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Menara initiative could offer framework for regional stability, development

By Mohammad Irani
Middle East affairs analyst

OPINION

Former Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has recently proposed the creation of a regional body to facilitate peaceful nuclear cooperation among its members via an opinion published in *The Guardian*. According to the veteran diplomat, the Middle East Network for Atomic Research and Advancement, or Menara, which means "lighthouse" in Arabic, is open to all qualified states in the Middle East and North Africa, to join, provided that they reject the development or deployment of nuclear weapons and commit to mutual verification of their compliance. In return, Menara would help them benefit from peaceful nuclear technology, including energy production, medicine, agriculture and scientific research. Mohammad Irani, a former Iranian ambassador in Jordan and Kuwait, believes the initiative could serve as a solution to sustainable development in the region. Here is what the former envoy has to say about Zarif's proposal:

For any initiative to gain traction in the region, certain preconditions and sustained efforts are required so that it may be recognized by different parties, assessed from the standpoint of each state, and its implications carefully weighed. The "Menara" proposal—currently being discussed as a framework for regional cooperation in fields such as nuclear energy—must first be tested for receptivity among regional nations.

A preliminary evaluation is possible. The Middle East, unfortunately, remains one of the world's most volatile regions. This reality should serve as a wake-up call for its governments to approach every new security initiative as an opportunity worth exploring. The Menara plan presents both strong potential and obvious obstacles. Its value lies in offering policymakers and intellectuals across the region a new platform to ease hostilities and lower the temperature of regional tensions. Contrary to narratives promoted by the West that depict Iran's nuclear program as a root cause of instability, it is in fact the existence of an illegal, oppressive, occupying, and rogue regime—the Zionist regime of Israel—that poses the real security threat in the region. The problem that this regime has with regional states is not limited to occupation. Its very survival depends on stirring up instability around it.

One need only imagine the Middle East in the 1940s—before this regime was established. Would the region be mired in such persistent security crises, growing tensions, arms races? The timeline of regional insecurity correlates directly with the creation of this regime, which has endangered all surrounding countries. Thus, the first and most fundamental roadblock to the Menara proposal is the Israeli regime itself. Israel is unlikely to permit the realization of any initiative—especially one aimed at regional peace and inclusive development.

Regional nations are deeply concerned about further destabilization, as their interests cannot be secured amid chronic unrest. It is hoped that this initiative—clearly the result of thoughtful planning—will help move the region toward a calmer, more stable, and prosperous future.

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Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (2nd R) honors the family of Nima Rajabpour, a chief journalist who lost his life when Israel bombed Iran's state broadcaster in June, during a weekly press conference by Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei (1st R) in Tehran on August 4, 2025 ahead of the National Journalist's Day which falls on Friday.

TASNIM

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Reparations reaction bespeaks US incognizance of int'l law: *FM spox*

Iran's Foreign Ministry on Monday said describing as "ridiculous" Tehran's compensation request for recent US strikes on its nuclear sites shows American officials' lack of information about international law.

The ministry's spokesman Ismaeil Baqaei in his weekly press conference said that any act contrary to international law is considered a "violation," and the "infringing" country bears international responsibility.

The US State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Tommy Pigott on Thursday called any demands for financial compensation by Iran "ridiculous".

The comments came after Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told the Financial Times that Washington must accept responsibility for the attacks and provide financial redress before nuclear negotiations could resume.

On June 22, the US bombarded Iran's Fordow, Isfahan and Natanz nuclear sites, inflicting serious damage. The US joined an aggression launched by Israel that



had derailed Tehran-Washington nuclear talks.

"What is absurd and ridiculous, unfortunately, can be seen in the official policies of the United States", Baqaei said.

"They themselves break the law, and at the same time, not only support the illegal actions of their closest ally in the region (Is-

rael), but also try to justify them (Israel's illegal actions), including in Gaza".

Baqaei advised the US officials to take a look at the rulings of international courts, particularly regarding cases they once dismissed as "ridiculous actions." For example, the International Court of Justice's case on US in-

tervention in Nicaragua or the case on Iran's oil platforms. In both instances, the United States was found in violation of international law, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"In any potential negotiation... the issue of holding the United States accountable and demanding compensation for committing military aggression against Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities will be one of the topics on the agenda," Baqaei said.

Following the US-Israel aggression, Tehran suspended its cooperation with the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, accusing the agency of siding with Western countries and providing a justification for Israel's air strikes.

However, the foreign ministry spokesman said that the IAEA's deputy chief is expected in Iran "in less than 10 days".

Last month, Iran said future cooperation with the UN agency would take on a "new form".

Baqaei said the upcoming visit by IAEA officials aims to discuss Tehran's future relations with the agency.

Iran's top security body approves formation of Defense Council



Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), the country's top security body, on Sunday approved the establishment of a Defense Council as part of major structural changes to the nation's strategic defense policies.

The SNSC said that the decision was made in line with Article 176 of the Constitution, which outlines national security responsibilities. The newly formed council will be responsible for developing defense strategies and enhancing the capabilities of the Armed Forces. The Iranian president will head the council, which also includes the heads of the three branches of government, senior military commanders, and designated ministers relevant to defense affairs.

Iran had a similar council during the 1980s Iraq's imposed war that left nearly 1 million casualties on both sides. The council's formation comes after the Israeli regime on June 13 launched a war of aggression against Iran, assassinating senior military commanders and nuclear scientists in targeted strikes and killing hundreds of civilians.

On June 22, the United States escalated the war by bombing three civilian nuclear facilities in Iran.

In response, the Iranian Armed Forces carried out retaliatory strikes on strategic Israeli positions across the occupied territories and targeted the al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest American military installation in West Asia.

Through its successful retaliatory operations, Iran managed to impose a halt to the aggression on June 24.

Hundreds of ex-Israeli officials beg Trump to help end Gaza war



People carry the body of a person who was killed while seeking food at a distribution point on Salah al-Din Road in the central Gaza Strip on August 4, 2025.
● AFP

About 600 former Israeli security officials, including previous heads of the Mossad and the military, have urged Donald Trump to pressure Israel to end the war in Gaza as the regime's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, considers expanding the conflict.

In an open letter, the former officials said an end to the war was the only way to save hostages still held by Hamas.

"Your credibility with the vast majority of Israelis augments your ability to steer prime minister Netanyahu and his government in the right direction: end the war, return the hostages, stop the suffering," they wrote.

The letter comes as pressure mounts for the Israeli cabinet to end the war, even as Netanyahu considers intensifying the offensive. Thousands of protesters took to the streets in Israel over the weekend after two videos were released of emaciated hostages held in Gaza.

One video in particular, which depicted a skeletal Eviatar David digging what he said could be his own grave, prompted a wave of outrage across Israel.

On Sunday night, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum headquarters released a statement that accused Netanyahu of "leading Israel and the kidnapped to doom".

The prime minister is considering expanding the war in Gaza despite the growing calls for a cease-fire. According to Israeli media, Netanyahu wants to try "pushing for the release of the hostages through decisive military victory".

The prime minister is expected to hold a meeting on Tuesday to decide on the

best path forward in Gaza, with expanded military operations on the table. Intensifying military activity in the Palestinian territory would placate the far-right ministers in Netanyahu's governing coalition, who have consistently advocated against a cease-fire.

An expansion of the war would be contrary to what Trump's Middle East envoy told the families of hostages over the weekend was the US position. Steve Witkoff said Washington was backing a comprehensive end to the Gaza war that would bring hostages home and assured the families that would not mean more fighting.


Any expansion of the conflict would risk worsening the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza. A UN-affiliated humanitarian body said the territory was experiencing famine, as the approximate 2.1 million people who live there, experience mass starvation.

Despite the announcement of expanded aid measures in Gaza, humanitarian groups say Israel is still not letting nearly enough aid into the territory.

At least 40 Palestinians were killed by Israeli gunfire and airstrikes in Gaza on Monday, in addition to five people who died of starvation, health authorities said. At least 10 of those who were killed were shot as they queued for aid outside distribution centers run by the private US Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF).

Almost 61,000 people have been killed in Gaza since the war began. Israel launched the war in response to an attack on Israel on October 7 2023 in which Hamas fighters killed about 1,200 people and took 251 hostages.

The former Israeli security officials also warned against an expansion of the war, arguing that Israel had long since achieved its military objectives in Gaza.




وزارت جهاد کشاورزی

Date: 1404/5/14 - No.:55/04/10105

INVITATION TO ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

First Announcement

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY



وزارت جهاد کشاورزی

The Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture-Jihad of I.R. of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below 7 items of pesticides technical material, through one step international tender.

	Name	PACKING	Quantity/kg
1	Fipronil Technical min 95% based on dry technical form	25 or 50 kg waterproof cardboard drum	2,200
2	Cartap Technical min 98%	50 kg waterproof cardboard drum	40,000
3	Propargite Technical min 90%	200 kg drum	96,000
4	Deltamethrin Technical min 98.5 %	50 kg drum	3,700
5	Permethrin Technical min 95%	200 kg drum	10,500
6	Cypermethrin Technical min 90%	50 kg drum	59,000
7	Glyphosate Isopropylamine Salt Technical 62%	200 kg drum	78,000

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Tuesday** dated **5/8/2025** until **Wednesday** dated **13/8/2025** (7 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of IRI. Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30-character identification code of 33903978226350065000000000000008.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Saturday** dated **13/9/2025** (to the end of official working hours) to our security office located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on **Sunday** dated **14/9/2025** at **14:00** with the presence of bidder's representatives at our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

We would like to emphasize that the value of the bid bond amount must be only submitted by the bidders in bank guarantee as follows:

- 1- € 6652/8 for Fipronil Technical min 95% equivalent to Iranian Rials 5,424,626,592.
- 2- € 32568/47 for Cartap Technical min 98% equivalent to Iranian Rials 26,556,001,920.
- 3- € 39218 for Propargite Technical min 90% equivalent to Iranian Rials 31,977,886,464.
- 4- € 8880 for Deltamethrin Technical min 98.5% equivalent to Iranian Rials 7,240,663,200.
- 5- € 5103 for Permethrin Technical min 95% equivalent to Iranian Rials 4,160,935,170.
- 6- € 31196/56 for Cypermethrin Technical min 90% equivalent to Iranian Rials 25,437,363,840.
- 7- € 8638/72 for Glyphosate Isopropylamine Salt Technical 62% equivalent to Iranian Rials 7,043,924,160.

- The bid bond value should be in Euro or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on the exchange rate of Telegraphic Transfer on CBI's ETS website, www.fxmarketrate.cbi.ir, on **22/7/2025**.
- The bidders are also permitted to submit the bid bond in Iranian Rial.
- After approval of ASSC's Financial Manager, the bidders are permitted to use their previous and definite outstanding claims as the bid bond.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir,
and <http://fiets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

Public Relations and International Affairs of Agricultural Support Services Company

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Iran could play key transit role as junction of three continents: VP

Aref set to meet UN chief in Turkmenistan

Economy Desk

Iranian First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref declared Iran possesses an "exceptional position in the transit sector," citing its role as "the central hub connecting the three major continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa." On Monday, prior to his departure for Turkmenistan to participate in the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in Awaza, Aref outlined the objectives of this trip, IRNA reported.

He stated the Iranian government's strategy is "the extensive and wide-ranging development of cooperation with neighboring and regional countries."

"32 developing countries in the world are landlocked, meaning they lack access to open waters, and eight of these countries are located in our region," Aref said.

The vice president said, "With the strategy we have in the government for extensive and wide-ranging development in all sectors, we enjoy good relations with these countries," adding, "The goal is to review the cooperation we can have with all landlocked developing countries, particularly these eight (neighboring) countries. We have good interactions with these countries."

Referring to Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit to Pakistan, Aref emphasized, "As we predicted, the president's visit to Pakistan was beneficial for developing regional relations and beneficial for the Islamic world."

He expressed hope that this trip will also lead to strengthened relations in all sectors, especially the transit sector. As part of the programs during Pezeshkian's official visit to the neighboring country, 12 cooperation agreements were signed on Sunday, aimed at fa-



Iranian First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref outlines the objectives of his trip prior to departure for Turkmenistan on August 4, 2025.
● MARZIEH SOLEIMANI/IRNA

cilitating and paving the way for the development of mutual cooperation across various sectors. The main areas covered by the signed agreements include tourism, agriculture, judicial and legal cooperation, industry, science and technology, transportation and transit, cultural heritage, and commercial and economic cooperation.

The first vice president underscored that the country has declared its readiness "to connect the landlocked countries to open waters."

He announced his sideline programs include a meeting with United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, along with planned talks with senior



Turkmen officials. He will also hold meetings with several other heads of state on bilateral, multilateral, and international issues."

Power generation capacity increases by 5,000 MW, minister says



Economy Desk

The Iranian Minister of Energy announced that over 5,000 megawatts have been added to the country's power generation capacity within the past year (began on March 20, 2024), "encompassing thermal, solar, and small-scale power plants."

During an unannounced visit by

President Masoud Pezeshkian to the Ministry of Energy and Iran's National Electricity Grid Dispatching Center, Abbas Aliabadi also stated that the country's solar power generation capacity has grown by 71% compared to last year, ISNA reported.

Aliabadi presented a report on the latest status of the national power

and water networks, emphasizing that, in total, considering thermal, solar, and small-scale power plants, over 5,000 megawatts have been added to the country's power generation capacity over the past year. According to official figures published on June 1, Iran's nominal electricity generation capacity reached 94,649 megawatts by the end of the first months of the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20, 2025), nearing the 95,000-megawatt threshold.

Aliabadi reported an unprecedented increase in electricity consumption, the implementation of emergency blackouts, and a significant decrease in Tehran's water resources, stressing the necessity of public cooperation in managing water and electricity consumption.

He stated that the country's electricity consumption in recent days has exceeded 77,000 megawatts, with rising temperatures being the primary cause of this consumption surge." The energy minister added that each degree Celsius increase in temperature imposes hundreds of megawatts of additional load on the

grid, placing substantial pressure on the power industry.

According to Aliabadi, the ministry is striving "to increase generation capacity by commissioning new projects and minimize the implementation of emergency blackouts. However, the cooperation of consumers across various sectors and energy conservation remain unavoidable necessities."

"As part of this program, over 87,000 LED lights have been installed in public streets nationwide, resulting in savings of 57.9 million kilowatt-hours of electricity."

Aliabadi also pointed to the unbalanced growth between power production and consumption over the past decade, stating, "In the last 10 years, electricity production has increased 13-fold while consumption has risen 23-fold, leading to a grid imbalance." Regarding power generation status, he reported, "Over 102,000 megawatts of power plant maintenance has been successfully completed, and power plants are operational with 98% readiness. This year, the capacity of thermal power plants has also increased by 4,000

megawatts compared to last year." Noting a 71% increase in solar power capacity and a 5% increase in wind power capacity compared to the previous year, Aliabadi described the future of the renewable power industry as promising.

4,000-MW rise in thermal capacity

Additionally, Naser Eskandari, Deputy of Production Operations at the Thermal Power Plant Company, stated that the capacity of the country's thermal power plants has increased by 4,000 megawatts compared to last year, adding, "During the current hot season, thermal power plants are operating with 98% readiness." Eskandari expressed his satisfaction with the overall status of the power plants, saying, "This year's power plant maintenance has been completed with appropriate quality, and their general condition is assessed favorably."

According to the official, "Approximately 102,000 megawatts of scheduled maintenance has been fully executed, and power plants are now operating with 98% readiness."

China not to bend to US tariff threats over Iranian oil imports

Economy Desk

China is unlikely to back down in the face of fresh US threats to impose punitive tariffs on Chinese exports over continued purchases of Iranian oil, AP reported on Monday, citing market analysts.

It came after US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in Stockholm last week that China would have to "pay a 100% tariff" on exports to the US if it persisted in importing oil under sanctions from Iran and Russia.

"It's no secret the Chinese are buying 90% of the Iranian oil," Bessent told reporters, expressing concerns about China's disregard for US sanctions.

China swiftly rejected the threat. "China will always ensure its energy supply in ways that serve our national interests," the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a post on X, dismissing Washington's pressure campaign as "coercion." The ministry also vowed that China would "firmly defend its sovereignty, security and development interests."

Tu Xinquan, the head of the China Institute for WTO Studies at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, echoed the government's stance.

"If the US is bent on imposing tariffs, China will fight to the end, and this is China's consistent official stance," he said.

China has already resisted US tariff threats. When US President Donald Trump imposed sweeping duties on dozens of countries in April, China was the only nation to strike back in kind.

Zong Peiwu, China's ambassador to Tehran, also dismissed Washington's threat, insisting that trade between China and Iran was "normal and should not be subject to unilateral sanctions imposed by a third party."

He told ISNA last week that "normal trade" between the two countries would not be negatively affected.

According to analysts, Beijing is unlikely to abandon Iranian crude due to its competitive prices. "Beijing simply can't afford to walk away from the oil from Russia and Iran," said Danny Russel, a distinguished fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute, based in Washington, D.C. "It's too important a strategic energy supply, and Beijing is buying it at fire sale prices."

China reportedly purchases Iranian crude at good discounts compared to global benchmarks.



An aerial view shows a crude oil tanker at an oil terminal off Waidiao island in Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, China, on January 4, 2023.
● REUTERS

Despite increased US efforts to tighten the screws on Iran, latest tanker-tracking data shows Iranian oil exports have risen steadily in recent months, reaching an estimated 1.8 million barrels per day, with most of them ending up at independent refineries in eastern China, known as "teapots."

Iran's Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad recently said that the country would continue to sell its oil regardless of external pressure.

Menara initiative could ...

Given the destabilizing role of the Israeli regime, the Middle East has long needed such frameworks. While similar ideas have circulated for decades, this latest proposal of Menara envisions cooperative civilian nuclear research as a step toward a nuclear weapons-free Middle East.

The foundation of this proposal dates back to the 1970s and 1980s, but what is new is a pragmatic roadmap aimed at joint use of peaceful nuclear technology across the region. This includes collaboration in medical research, energy production, and scientific advancement. If regional countries examine this plan seriously, it could evolve into a practical formula for sustainable and shared development.

On the question of how the US and Europe might respond if the plan gains traction, two angles must be considered. Regarding Israel, as mentioned earlier, opposition will be fierce from day one. Thus, the proposal must build in mechanisms to anticipate and counteract Israeli

sabotage. Clear coordination among regional actors will be needed to prevent Tel Aviv from undermining the initiative.

As for powers like the US and Europe, current US policy places a premium on regional stability—particularly the security of allies such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Persian Gulf states. Ironically, Washington may act as a restraining force on Israel's efforts to destabilize the region entirely. The US administration is currently invested in maintaining a degree of calm, and from this standpoint, Menara could offer high value. Given its long-term nature, the plan will take time to mature. Much depends on how the region evolves. But fundamentally, any initiative that contributes to stability and order in the Middle East aligns with the interests of global powers like the United States, which is keen to contain regional costs and avoid escalation. Developmental frameworks that foster lasting peace and security are also cost-saving mechanisms for global powers.

Iran's parliamentary diplomacy in Geneva



Iranian parliamentary delegation, headed by Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (front-left), attends the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from July 29 to July 31, 2025.
● ICANA

INTERVIEWS The Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, attended by 135 countries from July 29 to July 31, 2025, in Geneva, brought together 99 nations at the highest level of representation. With the official motto, "Parliamentary Cooperation and Multilateralism in a Turbulent World; Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions for All," the conference set out a clear agenda. Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, speaker of the Iranian Parliament, accompanied by his fellow lawmakers Abbas Qodrati, Abdolhossein Hemmati, Fatemeh Jarareh, and Hakem Mamkan, took active part in the event. Qalibaf laid out Iran's stance in his speech, calling out the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza and their attack on Iran in June 2025, urging global parliament leaders to "take a bold stand" against those crimes during this historic moment. The two events looming over this summit were Israeli military strikes on Iranian soil the month before, and the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Palestine — particularly Gaza — which is marked by hunger, bombings, and genocide, again at the hands of Israel. Iran's active participation alongside other parliaments helped build up the discourse on resistance, global justice, support for Palestine, and a pushback against double standards in international politics. Meanwhile, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is mapping out a new course through the enhancement of parliamentary diplomacy and effective participation of national parliaments. Their goal is to take on unilateralism, bring back multilateralism, boost institutional transparency and accountability, support vulnerable groups, and advance sustainable development goals by 2030. Accordingly, Iran's parliamentary delegation's packed two-day visit not only brought about valuable achievements for the country but also broke through the silence to make the voice of oppressed peoples in Iran and Gaza heard clearly and bravely worldwide.

Top lawmaker showcases Iran's soft power in Geneva

Abbas Qodrati, Iranian MP for Shirvan constituency, commented on the journey of the country's parliamentary delegation to Geneva: "This trip came at a time when the Zionist usurper regime and criminal America, after the 12-day war and Iran's power display, were trying to sideline Iran. But in Geneva, with global parliamentary leaders present, the voice of Iranians was shouted out loud to the world." He added that Qalibaf's meetings with his counterparts covered human rights, hu-

manitarian issues, genocide in Gaza, nuclear matters, the US attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, parliamentary relations, Muslim country cooperation, ties with neighbors, AI, and human rights abuses in Gaza — all of which sparked valuable debates. Referring to Qalibaf's candid and straightforward speech, Qodrati said it left a strong impact, showcasing Iran's soft power on the world stage. He described the parliamentary delegation's trip as a symbol of domestic unity and



Abbas Qodrati

defense of Iran's rights in international arenas, where the voices of oppressed peoples were raised up and Israeli crimes laid bare, delivering a crushing blow to the Zionist regime's media and diplomatic front.

Speaker seeks legal protections for Iranians abroad

Alaeddin Boroujerdi, member of parliament for Boroujerd constituency, regarding the Geneva summit and the Iranian parliamentary delegation's meeting with Iranians living in Switzerland, said: Our diaspora make up a significant part of the Iranian nation, and the Islamic Republic of Iran's policy is to strengthen ties with its "sons and daughters far from home — except for those who fall within the country's red lines".

The member of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee added: The majority of Iranians abroad carry a strong national pride, and the imposed 12-day war brought about an unprecedented unity between Iranians inside and outside the country as those abroad also showed up with their love for the homeland. Boroujerdi considered this meeting as aligned with the Islamic Republic's policies,



Alaeddin Boroujerdi

stating: "Currently, the Parliament is laying down legal frameworks to support Iranians abroad by opening up access to domestic systems, addressing their legal issues, and rolling out incentives to attract investment."

Iran convenes MPs to condemn Zionist crimes

Ahmad Fatemi, MP for Babol constituency, said that Iran's initiative in calling together parliamentary delegations from various countries was the best chance to blow the lid off the Zionist regime's crimes. "These atrocities should be called out on official global platforms." Highlighting Iran's demand from international organizations to clamp down on Zionist crimes, Fatemi stressed its importance under international law, describing Israel's actions as gross violations of fundamental international legal principles, especially "peremptory rules of human rights, genocide, and war crimes," with the Inter-



Ahmad Fatemi

national Court of Justice having jurisdiction. He praised Qalibaf's speech at the "Upholding International Law and the UN Charter to Ensure Global Peace and Security" meeting as very clever. "Iran's initiative to set up meetings with various parliamentary delegations deserves credit as it can help bring about parliamentary consensus against Zionist crimes," Fatemi added.



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf holds a picture depicting Israeli atrocities at the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Geneva, Switzerland, on July 30, 2025.
● ICANA

Zionist regime uses AI for acts of assassination, propaganda

Abdolhossein Hemmati, one of the Iranian MPs at the Geneva summit, at a specialized panel on parliaments' role in shaping the digital future held on the sidelines, pointed out the broad digitalization impact in education, health, commerce, and governance. "We are at a critical juncture where we must steer this digital revolution towards a future that respects justice, national sovereignty, human dignity, and closes down digital divides," he noted. Describing the Iranian Parliament's efforts to raise digital literacy, boost infrastructure — especially in rural areas — and support technological

innovation, Hemmati emphasized the National Information Network as the backbone of Iran's cyber policy, a vital step towards digital self-sufficiency and citizen rights protection in the data era. He called artificial intelligence a transformative opportunity, adding that it is being leveraged in Iran "to address national challenges such as disaster management, health-care improvement, and economic growth," stressing the ethical and culturally aligned use. Expressing concern over political and security misuse of emerging technologies, he charged that the Zionist regime in recent wars against



Abdolhossein Hemmati

Gaza, Lebanon, and Iran has relied on AI for public opinion engineering and assassination operations. "The international community must draw up deterrent laws to prevent such abuses," he underlined. Hemmati also affirmed Iran's commitment to shaping a digital future that is safe, just, and culturally respectful.

Iranian MPs challenge global hegemony

Mohammad Manan Raeesi, MP for Qom constituency, said that, unlike customary protocols outlining international organizations' frameworks, most of these bodies are dominated by a few major powers, chiefly the US and its allies, the flagbearers of global arrogance. Raeesi stressed the need for active participation by independent countries like Iran in international assemblies to break through this siege and effectively shed light on Iran's discourse. "With effective communication, it is possible to help break the US hegemony and global arrogance," he added.



Mohammad Manan Raeesi

The lawmaker also welcomed Iran's parliamentary delegation's activities at the World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, expressing hope that these efforts will make headway towards achieving the Islamic Republic's "international objectives".

The full article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

Calling for pushback against excessive American demands

By Ramin Mehmanparast
Former ambassador of Iran
OPINION

In today's world, foreign policy does not just boil down to official government stances. Public diplomacy shapes global public opinion and can serve as a key complement to any country's strategy. Western countries have been leaning on the media to shape public opinion across the globe, painting over unfavorable incidents as positive and peddling agendas that lack grounding in reality as desirable goals for the world to follow. It is important to note that parliamentary diplomacy forms a vital part of public diplomacy. In the current international climate, it can carry exceptional weight and act as one of the most powerful tools for molding public opinion. Members of the Iranian Parliament essentially represent all citizens of Iran. These lawmakers, as a non-governmental delegation representing the people, can lay out their positions on current global conditions, priorities in resolving crises, and shortcomings in the international arena. The World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Geneva always presents a major opportunity to bring up issues concerning Iran and the wider world stage. One of today's most pressing global matters is the situation in Gaza and Palestine. We are witnessing a new Holocaust carried out by Israeli criminals, who are driving defenseless Gazans toward genocide, and they do so openly without any shame. The unequivocal policy of the Zionist regime is that "a good Palestinian is a dead Palestinian". Backed by the US and President Trump, they aim to wipe out Gaza, turning it into a scorched land, forcing Gazans and Palestinians into migration, while expanding the occupied territories. We have seen through US officials' deception as they claimed to negotiate peacefully to resolve Iran's nuclear activities through dialogue and democracy. Unfortunately, while Iran's negotiation team was hammer-



The Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament is attended by 135 countries in Geneva, Switzerland, on July 29, 2025. IRNA

ing out talks and preparing for the sixth round, Israel, backed by the US, struck our country. This attack wiped out several military commanders, nuclear scientists, and over a thousand innocent Iranian civilians. This tragedy, this crime against Iran, and the Israeli oppression against our people, must be brought to light in international forums. The West, leveraging its illegitimate offspring — the Zionist regime — is pulling strings to advance its own agenda. The world needs to wake up to the fact that the Iranian people, following the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution, are willing to sacrifice their lives to preserve their independence. Their voices and sufferings must echo through global ears, and these crimes by the US, Israel, and some European countries must be firmly condemned in international forums. Human rights, peace, and justice have serious gaps on the global stage. The notions of peace and justice, often cited by the West or international bodies, are little more than empty words with double standards. The UN General Assembly and Security Council have set up rules to promote justice, but these laws are routinely twisted by criminal powers to serve their own

ends, leaving independent nations locked out of their rightful claims. Forums like the World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, where ideas are exchanged and cooperation sought, can help independent countries hammer out strategies to keep the international order afloat, aiming to

ensure peace, security, and adherence to the UN Charter. Iran officially conducts diplomacy through its president and foreign ministry, while its measures in parliamentary diplomacy have proven to be very timely and demonstrate the nation's engagement in championing its core principles internationally.

These efforts take the lead in highlighting the plight of the Palestinian and Gazan people. Iranian parliamentary diplomacy calls on other countries to stand up to the excessive demands of the US and the Zionist regime and to take concrete steps toward achieving global peace and justice. Several parliamentary speakers in Geneva stressed ending the veto power and reforming UN procedures. The current international structure has shown its cracks. While the UN General Assembly can follow up on many issues and pass resolutions, there is no enforcement mechanism in place. Global powers on the Security Council have carved out special privileges with the veto. This setup means that even when massive crimes are committed by these powers, a single veto can shut down any action to hold them accountable. For these reasons, the current structure is ineffective and requires a fundamental overhaul. However, such change will only come when independent countries, backed by their public opinion and citizens, team up to build a new framework that guarantees peace and justice worldwide.

The full article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

Iran officially conducts diplomacy through its president and foreign ministry, while its measures in parliamentary diplomacy have proven to be very timely and demonstrate the nation's engagement in championing its core principles internationally. These efforts take the lead in highlighting the plight of the Palestinian and Gazan people.



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (front-c) addresses a session, titled "Upholding International Law and the UN Charter to Ensure Global Peace and Security," on the sidelines of the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Geneva, Switzerland, on July 29, 2025. ROKNA

U17 World Wrestling Championships:

Iran misses out on gold as freestyle title remains elusive

Sports Desk

The Iranian freestyle squad had to settle for a runner-up finish behind the United States for a second year running at the U17 World Wrestling Championships, following a goldless run across 10 weight classes in Athens, Greece.

A medal haul of five silvers and double bronzes saw Iran collect 150 points – four adrift of Team USA, which bagged four golds, one silver, and two bronzes.

Kazakhstan, meanwhile, pipped Azerbaijan by one point to finish third with 91 points.

Parsa Tahmasbi and Arsham Vahabian fell short against American opponents in the final showpiece of their respective events on the final day, though a victory for Amirali Alizadeh against Russian David Dzebisov – competing as a neutral athlete – in the 92kg final would have still propelled Iran to 155 points and the team title.

Dzebisov, however, had other ideas and scored the first takedown to lead 2-0 before Alizadeh bounced back in the second period to make it 2-2 and lead on criteria.

The Iranian was then caught in a tangle with Dzebisov who managed to finish on top and score two points before a desperate Alizadeh gave away another two points in the closing stages and lost 6-2. Tahmasbi, meanwhile, was undone by American Keegan Bassett inside the first period of the



Iranian wrestler Mohammadparsa Karami (R) is seen in action against Ukraine's Artur Kostjuk in the freestyle 80kg final at the U17 World Championships in Athens, Greece, on August 2, 2025.

● UWW

with Amirhossein Naqdalipour making a quick work of Georgian Murtaz Bagdavadze, securing a superiority win (11-0) in the first period, to finish with a consolation bronze in the 110kg category.

Sina Ordou (51kg) and Mohammadreza Barari (55kg) left the Greek capital empty-handed.

Earlier at the U17 Worlds, Iran had lifted a fourth successive team trophy in the Greco-Roman competitions. Represented by nine wrestlers after Abolfazl Shiri (65kg) was denied an entry visa by the host country, Iran had only two finalists across 10 classes but still managed to pip Uzbekistan to the team title. Amirsam Mohammadi won the 92kg gold and Yazdan Delrouz took the 110kg silver, with Mohammadhossein Kazemi (71kg), Amirmohammad Hajivand (48kg), Abolfazl Zare' (60kg), and Amirreza Tahmasbpour (55kg) collecting four bronzes as Iran stood atop the table with 125 points. Uzbekistan impressed with four gold medals but had to settle for a runner-up finish with 118 points. Kazakhstan finished third with 113 points, with Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan – tied on 100 points – in fourth and fifth, respectively.

45kg showdown.

Bassett got the first takedown to lead 2-0 and then a turn made it 4-0 before the American got another takedown and kept Tahmasbi's back on the mat to secure a fall victory.

In a second Iranian-American final on Sunday, Vahabian suf-

fered a 9-2 loss to Jayden James, which saw the US leapfrog Iran in the team table for the first time throughout the freestyle competitions.

Elsewhere on the final day, Iranian Arian Mehralizadeh missed out on a podium-finish in the 60kg contest after a comprehen-

sive defeat (9-0) against Kazakhstan's Bekassyl Assambek. Sunday's results came after Iran had bagged four medals on the preceding night in the freestyle event.

Sina Boustani fell to a superiority defeat (12-1) against American Ariaiah Mills in the 48kg final,

while Mohammadparsa Karami settled for the 80kg silver following a 3-1 setback against Ukraine's Artur Kostjuk.

In the 65kg division, Morteza Hajmollamohammadi rallied from behind with seconds left to beat Indian Gourav Punia on criteria (8-8) for the 65kg bronze,

Coach Gholami vows 'more to come' from Iranian U19 volleyball team



● SEPIDEH ABDOLHAY/volleyball.ir

Sports Desk

Iran head coach Adel Gholami said volleyball fans will hear much more about his young players in the future, despite a mixed campaign by his team at the FIVB Boys' U19 World Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Iran suffered a 3-2 loss (23-25, 25-23, 15-25, 25-21, 15-10) to Spain on Sunday to settle for a fourth-place finish in the Uzbek capital and miss out on a top-three spot at the biennial competition for only a second time over the past decade.

"It was a close game. We reached the hotel around midnight after yesterday's game against France and then had to be back at the venue at 12 p.m. today, so the players didn't have much time to rest and perhaps their fatigue played a part in the defeat," Gholami said after the game.

Gholami, however, believes his

boys "still did a great job" in Tashkent, praising them for "working hard to achieve this feat."

"They are exceptional young talents and I am sure you will hear much more about this group of players in the future," said Gholami, who also his team to a runner-up finish behind China at the Asian U18 Championship last year. "They already have a professional mindset – with brilliant skills in different aspects of the game such as technique, tactics, and adaptability. They're also very intelligent and there is much more to come from all of them," added the former Iran international middle-blocker.

"You'll see them all play at the senior level soon, and I'm sure they will be a joy to work with because they know all about the volleyball basics – their foundation is already solid."

Sunday's defeat was a second

setback for Iran against Spain in Tashkent, following a 3-2 loss on the opening day.

Gholami's boys recovered from the first-day defeat to beat Poland, which ultimately won the silver, in five sets and then walked away with comfortable straight-set wins against Egypt and Tunisia. A 3-1 loss to Italy on the final day of the group phase saw Iran finish third in the six-team Pool C and land Belgium in the round of 16. Iran overcame Belgium in four sets before defeating surprise package Finland – the only team with a perfect record in the group stage – 3-1 to set a last-four date with defending champion France in a repeat of the 2023 final. However, Iran's bid for a first world under-19 title since 2017 ended in vain after France recovered from a first-set defeat to win 3-1 (14-25, 25-14, 25-22, 25-19) on Saturday.

American Lyles clocks world's fastest 200m this year

REUTERS – Noah Lyles surged past Keny Bednarek to win a heated 200-metre race in a world-leading time at the USA Track and Field Championships on Sunday, turning to stare down Bednarek as the sprint rivals crossed the finish line. Lyles, the three-times world champion in the event, trailed coming off the bend but stormed to the front to cross in 19.63 seconds, the fastest time in the world this season in a huge statement

ahead of next month's World Championships in Tokyo.

Bednarek, winner of Friday's 100m, finished in 19.67, and then shoved Lyles in the back after they crossed. Lyles turned angrily with arms raised before the two exchanged words and finally shook hands.

"It was a pretty difficult championship," said Lyles, who has been hampered with an ankle injury this season. "I've

been tired. It's been rough, coming out here when you're not 100 percent." Lyles had not needed to compete in Eugene, Oregon to qualify for Tokyo, as he already had a bye in both the 100m and 200m as the reigning champion.

Their anger spilled into their trackside NBC interview. "If you've got a problem, I expect a call," Bednarek said. Lyles replied: "You know what, you're right... Let's talk after this."



● KIRBY LEE/IMAGN IMAGES

Negaran Valley in Saravan preserves prehistoric art



Iranica Desk

Negaran Valley in Saravan, Sistan and Baluchestan Province, is an extraordinary collection of carvings and drawings etched onto the faces of rocks and cliffs, captivating the attention of every visitor. This valley, featuring over a thousand engravings — including both individual images and expansive panels — is recognized as the largest petroglyph site in Iran, with an estimated age of approximately 10,000 years.

The locals of Nahuk village, located in the area, refer to these carvings as “Sang-e Pir Guran” (Old Stone of Guran) and hold that the subjects chosen by the artists of the hunting era primarily include animals such as wild cattle, two-humped camels, and mountain goats. These animals appear across various scenes and forms, while additional prominent themes include depictions of hunters as well as representations of the moon and sun.

Experts consider petroglyphs of this kind to hold profound importance in studying prehistoric human societies. During that time, people used carvings and drawings on diverse surfaces to communicate messages and convey abstract mental concepts. These petroglyphs stand as a testament to the artistic abilities of early humans, who skillfully and aesthetically depicted facets of their lives through intricate reliefs and engravings.

Most of the images found in the valley are believed to have been created by hunting and herding men, predominantly symbolic in nature. By carefully examining their style of execution and subjects, scholars can gain valuable insights into the ancient age and historical significance of these artworks. Among the carvings are human figures alongside images



● kojaro.com

of animals such as horses, wild donkeys, snakes, cattle, dogs, and foxes, IRNA wrote.

Throughout various regions of Baluchestan, countless petroglyphs have been carved over time onto rock surfaces. The petroglyphs in Saravan are situated in the Siahan Mountains, located north of the city, encompassing a wide variety of such rock engravings. This mountain range begins near the border of Baluchestan around Taftan in Khash and stretches eastward. Eventually, the mountains cross Iran’s eastern border and continue into Pakistan at a location called Sabz Kuh, thereby enhancing the cultural and historical richness of the entire region.

Location

If you plan to visit this ancient and culturally significant site, after traveling to, head toward Saravan. The valley lies approximately 75 kilometers from Saravan, adjacent to the Siahan Mountains. Should you encounter any difficulty locating it, inquire about Nahuk Rural District, as the valley is situated directly beside this area.

Historical significance

The carvings and petroglyphs found in this valley constitute a valuable resource for historians, archaeologists, researchers, and scholars alike. By studying and deciphering these images, they can obtain extensive information about prehistoric hunting practices, daily life, religious ceremonies, and cultural symbols of that era. Created progressively through various periods, these petroglyphs date back to prehistoric times — roughly 10,000 years ago — continuing into more recent eras. The age of these rock engravings is generally divided into three phases: Old, Middle, and New. The Old Period roughly corresponds to the 4th through the 8th millennia BCE. Based on archaeological studies conducted particularly in recent decades, a wealth of information about the cultural and artistic history of this region has been uncovered. These findings have greatly enhanced our understanding of the lifestyles and beliefs of the ancient peoples who once inhabited this area.

Motifs and petroglyphs

The petroglyphs of Negaran Valley possess distinctive qualities that elevate their importance beyond that of other surviving carvings and engravings. One of the most notable features is the diversity and extensive distribution throughout the landscape, spanning not only a single era but multiple historical periods. Studying these images reveals rich cultural and artistic diversity over time. In addition to the variety of carving techniques — executed with specialized tools and methods — these petroglyphs showcase the high level of artistic skill achieved by ancient craftsmen. Their content predominantly features images of wild animals, hunting scenes, geometric shapes, and depictions of religious and ritual ceremonies. These motifs collectively serve as historical documents reflecting the daily life and cultural beliefs of the region’s ancient inhabitants.

Impacts

This historic and nationally registered heritage site, officially recognized in 2003, functions both as a significant archaeolog-

ical attraction and a prominent destination for cultural tourism. Each year, numerous researchers, archaeologists, tourists, and enthusiasts visit the area. These visits have contributed positively to the development and advancement of the broader region.

However, alongside these benefits, the site remains vulnerable to environmental wear and human damage, necessitating continuous protection, monitoring, and restoration. Since its registration, special attention has been devoted to its preservation. Educating local residents and visitors, combined with enforcing protective regulations, plays a crucial role in safeguarding these invaluable artifacts.

Challenges

Negaran Valley faces several critical challenges despite its unique beauty and exceptional historical and cultural significance. One of the foremost threats is environmental degradation: climate change, accelerated natural erosion, and atmospheric elements such as wind and rain gradually

wear away the stone carvings. These factors lead to the loss of fine details and diminish the value of artworks that have endured for thousands of years, thereby endangering the cultural heritage of the region. Consequently, proper management, ongoing scientific research, and the implementation of effective conservation measures — including installing protective coverings and conducting restoration projects — are vital to mitigating these adverse effects.

Another significant challenge arises from human activities and misuse, which may result in the destruction of Negaran’s cultural heritage. Unauthorized tourism, illegal excavations, and intentional vandalism — often conducted without oversight — render the ancient works highly vulnerable. A lack of awareness among visitors and locals, destructive behaviors, and non-compliance with preservation laws underscore the urgent need for ongoing education and outreach. Organizing cultural and educational programs alongside enhanced supervision is strongly recommended to prevent violations and further damage.

Despite these challenges, Negaran Valley remains one of Iran’s largest and most significant rock art galleries, as well as the foremost archaeological attraction in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. With its unparalleled collection of diverse petroglyphs, this site serves not only as a vital resource for historians and researchers but also as a key driver in promoting cultural tourism and strengthening regional identity. Preserving this priceless heritage demands serious attention, allocation of adequate resources, and international cooperation to ensure a bright, culturally rich future for Negaran Valley and to pass it intact to future generations.

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Iran's National Orchestra to perform in Tehran on August 8

Arts & Culture Desk

The concert of the Iran's National Orchestra, titled "Golgoon (Blushborne)," led by Homayoun Rahimian and featuring works by prominent Iranian composers, including Hassan Ryiahi and Homayoun Rahimian, will be held in Vahdat Hall of the capital, Tehran, on Friday evening (August 8). In the concert, Amirhossein Samiee and Hossein Alishapour will accompany Iran's National Orchestra as vocalists.

The performance of "Golgoon," centered on national music and utilizing an authentic repertoire, provides another opportunity to hear exquisite Iranian musical works in an orchestral format. Iran's National Orchestra was founded in 1998 by Maestro Farhad Fakhreddini with the aim of performing valuable Iranian orchestral music. The orchestra was established with a balanced combination of Iranian instruments including santur, qanun, a group of tar and tarbass players, oud, and

percussion instruments alongside the instruments of a symphony orchestra. There are over 270 pieces of music in the National Orchestra's repertoire. The orchestra is a subsidiary of the Roudaki Artistic Cultural Foundation and currently operates under the permanent leadership of Homayoun Rahimian. Iran's National Orchestra began its activities this year with an approach of honoring great Iranian musicians and performing their works. The orchestra's first con-

cert, titled "A Memory Lives Within Me," was held on April 21st in honor of Mohammad Sarir, a veteran musician and composer, led by Homayoun Rahimian and with Ali Tafreshi as vocalist, at Vahdat Hall. The second concert of Iran's National Orchestra, titled "A Gaze Linger," featuring works by the late Homayoun Khorram, was also held on June 8 at Vahdat Hall, conducted by Homayoun Rahimian, with Mohammad Abdolhosseini as vocalist and Babak Shahraki performing a violin solo.



Excavations to continue in Soltaniyeh World Heritage site: *Official*



Arts & Culture Desk

The director of the Soltaniyeh Dome, a UNESCO World Heritage site in the Iranian province of Zanjan, announced the continuation of a new round of excavations in the Abwab-al-Bar area with the aim of identifying Ilkhanid architecture and re-reading historical structures. "According to historical texts, Oljeitu, the eighth Mongol Ilkhan, built a tomb for himself at the same time as the construction of the new capital of the Ilkhanid government in Soltaniyeh, which is known today as Soltaniyeh Dome or Ali

Mansion. Following the actions of his brother, Ghazan Khan, in Tabriz, and at the recommendation of Iranian ministers, he established a complex of public welfare buildings called Abwab-al-Bar next to this dome and within the citadel," Abolfazl Aali said in an interview with ISNA. Pointing to historical sources, he added, "Abwab-al-Bar included 19 buildings with various functions, which, as a charitable foundation with a specific administrative structure and independent budget, provided services to the residents of the capital and travelers. However, precise information about the location of these buildings and their architectural structure is not mentioned in historical texts, and this has provided an incentive for new excavations." Aali underlined that the directorate of Soltaniyeh World Heritage site, with the aim of increasing knowledge about the structure of Abwab-al-Bar

and the buildings around the dome, began excavations in the eastern and western sides of the dome in August, and said, "In this phase, the focus is on determining the enclosure around the dome, the entrances, and how this complex connects with other parts of the historical Soltaniyeh citadel." According to the director of the Soltaniyeh Dome, in continuation of the research, considering previous findings in the 1970s and also excavations in the 1980s and 1990s on the eastern side of the dome, another goal of the new excavations is to re-identify and interpret the works and results of past excavations. "In this season of excavations, significant results have been obtained on the western side of the dome, and a part of the spaces adjacent to the dome belonging to the Ilkhanid period, along with traces from subsequent periods, have been identified," Aali added.

'Dandelions Girl' heads to South Korea; 'The Plain Sings' to Italy

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian short film 'Dandelions Girl,' written and directed by Azadeh Masihzadeh and produced by Raziieh Gholami, was introduced as one of the selected works in the international short film competition section of the 13th Seoul International Children's Film Festival (SICFF). The festival, one of Asia's most prestigious cinematic events in the field of children's films, will be held in Seoul from September 10 to 17, 2025. The film 'Dandelions Girl' will be screened at the prestigious event and evaluated by the jury alongside other prominent cinematic works from around the world. 'Dandelions Girl' tells the story of a girl who enters the boys' world of football and, through her perseverance on the field, disrupts the balance of power. With a metaphorical look at the confrontation between truth and lies, the movie depicts the honesty of the young generation and their resistance against power. The short film stars Tara Soroush, Benyam Afrangah, and Abdollah Bahadori. Moreover, the short film 'The Plain Sings,' written and directed by Gita Feizi and produced by Diman Zandi, has been selected for the competition section of the 31st Della Lessina Festival in Italy. Founded in 1995, the Della Lessina Film Festival initially focused solely on the topic of the Lessini Mountains, but the scope of the festival gradually expanded and eventually encompassed mountains worldwide and their unifying theme, namely works that narrate the stories of life, history, and mountain traditions. The festival will be held from August 22 to 31, 2025 in Italy.



The synopsis of 'The Plain Sings' states, "Amidst the daily routines of a shepherd girl's life, a wolf attacks the flock. This attack leads to an important decision for her." Darya Kakaei, Afshin Khedri, Sara Ahmadnejad, and Saman Saed Moocheshi have acted in the film. 'The Plain Sings' has previously won awards from the 31st Thalmässing Festival in Germany, the main award for Best Film at the 26th Yuki International Film Festival in Austria, the Grand Prize at the 20th Early Bird Film Festival in Bulgaria, two awards for Best Film in Kurdish and Best Mitosfilm Short Film at the 14th Berlin Kurdish Film Festival, the Best Film award in the Invisible Lands section at the 4th Son of a Pitch Film Festival in Italy, and the Best Music award at the 20th Nahal Festival, and has participated in the Sehsuechte Festival in Germany (54th edition), Kurdish London (14th edition), Sakarya (10th edition), Kaaffilm (3rd edition), and Abbas Kiarostami and ISFA festivals.

Inventive instruments; a failed experiment in Iranian music

Iranian music, with its ancient history and enduring traditions, has always faced the challenge of limited tonal color and sonic range of its instruments. These limitations, especially in the bass register, have led musicians and instrument makers to invent new instruments; instruments that promised to expand the sonic range and bring innovation to Iranian orchestras. But now, more than a decade after the introduction of many of these inventive instruments, the fundamental question is: what has become of these innovations and these inventive instruments? The discussion of inventive instruments has flourished in Iranian music for about twenty years. In all eras, instrument makers have tried to invent and innovate instruments, but with the entry of Mohammad Reza Shajarian, the master of Iranian singing, into the field of instrument making

and the unveiling of his inventive instruments, a new chapter of innovation in Iranian instruments began. In the mid-2000s, Shajarian, citing that due to his round-the-clock activity and numerous concert performances, he was more aware than anyone of the lack of bass sound in music, made several innovations in instrument making. From Sorahi and Shah-Sorahi to Bam-Sorahi, Shahrashoob, Shahrashoob Alto, Bam-Saz, Shahnavaaz, Shahbang, Kereshmeh, Barbad, Tondar, Saghar, Saboo Soprano, Del and Del Alto, Del and Del Soprano. These instruments were initially welcomed in "Shahnaz" group concerts and specialized exhibitions, creating great hope among music lovers. However, contrary to expectations, these instruments never entered other orchestras or various albums beyond Master Shajarian's works and gradually fell into



oblivion. No mass production of these instruments took place, and the made versions did not remain in the hands of musicians. Among other inventive instruments that have received special attention in Iranian music is the "Shorangiz" instrument; an instrument that is mostly associated with the name of Hossein Alizadeh. Alizadeh has used this instru-

ment in many of his concerts and solo performances, but it should be noted that Shorangiz was originally invented by Ebrahim Ghanbari-Mehr, a veteran master and one of the prominent figures in Iranian instrument making. It is said that this instrument was designed at the suggestion of Ali Tajvidi with the aim of providing a deeper bass sound than the Setar;

the bowl of this instrument is also close to the Tanbour in terms of size and shape. It is no secret that Iranian instruments have many shortcomings. Such as frequent tuning changes with slight temperature changes, and the unsuitability of performing with skin instruments in humid areas, which has given the most motivation to innovators to overcome these shortcomings, and they have often had successful experiences. Such as the invention of special tuning pegs that prevent the tuning from loosening and the creation of artificial skins for percussion instruments. Also, due to the limitation of the Santour instrument for performing all modes of Iranian music, Santours have been invented that change tuning instantly with movable frets similar to the Qanun, which simplifies performance for the musician in large orchestras or practices.

Despite all the requirements expressed by undisputed music masters for the sonic range of Iranian music and the need for new instruments, and despite the fact that renowned masters such as Ghanbari-Mehr, Shajarian, Alizadeh, and others have embarked on this path, it seems that the experiment of inventing new instruments in Iranian music has currently failed; because none of the long list of instrument names mentioned are in the hands of active musicians and students, and not only have they not reached mass production, but some of them have only one version made. Considering that an instrument must ultimately be in the hands of musicians and accepted by them, almost no inventive instrument has had such a fate.

The full article, penned by Ata Navidi, first appeared in Persian on Khabaronline.