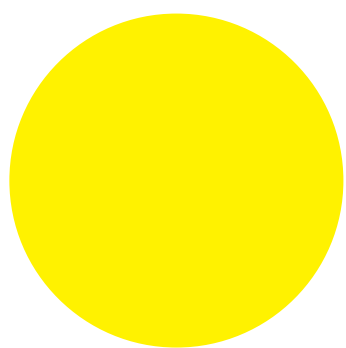


Archaeologists launch sixth dig at Qaleh Kurd Cave, Iran's oldest human settlement

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Pezeshkian: Iranian media dashed aggressors' hopes for destabilizing country

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President Masoud Pezeshkian gives a flower to a reporter as a token of appreciation during a surprise visit to the Islamic Republic News Agency's head office to mark the National Journalist's Day in Tehran, Iran on August 9, 2025. ● president.ir



Legendary Persian miniature master Mahmoud Farshchian dies at 95

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Iran's Palermo approval heralding economic stability, diplomacy clout

P E R S P E C T I V E

Iran's accession to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, long tied up in political wrangling, has now opened new doors for the country's economy — a breakthrough greeted with a green light from the financial markets. Hopes are running high that with the approval of the final bill for Iran's membership in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) — namely the "CFT" — fresh opportunities will come through for economic players. The Palermo Convention, as it is widely known, had been caught in the crossfire of Iran's political and legal disputes for years. At one point, the system opted to put it on ice in the Expediency Council, leaving it to gather dust for years. But in the current climate, on grounds of national interest, this deadlock has been broken, and the Palermo approval has formally moved to the implementation stage. The decision to join the Palermo Convention has acted not only as a legal milestone but also as a powerful signal to domestic and international markets. Financial markets reacted swiftly, with the dollar and Tether rates falling. On the global stage, the FATF, after six years, has once again extended an invitation to Iran for in-person talks.

Stability signal to domestic markets

Palermo's approval came at a time when Iran's financial markets were grappling with chronic volatility, high inflationary expectations, and deep investor mistrust. The decision effectively sent out a "stability signal" to economic stakeholders, with its psychological impact immediately visible in currency trading, the stock exchange, and even the gold market. The drop in dollar and Tether rates in the days following the approval was not merely the result of short-term shifts in supply and demand; analysts believe it signaled a reduction in negative expectations among traders.

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Azerbaijan-Armenia peace deal

Ignoring Iran's role could turn accord into new battleground

By Afifeh Abedi
International affairs analyst

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan signed a peace agreement on Friday evening, local time, in a ceremony at the White House attended by US President Donald Trump. The accord aims to strengthen bilateral economic ties after decades of conflict and to move toward full normalization of relations. During the signing ceremony, Trump announced both sides' commitment to "stop all fighting forever." Yet the history of the South Caucasus has shown that the ethnic, religious, and territorial disputes in this region run so deep that even a comprehensive, detailed political agreement is unlikely to settle them entirely on its own. Even international agreements backed by major powers—without mutual trust and effective monitoring mechanisms—run the risk of collapse or a return to cycles of tension. From this perspective, proclaiming a permanent end to hostilities between Azerbaijan and Armenia appears more as a display of political and diplomatic optimism than a reflection of an enduring reality, and will still need to stand the

test of practical implementation. US mediation and oversight of the agreement's implementation have added a new layer of geopolitical competition to the South Caucasus. Part of Washington's role goes beyond sole diplomacy, tying directly into safeguarding the interests of multinational corporations and the potential deployment of US-linked military assets in the region. Such developments are naturally alarming for Russia—which views the Caucasus as part of its traditional sphere of influence—and could tip the balance of power in the region. However, with Moscow's resources and focus constrained by the war in Ukraine, much of the responsibility for countering these shifts in regional balance has effectively fallen on Iran. This situation presents Tehran with a complex and multi-layered challenge, requiring shrewd diplomacy, tactical flexibility, and a careful balancing of relations with both Eastern and Western power blocs. Consistent with its foreign policy tradition, Iran prefers to see Russia's influence in the Caucasus maintained and to prevent any expansion of Western—particularly direct US military—presence, which could undermine Iran's geopolitical and economic interests.

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Syria ticking time bomb

Tel Aviv out to weaken regional states

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

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Rudbar-e Qasran; a jewel in Tehran's northern slopes

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