexed. However, more recent initiatives have gotten a lot greedier and push for a total takeover of Area C, in addition to some parts of Area B. If the initial annexation proposals are the roadmap set forth, then this will mean that Israel will be forced to either give tens of thousands of Palestinians citizenship, granting special ID status like is the case for Palestinians living in occupied Al-Quds (Jerusalem), or ethnic cleansing. In the event of a maximalist approach, then we are talking about a mass expulsion program for hundreds of thousands of people, who have the option of fleeing to Jordan or heading towards PA-controlled areas.

Either way, this will eventually lead to the collapse of the Palestinian Authority. This was always the ultimate goal: to complete the ethnic cleansing of the territories occupied in 1967 once and for all, something that the Israelis now clearly have in mind. Many analysts have posited that Tel Aviv's annexation strategy will trigger a Third Intifada in the West Bank. This prospective development is based upon a series of assumptions, which may or may not lead to the conclusions they draw. The West Bank population has not moved an inch, as a collective, since the beginning of the Gaza genocide. In fact, when the Jenin refugee camp and Nour al-Shams Camp were being bombed, their people were displaced, and civilian massacres occurred throughout the last 22 months, the rest of the West Bank did nothing. But why? It is quite simple. The people of the West Bank are truly the frog in slowly boiling water. To begin with, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the West Bank work for Israeli businesses, and many of them quite literally live in the settlements that are built on top of their own land. There is also no Palestinian leadership in the West Bank as the PA is an agent of Israel and the US. A big segment of the West Bank population is also on the payroll of the PA. Keeping these two things in mind, a large portion of the population is dependent upon the Israeli occupiers and their subcontractors to sustain their standard of living. Then there are the plethora of Western NGOs working in the occupied territory, giving conditional grants to Palestinians for everything from planting vegetables, non-violent protest movements, to

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How is this all possible while the West Bank people are surrounded by checkpoints, under the gun of occupying soldiers, witnessing their homes being invaded as a normal part of life, and enduring settler violence? It's very simple, they came to accept their reality and chose to focus on distractions, telling themselves that the price of resistance is too expensive.

women's empowerment or something as harmless as weightlifting. This is how the EU, UK, and US have managed to NGOise the territory, changing the territory even on a cultural level, shaping the way the people see resistance, turning their goals away from the liberation of the homeland. If you want to get a grant from international organizations as a Palestinian trying to do anything, there are requirements in the way. What these NGOs also do is turn villages, towns, refugee camps, movements, tribes, and cities against each other over access, status, travel, and money. This is not to mention what is perhaps the worst form of entrapment: loans and credit cards. Yes, Palestinians in the West Bank are handed out loans with almost no restrictions. Why? So that they can trap themselves in pools of debt, from which they can never rid themselves. In addition to this, access to huge loans and credit cards was paired with an influx of foreign cars, luxury items, and the emergence of cafe culture. In other words, young impressionable people are roped into caring about material things like their cars, clothes, or handbags, to chase material goods, not to care about resisting an occupation. How is this all possible while people are surrounded by checkpoints, under the gun of occupying soldiers, witnessing their homes being invaded as a normal part of life, and enduring settler violence? It's very simple, the people came to accept their reality and chose to focus on distractions, telling themselves that the price of resistance is too expensive. Despite all of this, there are still many West Bank Palestinians who refuse to bow down and seek to resist. This often comes in the form of lone wolf attacks on soldiers or illegal settlers, or in the small resistance groups that emerge throughout the territory. Almost every Palestinian supports these brave people, but most refuse to follow their path because of the immense cost. So, is it hopeless? Absolutely not. An uprising is always possible, and the population of the West Bank is being squeezed today in a way we haven't seen since the Second Intifada. Yet the trigger for a mass mobilization is relatively unpredictable; It could quite literally be anything. If the PA falls, however, this would certainly accelerate the process. When it eventually does happen, then the divided population will experience major challenges as they do not have a well-trained and prepared armed resistance like Gaza does. In the worst-case scenario, the population will begin to be expelled into Jordan, which could very easily translate into the toppling of the Hashemite Kingdom, not least because of the economic and social burden such a mass ethnic cleansing would cause. The fall of Jordan would inevitably lead to resistance groups using it as a launching pad for action against Israel.

The article first appeared on The Palestine Chronicle.



Palestinian protesters hold up placards as they demonstrate against the US-brokered peace proposal, the Deal of the Century, in the West Bank city of Ramallah, on February 11, 2020. ● ABBAS MOMANI/AFP



People stand in front of luxury cars and a mural of the late Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh on the Palestinian side of the Israeli separation wall, in the West Bank city of Bethlehem. ● ABED AL HASHLAMOUN/EPA



## FIVB Boys' U19 World Championship:

## Iran makes quick work of Egypt to progress to last 16

## Sports Desk

Iran claimed a comfortable 3-0 (25-16, 25-22, 25-20) victory over Egypt on Monday to secure a last-16 spot at the FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Mohammad-Amin Rahimi contributed 11 points – including double aces – for Iran, with fellow outside-hitter chipping in 10.

Egyptian middle-blocker Abo Gabal scored a game-high 12 points, while outside-hitter Zeyad Ghonim added seven for the African side, which suffered a third defeat in Uzbek capital.

This was a third successive win for Adel Gholami's boys in Pool C, following a five-set loss to Spain on the opening day of the competition.

Chasing a third world under-19 title, and first since

2017, Iran bounced back from the first-day setback to edge Poland in a five-set thriller, before easing past Tunisia in straight sets.

Runner-up to France in the previous edition in 2023, Iran will square off against Italy in the final round of the group phase today.

"Iran's group features some decent sides of the tournament in Spain, Italy, Poland, and even Tunisia and Egypt, which came here as the top two of the African Championships," Gholami said after the game.

"We knew it was going to be a tough group, and the challenges would only grow with each game, but thank God, today's win confirmed a place in round of 16 for us. Hopefully, we can achieve another positive result against Italy tomorrow and then see what comes our

way in the knockouts," added the former international middle blocker.

"We were aware of Egypt's weakness in transition plays. We performed exceptionally well in reception, serving, and attacking throughout the match, though our players were a bit hasty with their decision-making at times, making things harder for us, which is normal given their age and experience level."

The top four in each of the four six-team groups will progress to the round of 16. Elsewhere on Monday, defending champion France overcame a two-set deficit to beat Japan 3-2 (33-35, 23-25, 25-21, 25-19, 17-15) in Pool B, while Belgium secured a top-four finish in Pool A, thanks to a 3-1 win (25-14, 20-25, 25-19, 25-12) against Türkiye.



Iranian players and coaching staff pose for a photo after a 3-0 win against Egypt at the FIVB Boys' U19 World Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on July 28, 2025.

● FIVB

## Asian Junior Wushu Championships:

## Iranians win four medals on Day 3

## Sports Desk

There were further taolu medals for the Iran on the third day of the Asian Junior Wushu Championships in Jiangyin, China, while four Iranians progressed to the final bouts in the sanda contests on Monday.

Having won a silver and a bronze earlier in the competition, Iranian girl Helia Chearqi scored 9.063 points to win the bronze in the nanquan event of the children age group. Mohammadreza Madadi, meanwhile, bagged a silver medal in the men's junior nanquan showpiece with 9.403 points, while Hasti Askari won the bronze medal of the same event in the women's competitions, also registering 9.403 points.

Reza Siahmoshtei settled for a silver medal in the men's junior daoshu category, thanks to a 9.433-point performance.

In the men's junior sanda competitions, Amirhesam Mohammadi (60kg), Ali Rezaei (65kg), Amir-Mahdi Shirdel (75kg), and Amirreza Karimi

will vie for the ultimate prize after coming out victorious in the semi-finals of their respective weight classes.



● iranwushufed.ir

## Bayern agree £65.5m deal with Liverpool for Diaz

**BBC** – Luis Diaz is set to join Bayern Munich after the German champions agreed a deal worth 75m euros (£65.5m) including add-ons with Liverpool. Liverpool rejected an initial bid of £58.6m from Bayern for the Colombia forward earlier this month.

Diaz, 28, was left out of Liverpool's squad for Saturday's 4-2 pre-season friendly defeat by AC Milan in Hong Kong because of speculation surrounding his future.

He has been given permission by Liverpool to fly to Europe from Asia to complete a medical in the coming days.

Liverpool have signed forwards Florian Wirtz and Hugo Ekitike already this summer and are interest-

ed in Newcastle United's Alexander Isak.

Diaz arrived at Anfield from Porto in a deal worth an initial £37m in January 2022 and has scored 41 goals in 148 appearances, including 13 as the Reds won the Premier League title last

season.

His 17 goals in all competitions in 2024-25 was the most prolific season of his career.

Bayern won their 34th Bundesliga title last season and scored a league-high 99 goals, but only made it to the last 16 of

the German Cup and exited the Champions League in the quarter-finals.

Diaz will provide an attacking option for the Bavarian side, who will be without forward Jamal Musiala for a "long period" after he suffered a broken leg and dislocated ankle at the Club World Cup.

Diaz's shot conversion rate of 18.3% in 24-25 comfortably ranked as his best in a Premier League season.

Many of his other attributes stood out statistically too.

Diaz sat just outside the top 10 in the Premier League for most combined goals and assists (18), shots on target (30), chances created (56) and dribbles completed (52).



● GETTY IMAGES

## Persian Gulf Pro League:

## Tractor to begin title defense against Esteghlal

## Sports Desk

Tractor will begin its Persian Gulf Pro League title defense at home against Iranian Hazfi Cup champion Esteghlal on August 18.

The game will be a second encounter between the two in seven days, following the Iranian Super Cup match at Isfahan's Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium.

The opening day of the new Iranian top-flight season will also see Sepahan – runner-up to Tractor last season – play away to Malavan FC, while Persepolis, which finished third last term, will begin its bid for an eighth league trophy in a decade at home against newly-promoted Fajr Sepasi – in head coach Vahid Hashemian's debut on the Tehran Reds' bench.

Persepolis will be chasing

their first league victory over Sepahan since December 2021 when the two domestic rivals face off in Isfahan on the second matchday.

The two sides met on four occasions across different competitions last season, with Sepahan achieving a clean sweep of victories.

Persepolis will then host Foolad Khuzestan on matchday three and Sepahan will visit Sirjan to face Mahdi Tartar's Golgozar.

Elsewhere on matchday one, Esteghlal Khuzestan will host Shams Azar in Ahvaz, with Zob Ahan and Paykan, which also won promotion last season, squaring off in Isfahan.

Last season's surprise package Chadormalou will welcome Yahya Golmohammadi's Foolad Khuzestan, which will be looking to im-

prove on the fourth-place finish last term.

Golgozar and Iralco will meet in Sirjan, while Mes Rafsanjan will visit Khaybar. A second league game for Tractor will come at Mes Rafsanjan, before Dragan Skocic's side play at home against Iralco in the third round of fixtures.

Esteghlal, meanwhile, which has Portuguese coach Ricardo Sa Pinto back in charge, will face Zob Ahan in its first home game of the campaign, followed by a trip to Ahvaz, where the Tehran Blues will meet Esteghlal Khuzestan on matchday three.

The first Tehran Derby of the season will come on matchday twelve, as Esteghlal will be desperate to end a seven-year winless streak against archrival Persepolis in the league.



● IRNA



# Fragile splendor of Daryasar Plain at risk

## Iranica Desk

Daryasar Plain in Tonekabon, Mazandaran Province, located at an altitude of over 2,000 meters above sea level and becoming one of tourists' favorite destinations in May with the blossoming of yellow chamomile flowers, is facing a water shortage phenomenon this year. A significant part of the middle river has dried up, and many springs in the plain are experiencing a sharp decrease in water output. These changes clearly indicate the negative impacts of climate change and consecutive droughts in the region.

On the other hand, the increasing number of tourists in spring, especially during holidays, has put great pressure on the plain's infrastructure and environment. The lack of adequate facilities to manage tourist populations, including parking lots, restrooms, and access paths, has caused garbage accumulation and destruction of the area's vegetation cover. This situation not only diminishes the beauty of the plain but also poses a serious threat to its sensitive ecosystem.

Some environmental activists, tour guides, and nature enthusiasts have come to help by forming a group to clean up the plain, and from time to time, they collect rubbish and clean the area. However, these actions are temporary, Mehr News Agency reported.

Daryasar Plain lacks integrated management and a designated authority. This has led to the absence of necessary coordination for sustainable development and environmental protection of the area. Furthermore, the lack of appropriate infrastructure such as accommodations, safe access roads, and sanitary services affects tourists' experience and prevents optimal utilization of the tourism potential of the plain.



In this plain, two brothers named Ali and Mostafa Talikani act as the area's wardens and settle in their cabin during busy times. Along with livestock farming and producing dairy products, they watch over the area. These individuals put in considerable effort for the area but are dissatisfied with many tourists not respecting the environment, saying that they face an overwhelming flood of irresponsible tourists. They either have to compensate for

the damage caused by these visitors, clean up their rubbish, or attend to the problems they encounter.

These two brothers stay and live in this area for several months of the year; however, preserving the beauty and ecosystem of Daryasar Plain requires comprehensive planning and integrated management. The development of tourism infrastructure in accordance with environmental principles, education and cultural aware-



ness among tourists, and co-operation between various organizations can help preserve this area. Additionally, focusing on environmental issues and sustainable development could lead to economic prosperity in the region and create employment for local residents.

Mohammad Ali Jari, a nature guide in western part of Mazandaran Province, told Mehr News Agency, "This plain experiences a large crowd in spring, especially in May and early June,

which generates a lot of garbage. Some tourists here are trained nature travelers, and when they leave the plain, they take their garbage with them. But our problem is with ordinary tourists who litter and do not respect the environment, and we witness all kinds of behavior from them."

He said, "Every year, friends who frequently pass through this path or are herders collect the trash left by these people and take it down with them.

But all these activities happen spontaneously, and there is no proper management in the area. Whereas this place should be managed like Qaleh Rudkhan."

Jari suggests organizing the entrance routes to the plain. He believes tourists can be sent to the area accompanied by a guide. On the other hand, the area has difficult passages that not everyone can cross, so the presence of a guide is necessary. Also, setting designated times for entering and leaving the plain is helpful because it takes about an hour and a half to ascend and reach the plain. Some people arrive too late and face difficulties returning, which burdens the local residents.

In mid-May this year, Hadi Mansourkiaei, head of Tonekabon's Department of Environment, emphasized obtaining permits from the environmental agency for presence in Daryasar Plain, saying, "Tourist presence continued until mid-June in Daryasar Plain. However, considering the wildlife breeding season, overnight stays and presence of tourists in the area were prohibited. Daryasar Plain cannot handle a large volume of tourists, and paying attention to this is influential in protecting this exemplary area."

The beauty of Daryasar Plain is indescribable, especially when its flowers bloom, presenting tourists with a yellow, red, and green plain under a blue sky. But among this beauty, some people start fires and leave them without properly extinguishing them, along with garbage.

If such behaviors increase and if locals, wardens, dedicated nature travelers, and experienced guides are not present, Daryasar Plain will face an environmental disaster, and then we will regret introducing one of the most beautiful plains of Iran to tourists or depriving it of its beauty.

## Falak-ol-Aflak Archaeology Museum displaying trace of 100,000 years of life

### Iranica Desk

More than 100,000 years of human habitation have been put on display at the Falak-ol-Aflak Archaeological Museum in Khorramabad, the capital of Lorestan Province, the Director General of the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization said.

Ata Hassanpour said, "The museum exhibits a wide range of archaeological artifacts from

various periods, with a special emphasis on the prehistoric sites of Khorramabad Valley, which have been nominated for registration on the World Heritage List."

He continued that in total, 385 objects from the Paleolithic, Upper Paleolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, as well as the Bronze and Iron Ages, the Seleucid, Parthian, Sassanid periods, Islamic eras, and archaeological findings from the excavations of the Fal-

ak-ol-Aflak hill are displayed in different sections of the museum, ISNA wrote.

The museum is organized into four sections with an area of 224 square meters, namely General Introduction to Prehistory, Prehistory, General Introduction to Historical Periods (with a focus on the Falak-ol-Aflak castle and hill), and the Islamic Period.

Hassanpour emphasized that the first section of the museum includes a map classifying key

archaeological sites in Lorestan Province by period, information about the geomorphology of Khorramabad Valley, and an overview of province's prehistoric periods; this section also features a model of a cave depicting a Neanderthal human making stone tools beside a child.

He stated that the museum's prehistoric section includes 185 paleontological and archaeological specimens, with the oldest artifacts dating back to the Middle

Paleolithic period, some of which were discovered in the Humian Rock Shelter north of Kuhdasht and are over 100,000 years old.

This official noted that Upper Paleolithic finds, related to the anatomically modern humans' entry into the region, include stone tools, animal remains, and bone tools excavated from the Yafteh Cave, dated between 30,000 and 40,000 years ago.

Hassanpour pointed out that Yafteh Cave is one of the most

important Upper Paleolithic sites in Iran, providing valuable insights into the lifestyles and traditions of humans of that era. Tools from the Epipaleolithic — the final stage of the hunting and gathering era — are displayed from the Pasangar Cave.

He said, "With the end of the Ice Age, humans living here between 10,000 and 12,000 years ago gradually began domesticating animals, cultivating grains, and establishing rural life."



● chtn.ir



● IRNA



● tasnimnews.com





# Iran's culture minister calls for clearer artistic policy framework

## Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, urged for more precise and inclusive policy documents in the arts sector during the 118th session of the Art Council held on Monday. The meeting gathered representatives of visual arts associations to address key challenges and the necessity of drafting strategic cultural charters, IRNA reported. Salehi emphasized that producing well-structured documents creates a "common language" between artists, government bodies, and other stakeholders. He added that a major hurdle in implementing cultural policies has been the lack of consensus among primary beneficiaries. "One reason these documents fail in practice is that main stakeholders have not been sufficiently convinced," Salehi said. The

minister highlighted multiple benefits of formalizing such policy documents. Beyond fostering shared understanding, he pointed to the establishment of "relative stability" in artistic governance. This stability helps shield the arts sector from disruptions caused by frequent leadership changes and offers artists a degree of "relative settlement." Salehi added that a clear reference text would reduce contradictions within the governance system, enabling more coherent oversight. Salehi acknowledged the need for clarity about the objectives and expectations surrounding these documents, stressing that the process must reflect the voices of artists and other involved parties. "If we accept the necessity of documentation, we must define what we expect from it and its essential features," he said. He further questioned whether



Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi (c) attends the 118th session of the Art Council in Tehran, July 28, 2025.

● IRNA

drafting should be delegated to the art community itself, handled by an external body, or a hybrid approach. The session included detailed discussions on the pressing issues facing the visual arts field and the role of strategic documentation in resolving them. The minister's statements come amid ongoing efforts to implement the Cultural Engineering Document, a government-led initiative aiming to align cultural activities with broader national goals. By fostering dialogue and shared policy language, Salehi signaled a move toward more stable and effective cultural governance in Iran's evolving artistic landscape.



## Iranian short 'Birthday' to compete at Germany's 49th Weiterstadt Film Festival



## Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian filmmaker Raheleh Karami's short film 'Birthday' was officially selected to compete at the 49th Weiterstadt Open Air Film Festival, to be held in Hesse, Germany, from August 14 to 18. The five-day festival, one of Germany's longest-running open-air cinema events, will screen Karami's film alongside selected titles from around the world, ILNA reported. This year's edition saw nearly 4,000 submissions, with Birthday making the final cut thanks to its originality and

storytelling style that sidesteps conventional cinematic boundaries. The event is known for its strong emphasis on "diversity" and "authenticity," drawing crowds for its mix of avant-garde and cross-genre shorts. Written and directed by Karami and produced by Hojjat Babaei, 'Birthday' completes a thematic trilogy by the filmmaker focused on women's experiences. It follows her earlier shorts 'The Doll' and 'The Good Girl,' both of which explored gender dynamics in modern Iranian society. In 'Birthday,' the narrative centers on

a young girl's emotional expectations on her birthday. "Today is my birthday, mom. It's supposed to be the best day of my life..." reads the official synopsis. Actresses Shaghayegh Faryadshiran and Mahana Ekhlas lead the cast in the short, which marks Karami's third directorial work. Separately, Karami's latest film 'The House' was recently selected for the 38th edition of the Les Instants Vidéo numériques et poétiques festival in Marseille, France, continuing the director's growing presence in the European short film circuit.

## Mustafa foundation's Observatory magazine covers tomorrow's technologies today

## Social Desk

In its latest issue, Observatory magazine, published by the Mustafa Science and Technology Foundation, explores the seismic changes underway in software engineering, spotlighting the role of artificial intelligence in transforming the way software is built, maintained, and understood. Published by the Nasim Observatory at the Mustafa Science and Technology Foundation, Observatory not only explains the mechanisms behind major scientific achievements by leading global researchers in simple terms, but also sheds light on the transformative future those breakthroughs may bring. The second issue spans a wide range of scientific advances—from tissue engineering and drug-delivery nanoparticles to mechanisms behind multiple sclerosis progression, exploration of brine reservoirs, and the exotic role of triquark particles in quantum physics. Through interviews with the scientists behind these discoveries and accessible visual content, the magazine aims to

both enhance public understanding of the scientific concepts and foster interdisciplinary research among scholars. The April edition features a thought-provoking article by leading researcher Ahmad Hassan, examining how AI is reshaping the software landscape. One of the articles in this issue is titled 'On the Verge of a Historical Turning Point in Software Evolution.' Full text follows below:

In a world where technology advances at a breakneck pace, software has become the beating heart of digital transformation. Ahmad Hassan, one of the most influential researchers in software engineering, is exploring artificial intelligence, new revolutionary ways software is built, maintained, and optimized. Using artificial intelligence (AI) solutions that can make programming faster, smarter, and less error-prone. In the near future, artificial intelligence will not only help programmers, but it also will turn itself into a skilled programmer, available to the general public. It can even connect natural language and program code,

making codes easier to write and understand.

## Software with millions of users

Ultra-Large Scale Software Systems (ULSS) are those that make the world go round. They allow us to get millions of results in less than a second when we google or recommend contents to one another as we scroll on Instagram or Facebook. These platforms all run on ULSS. Extremely large software systems operate on a global scale, serving millions of users around the clock. They include Google (a search engine that processes billions of requests in real-time), Facebook (a social network in which users from all over the world interact with each other), and Visa (a financial transaction processing system that manages millions of purchases every second). These systems, which serve millions of users daily require uninterrupted, nonstop operation.

## Software development, faster than ever

Today, artificial intelligence can play a role in all stages of software development, from production and improve-



ment to processes. Until just a few years ago, the only way to write a program was through programmers. But in 2023, Garter announced that artificial intelligence in software engineering has attracted a lot of attention, which means that in the near future, all software will be developed with the help of artificial intelligence, and the pace of software development will accelerate. Hassan believes that AI will not replace programmers but

that it will empower them, much like a friend would. A can make software development processes faster and more efficient. Other uses of this field include automatically detecting errors at the time of coding, suggesting more optimized codes, and automatically writing parts of the code. The implication of this for technology companies is that they will be able to produce software faster, cheaper, and of higher quality.