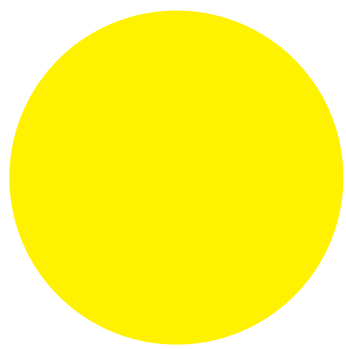


Iran criticizes US for 'illegally' targeting Chabahar Port investments

3 >



Tehran to suspend IAEA cooperation after snapback invocation: *Top security body*

2 >

A reflection on legal concept of snapback



By Hadi Khosroshahin
Editor-in-chief
of Iran newspaper

O P I N I O N

On September 19, Iranian media outlets were filled with headlines that bore little resemblance to the legal reality of Resolution 2231 that enshrined the 2015 Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA). Phrases such as "Back to square one," "Security Council votes for return of sanctions," or "Draft to lift sanctions fails at Security Council" dominated the media. The underlying and sometimes explicit message of such headlines was a mistaken emphasis on the instigation of the "snapback" mechanism — whereas no such conclusion can be drawn from the provisions of Resolution 2231. Paragraphs 9 through 12 of the resolution draw a clear distinction between the process of snapback and its actual activation. A lack of attention to this distinction appears to have led to several misleading headlines splashed across print and online media. A core provision of this resolution is that the snapback mechanism hinges on two key conditions: "no decision on the continuation of lifting UN sanctions against Iran," and "the continuation of no decision for a 30-day period". Put differently, the snapback mechanism remains at the procedural stage without these two conditions being met and does not cross over into the realm of implementation. Another important aspect is the starting point of the process, which begins the moment member states claim Iran has violated its JCPOA commitments. That starting point was triggered on August 28, when the European troika submitted its complaint against Iran to the Security Council. Hence, the 30-day countdown began then. While the vote on Friday's draft resolution covered the first condition, it fails to meet the second — the 30-day timeframe. What happened on Friday at the Security Council fell under Paragraph 11 of Resolution 2231. This paragraph states that upon receiving a notification from a JCPOA participant about significant non-performance of commitments, the Security Council shall vote within 30 days on a draft resolution to continue the lifting of sanctions in paragraph 7(a) of Resolution 2231. If no member of the Council has submitted such a draft resolution within 10 days of the notification, the President of the Security Council shall do so and put it to a vote within 30 days. That is what unfolded in New York on Friday: the Council voted on a draft resolution introduced by South Korea, as the rotating president, in line with Paragraph 11. The move was procedural, not substantive, and was based on the Yalta voting model — nine votes in favor without veto power. The aim was to prevent the automatic initiation of snapback at the close of the 30th day. Yet the effort failed after nine members opposed it.

Page 3 >

Pezeshkian: Israel will not forsake occupation unless 'world puts it in its place'

Iran ready for nuclear talks with US 'under int'l law'

2 >



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) speaks to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV during a visit to China earlier in September. The full text of the exclusive interview was published on September 21, 2025.
● president.ir



From crafting JCPOA to shutting down diplomacy
Europe heading down wrong path

ANALYSIS 4 >



Wrestling World Championships:
Saravi reclaims 97kg title, Sohrabi bags consolation bronze

6 >



Persian play wins three top prizes at Italy's Sele Teatero Fest

8 >

Eight years of war in 1980s made Iran stronger



By Brig. Gen. Vali Oveisi
Former Air Force pilot

O P I N I O N EXCLUSIVE

September 22, 1980, stands as a turning point in Iran's modern history — the day Iraq launched its war against Iran and an unrelenting military and popular mobilization began to defend the homeland and preserve territorial integrity. This determined resistance, remembered as the "Sacred Defense," was not merely a military confrontation; it embodied the spirit, sacrifice, and deep commitment of Iranian fighters to the national and Islamic ideals of the nation. One of the most remarkable aspects of that defense was the unique role of the Air Force. In the opening days of the war, the Air Force played a decisive role in preventing Iraqi forces from penetrating Iranian territory. Despite being weakened in the early years of the 1979 Islamic Revolution and lacking full operational readiness, the force quickly stepped in and, through careful planning, carried out critical

and game-changing missions. Throughout the eight-year war, the Air Force maintained an active presence in all battles, executing landmark operations such as "Kaman 99" and the complex and successful "H3" strike deep inside Iraq's westernmost bases. These missions dealt severe blows to the enemy and have since been recorded in the annals of world air warfare as outstanding examples. Iran's distinctive use of its Air Force fleet demonstrated only a fraction of the capability the service was able to mobilize during that period. Between 1980 and 1988, despite the Iraqi Ba'athist regime's extensive foreign support and the heavy damage inflicted on Iran's military infrastructure, Iranian pilots and commanders — through ingenuity, training of fresh recruits, and the reconstruction of damaged equipment — assumed the critical role of air operations and support for ground forces. Efforts to maintain and upgrade aircraft, develop indigenous missiles, and arm jets with effective bombs reflected the determination and creativity of the Air Force in countering enemy threats.

Page 8 >

Pezeshkian: Israel will not forsake occupation unless 'world puts it in its place'

Iran ready for nuclear talks with US 'under int'l law'

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian said the Israeli regime will not give up its vision of 'Greater Israel' "unless the world puts it in its place."

In an interview with Chinese CCTV broadcast on Sunday, Pezeshkian said the map designed by the regime's authorities to establish a "Greater Israel" will include many regional countries, adding that the regime will not give up its plan "unless the world puts it in its place."

Back in August, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed he feels he is on a "historic and spiritual mission," and that he is "very" attached to the vision of the "Promised Land and

Greater Israel."

The "Greater Israel" concept supported by ultranationalist Israelis is understood to refer to an expansionist vision that lays claim to the occupied West Bank, Gaza, parts of Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Jordan.

Netanyahu's comments drew condemnations from many regional countries.

"It is unacceptable that a small or great country allows itself to invade another country while the world remains indifferent," the Iranian president said.

"The regime does not have the right to invade other countries," Pezeshkian added. "Israel today easily carries out invasions in Syria, kills people in Gaza and now is seeking to expel its residents from their land. If the

world accepts its measures, the regime will never abandon its policies in the region."

Negotiations with US

In response to a question about the resumption of negotiations with the United States over Iran's nuclear program, Pezeshkian said that the Islamic Republic is ready for dialogue within the framework of international laws.

However, a regime that always claims is being threatened by others, influences the negotiations. Iran and the US began talks in April to resolve a decades-old dispute over nuclear program and held five rounds of talks mediated by Oman. But two days before the sixth round of negotiations scheduled for June

15, Israel launched an unprovoked aggression against Iran, which derailed the talks.

The US later joined the onslaught on June 22 and targeted Iran's three nuclear facilities in violation of the United Nations Charter and the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The US had been pressuring Iran to accept zero uranium enrichment. But Iran has repeatedly said that it will not abandon enrichment in its facilities but is ready to decrease the level of enrichment at the 3.75% purity, which has been allowed in the 2015 nuclear agreement from which the US unilaterally withdrew and left the future of the nuclear deal in limbo.

Pezeshkian also pointed to Iran's lack of trust in the US, say-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) speaks to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV during a visit to China earlier in September. The full text of the exclusive interview was published on September 21, 2025.

● president.ir

ing, "Today, the reason why the Leader (of the Islamic Revolution) and the people of Iran are not optimistic about the United States is precisely because of these re-

peated breaches of agreements. The United States has repeatedly and unilaterally withdrawn from agreements that it itself had signed."

Tehran to suspend IAEA cooperation after snapback invocation: *Top security body*

International Desk

Iran's top security body said the hostile move by Britain, France and Germany to reimpose UN sanctions will "effectively suspend" Tehran's cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog.

In a statement on Saturday, Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) condemned the "ill-considered" measures by the three European countries — known as the E3 — regarding the Islamic Republic's peaceful nuclear program.

"Despite the foreign ministry's cooperation with the (International Atomic Energy) Agency and the presentation of plans to resolve the issue, the actions of European countries will effectively suspend the path of cooperation with the agency," the SNSC said.

On Friday, the 15-member Security Council failed to adopt a resolution that would have prevented the reimposition of UN sanctions on Iran after the E3 triggered the "snapback" mechanism, accusing Tehran of failing to comply with the 2015 deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Iran rejected the illegitimate move by the European troika, pointing



Bushehr nuclear power plant
● [GETTY IMAGES](http://gettyimages.com)

out that the United States had already pulled out of the deal and accusing the European trio of siding with illegal sanctions instead of honoring their own commitments.

According to the statement, Iran's top security body tasked the Foreign Ministry with continuing its consultations within the framework of the SNSC decisions to safeguard the national interests. It added that Iran's foreign policy will be based on cooperation to establish peace and stability in the region.

Earlier on Saturday, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran can overcome any re-imposition of sanctions and will never surrender to excessive demands.

The SNSC was formally put in charge of overseeing cooperation with the IAEA in July, following a series of illegal and unprovoked Israeli and US attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities.

The shift came after Iran's Parliament passed legislation on July 2, requiring that all IAEA inspection requests be reviewed and approved by the SNSC.

Britain, Australia, Canada recognize Palestinian state

Britain, Canada and Australia all recognized a Palestinian state on Sunday in a move borne out of frustration over the Gaza war and intended to promote a two-state solution but which is also bound to anger Israel and its main ally, the United States.

The three nations' decision aligned them with about 140 other countries which also back Palestinians' aspiration to forge an independent homeland from the Israeli-occupied territories.

Britain's decision carried particular symbolic weight given its major role in creation of the Israeli regime in the aftermath of World War Two.

"Today, to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis, and a two-state solution, the United Kingdom formally recognizes the State of Palestine," Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on X.

Other nations, including France, are expected to follow suit this week at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Varsen Aghabekian Shahin welcomed countries recognizing a Palestinian state.

"It is a move bringing us closer to sovereignty and independence. It might not end the war tomorrow, but it's a move forward, which we need to build on and amplify," she said. However, Israel's foreign ministry said it rejected what it called the "one-sided" recognition of a Palestinian state, warning that the move could further destabilize the region. "Israel categorically rejects the one-sided declaration of the recognition of a Palestinian state made by the United Kingdom and some other countries...This



declaration does not promote peace, but on the contrary further destabilizes the region and undermines the chances of achieving a peaceful solution in the future," the ministry said in a statement.

Western governments have been under pressure from many in their parties and populations angry at the ever-rising death toll in Gaza and images of starving children. Israel's ensuing campaign in Gaza has killed more than 65,000 Palestinians, most of them civilians, according to Gazan health authorities, and has spread famine, demolished most buildings and displaced most of the population - in many cases multiple times. "Canada recognizes the State of Palestine and offers our partnership in building the promise of a peaceful future for both the State of Palestine and the State of Israel," Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said on Sunday. Israel's hardline minister Ben-Gvir said he would propose at the next cabinet meeting to apply sovereignty in the West Bank - de facto annexation of land Israel seized in a 1967 war. He also said the Western-backed Palestinian Authority, which exercises limited self-rule in the West Bank, should be dismantled.

Armed Forces condemn Ecuador's blacklisting of IRGC



● [TASNIM](http://tasnim.com)

International Desk

The General Staff of Iran's Armed Forces strongly condemned the Ecuadorian government's "despicable and unlawful" decision to designate the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization.

In a statement on Saturday, the General Staff of the Armed Forces said that "the irrational, desperate, and illegal" decision of the Ecuadorian government is in line with serving

the global hegemonic system led by the terrorist-sponsoring United States and the fake Israeli regime.

The anti-IRGC move could prepare the ground for the US to increase its acts of evil and insecurity in the world and embolden the child-killing Zionist regime to commit genocide in Gaza, Palestine, and even other countries in the region, it added.

It emphasized that the IRGC is directly involved in the fight against terrorist groups, which are proxies of the US and the Israeli regime, and defends the Iranian nation, land, and territorial integrity.

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas and the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah are fighting to defend the people of Palestine and Lebanon in the face of the Zionist occupiers, it noted.

The General Staff asked the Ecuador-

ian government whether the IRGC, Hamas, and Hezbollah are terrorists or the US and the Israeli regime, which invade sovereign countries and refrain from recognizing any red line in their acts of aggression and abiding by any international law.

Iran's Armed Forces announced that they will strongly defend the Iranian nation and territory and will stand by the people of Palestine and Lebanon, especially the defenseless people of Gaza, and will protect their rights. Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa signed an executive decree on September 16, designating Hamas, Hezbollah, and the IRGC as terrorist organizations.

It cited reports from Ecuador's National Intelligence Center (CNI) warning of the groups' presence in South America and possible ties to domestic criminal networks.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran criticizes US for ‘illegally’ targeting Chabahar Port investments



Economy Desk

Iran’s Foreign Ministry on Sunday criticized Washington’s move to revoke sanctions waivers for the southeastern Chabahar Port, calling it an illegal attempt “to block other countries from investing in the facility”.

“The US decision is not only aimed at putting pressure on Iran and hindering the economic development of Sistan and Baluchestan Province, but also at unlawfully preventing other countries from cooperating in the investment and development of Chabahar Port,” Mohammad Reza Bahrani, director-general for South Asia at the ministry, told IRNA.

The US has announced it will

revoke the waiver of sanctions granted to India on Iran’s Chabahar Port, ending the special exemption granted in 2018 during Donald Trump’s first tenure. The exemption had allowed India to operate and develop a trade terminal in the port city on Iran’s Makran coast.

The US State Department said that starting September 29, persons operating Chabahar Port and engaging in related activities would face sanctions under the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act (IFCA). The move, part of the Trump administration’s “maximum pressure” policy, is another setback for India’s plans to develop Chabahar, which has already faced delays due to

wider US sanctions on Tehran. The Iranian Foreign Ministry official said the measure is significant because Chabahar has served as a symbol of cooperation between Iran and countries in the Global South, helping improve geographical access and promote trade and transit across the region.

Bahrani added that Iran and its economic and trade partners, fully aware of the importance of their cooperation, will continue advancing Chabahar’s development plan as a key national and regional project, regardless of what he called Washington’s “illogical and anti-development interference.”

The US decision threatens New Delhi’s \$500 million in-

vestment and its bid to reach Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan. Trump’s decision jeopardizes India’s first overseas port project and undermines the Chabahar port, the strategic counter to Pakistan’s Gwadar port run by China.

In a reaction to the US withdrawal of the sanctions waiver, India’s Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday said it was “examining its implications” for New Delhi.

“We have seen the US press statement regarding the revocation of the sanctions waiver for Chabahar Port. We are presently examining its implications for India,” MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told the media.

President urges turning scientific achievements into industrial growth



President Masoud Pezeshkian(c) chairs a meeting on strategies for advancing Iran’s technological development in the capital Tehran on September 20, 2025. [president.ir](#)

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Saturday that translating scientific achievements into industrial growth and transferring knowledge from universities to technology and industrial companies is a priority for his government.

Speaking at a meeting on strategies for advancing the country’s technological development, Pezeshkian said global economic shifts, particularly in the Persian Gulf region’s move toward a post-oil economy, make this effort even more urgent, IRNA reported.

He added that the government plans to use technological and innovation-driven developments as a framework for decision-making.

The meeting, chaired by the president, was held on Saturday evening to review strategies for the country’s technological development. In this session, the global conditions in the field of new technologies, the status of leading countries and the country’s position in this arena were discussed and exchanged in detail.

The necessity of ‘supporting the private sector to facilitate the formation of large technology

companies with global competitiveness’, ‘special attention to participation in the placement of large international companies, especially in the fields of biotechnology, nanotechnology, high-tech and artificial intelligence’, ‘utilizing the model of leading countries in creating smart cities with the aim of strengthening dozens of industrial disciplines based on artificial intelligence’ and ‘a special focus on developing technology diplomacy’ were among the topics reviewed and emphasized at this session.

At the session, Pezeshkian said Iran should also draw on successful experiences of member states of regional and international organizations such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. He added that the government is committed to supporting technological development and will engage any sector or institution that can contribute.

He asked officials to prepare educational packages in the field of artificial intelligence and new technologies to be included in the student education system and present them to the government, in order to improve the quality of education as one of the government’s major plans.

First Iran-Kuwait TIR Carnet shipment passes Shalamcheh border

Economy Desk

Head of the Khorramshahr Chamber of Commerce announced on Sunday that Iran had exported its first TIR Carnet shipment to Kuwait through the Shalamcheh border crossing.

The cargo, consisting of seafood, was cleared in Iraq and entered Kuwait via the Safwan border, ILNA quoted Mostafa Mousavi as saying.

Tir Carnet, as a valid customs document, allows

goods to pass through countries on the way in a sealed manner, without having to go through repetitive customs formalities at the entry and exit borders.

The shipment was made possible after three years of follow-up efforts by the Khorramshahr Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Industries, Mine and Trade, and Agriculture Ministry, he added.

The businessman said the move marks a major

achievement, following Iraq’s accession to the TIR system and multi-agency coordination. With the step, Shalamcheh is now recognized as an official TIR entry point and is expected to serve as a key hub for exports and transit of goods to Iraq, Persian Gulf countries, Jordan and North Africa.

The TIR unit of the Khorramshahr Chamber has also announced readiness to cooperate with domestic and

foreign transport companies, offering services to facilitate international trade and transit.

The formal launch of the crossing with Iraq has drawn the attention of business leaders and tourism experts to its new opportunities, Mousavi has recently said, adding that many argue Shalamcheh is more than a local passage and could be a strategic link in expanding Iran’s trade and tourism.

Renewable energy projects secure \$4b funding

Economy Desk

Iran’s Economic Council authorized the National Development Fund (NDF) to invest in building 8,000 megawatts of renewable energy capacity, with an estimated cost of around \$3.95 billion, IRNA reported.

The approval follows a Leader-endorsed authorization allowing the fund to invest in the energy sector and a resolution by the NDF’s governing board. The fund will participate alongside private sector companies in building and expanding solar and

wind power plants across the country.

Under the decision, the NDF may provide up to 80% of the total investment cost, proportionate to the share of the private company’s contribution, in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

The measure aims to mobilize non-governmental companies to develop renewable energy sites nationwide, while the NDF is required to ensure the repayment of principal and a minimum annual return of 8% in foreign currency.

Electricity generated from these projects will be eligible



for domestic consumption or export and will not be subject to any load management programs.

A reflection on ...

Failure to secure a majority in favor of extending the suspension of sanctions amounts, under Resolution 2231, to a continuation of the “no decision” state. This is a necessary condition for snapback but not a sufficient one. For the mechanism to be triggered, the no decision status must last the full 30 days. Paragraph 12 makes this clear: If the Security Council has not adopted a resolution under Paragraph 11 to continue the sanctions relief in Paragraph 7(a), then, after the 30th day following the notification, at midnight GMT, the provisions of Resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747, 1803, 1835, and 1929 shall apply again in the same manner as before the adoption of Resolution 2231.

From these legal premises, at least two conclusions can be drawn. First, the process of snapback is still ongoing, and September 28 will be the day of its enforcement, whether or not the procedural resolution raised on Friday passes (because Resolution 2231 explicitly names no decision as the necessary condition for snapback). Second, given that the continuation of the no decision status for the 30-day window is also the sufficient condition, there remains about one

week for diplomacy — even if that opportunity is merely theoretical. In fact, any permanent or non-permanent member of the Council that is also a JCPOA participant could, through a political deal struck outside the chamber, introduce a draft resolution to extend Resolution 2231 and thus block snapback, even one minute before the deadline at midnight GMT on the 30th day.

The final point is this: the odds of snapback not being provoked are, based on overwhelming political evidence, a formal possibility, not a practical one. But it cannot be overlooked that the pre-2231 resolutions were passed at a time of consensus among the global powers. Just this past Friday, however, Russia, China, Algeria, and Pakistan voted in favor of South Korea’s procedural resolution to extend Iran’s sanctions relief. This underscores that the reinstated resolutions will return in a very different political climate than when they were first adopted, and they will be enforced amid far more complex global dynamics.

For Iran, the costs of their return are inevitable. Yet those costs, compared with the earlier period, and the world’s shift into an era of great powers’ rivalry, are likely to be capped at a lower threshold.

From crafting JCPOA to shutting down diplomacy Europe heading down wrong path



France's President Emmanuel Macron (C), flanked by Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer (L) and Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz, arrives at Kyiv railway station on May 10, 2025.

● GETTY IMAGES



After the US unilaterally pulled out of the JCPOA in 2018, Europe announced 11 specific commitments to support the deal's continuation and protect Iran's economic interests. These included guaranteeing the purchase of Iranian oil and gas, supporting European banks and companies working with Tehran, setting up alternative financial channels, and easing Iran's non-oil exports. However, many European banks and companies shied away from cooperating with Iran in fear of US sanctions, and the financial channel failed to kick off the expected economic flow.

ANALYSIS

The European troika of France, Germany, and the UK, as well as the United States, got their wish on Friday, September 19, 2025, after the UNSC voted not to permanently lift economic sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program. As a result, all sanctions that had been lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal (known as the JCPOA) will return by September 28 if no significant deal is reached beforehand. This vote not only signals increased Western pressure on Tehran but also puts the last hopes of diplomacy to defuse the nuclear dispute in jeopardy.

Ten years after the JCPOA was crafted and signed, Europe's engagement with Iran's nuclear dossier shows a gradual backing away from realist strategies and effective diplomacy. The JCPOA, aimed at ensuring Iran would not develop nuclear weapons in exchange for lifting sanctions and fostering economic cooperation, was a relative diplomatic success on the international stage and kept the door open for engagement with Iran. However, the developments of the last few years reveal that Europe's policy toward Iran has gone off that track and has been reduced to reactive and pressure-based measures.

After the US unilaterally pulled out of the JCPOA in 2018, Europe announced 11 specific commitments to support the deal's continuation and protect Iran's economic interests. These included guaranteeing the purchase of Iranian oil and gas, supporting European banks and companies working with Tehran, setting up alternative financial channels, easing Iran's non-oil exports, opening credit lines, ensuring Iran's access to advanced technology, backing investments in the country, protecting its frozen assets, providing insurance for transactions, maintaining transportation

routes, and adhering to transparent oversight mechanisms. To make these commitments work out, Europe designed a special mechanism called INSTEX to facilitate financial and economic exchanges with Iran and offset the impact of US sanctions.

However, INSTEX never lived up to its potential and remained mostly symbolic. Many European banks and companies shied away from cooperating with Iran in fear of US sanctions, and the financial channel failed to kick off the expected economic flow. This failure led to European inaction in fulfilling its commitments, slowing down Tehran's efforts to ease tensions and maintain regional balance, undermining Iran's trust in European diplomacy. Ultimately, this gap between Europe's words and deeds not only dampened JCPOA hopes but also threw a wrench into the prospects for genuine diplomacy with Iran.

In recent months, even after Iran faced a 12-day assault and bombings on its nuclear fa-

cilities, which were supposed to be protected by the IAEA, Tehran tried to keep up technical and political cooperation with the IAEA and keep the dialogue flowing with the European troika to build mutual trust. As such, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi took off for Geneva, the European UN headquarters, in the middle of the imposed 12-day war to meet his British, French, and German counterparts and the EU foreign policy chief. Despite sharply criticizing their support for Israel's military aggression against Iran, he tried to keep the door open to talks. Two rounds of deputy foreign ministers' meetings in Istanbul and Geneva over recent weeks also showed Tehran's determination to push ahead with negotiations, aiming, first and foremost, to close the nuclear dossier and then build trust for possible future agreements.

On Friday, Araghchi wrote on X (formerly Twitter) regarding Iran's proposal for the continuation of diplomacy, which was presented during a Wednesday

call with the European troika's foreign ministers and the EU foreign policy chief, "On behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I yesterday presented a reasonable and actionable plan to E3/EU counterparts to avert an unnecessary and avoidable crisis in the coming days."

Iran took serious steps to head off the activation of the Dispute Resolution Mechanism (also known as snapback). This was while it had fresh, logical complaints of the performance of the IAEA and its director general amid Israeli and US military strikes on Iranian nuclear sites. On September 9, Tehran drew up a new cooperation framework with the nuclear watchdog to take away any pretexts from the European troika. Based on an agreement reached in Cairo with Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty as facilitator, Tehran committed to technical and monitoring cooperation consistent with its safeguards obligations — if approved by the country's Supreme National Security Council.

On Friday evening, September



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) and Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi (L) sign an agreement to open the way for resuming cooperation, at Tahrir Palace in Cairo, Egypt, on September 9, 2025.

● EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY

19, 2025, Rafael Grossi, IAEA's director general, discussed the latest status of the Iran-IAEA agreement and the snapback issue in a phone call with Araghchi. In this call, Araghchi called out the political atmosphere dominating the Board of Governors meeting and stressed that Iran's cooperation with the agency is purely technical and within international regulations. He also reminded that the Islamic Republic has always stuck to diplomacy and constructive cooperation and will not accept any unfair political moves or pressures that fuel tensions.

In response to the three European countries' actions to bring back international sanctions against Iran at the Friday UNSC meeting, the Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement reiterating that "The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns as unlawful, unfounded, and provocative the attempt by France, Germany, and the United Kingdom to abuse the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) dispute resolution mechanism in order to reinstate Security Council resolutions that were terminated in 2015 under Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA." It also emphasized: "The full responsibility for the consequences of this measure, should it lead to the reinstatement of terminated UN Security Council resolutions against Iran, rests with the US and the European trio, which, by distorting realities and making baseless claims, pressured some non-permanent members of the Security Council to align with them."

Europe, once the main architect and defender of the JCPOA, now effectively stands in the front line of pressure against Iran. Not only did they fail to follow through on their economic commitments after the US withdrawal in 2018, but by joining in political and even military attacks by the US and Israel on Iran's nuclear infrastructure, they have effectively taken sides with the aggressors. The recent decision to activate snapback is the latest sign of this bad faith and, in practice, shuts the door on diplomacy.

Europe's move to activate snapback is a strategic misstep because it is inherently based on political pressure and alignment with Washington rather than on dialogue and technical cooperation. This decision was made despite Europe's prior failure to deliver on its economic commitments under the JCPOA, which has undermined Iran's trust in European diplomacy.

Activating snapback not only closes off existing avenues for peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue and mutual trust-building but also stirs up tensions regionally and globally, increasing the risk of entering a period of unpredictable crises and tensions. Meanwhile, the real solution for security and stability still lies in responsible diplomacy and dialogue, but Iran cannot be the only player left that bears the consequences of this move.

The article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

How Iran just proved West doesn't want nuclear deal


By Robert Inlakesh
Journalist, writer

OPINION

This Friday, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voted to reject the continuation of sanctions relief for Iran, meaning that the end result of the Obama-era nuclear deal has been an even greater economic blow to Tehran. Not only does this send the message of war, but it also eliminates any hope for future agreements and cooperation.

The UNSC vote represented a death blow to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), otherwise known as the Iran Nuclear Deal. As a result of this vote, a major shift is about to occur that will have enormous violent reverberations.

When the JCPOA was originally negotiated back in 2015, part of the agreement was an in-built mechanism that would permit “snapback” sanctions to be applied against Iran, should it fail to apply to its side of the agreement. In late August, the E3 countries — Britain, France, and Germany — had initiated a 30-day process, which would lead to the imposition of these “snapback” sanctions, unless Iran decided to meet unrealistic demands that they knew wouldn’t be met. Now, as per the UNSC vote to block sanctions relief on Iran, the Islamic Republic has been given until September 28 to reach a significant deal to block the imposition of sanctions.

In response to this, Russia, China, Algeria, and Pakistan, who had voted for the continuation of sanctions relief, condemned the move of the Security Council and even indicated they would not comply with such sanctions. So, why is this a bombshell decision?

Some media commentators and analysts are treating this UNSC decision as a simple road to more sanctions and pressure on Tehran. As is usually the case, however, the devil is in the details, and to understand this, we must look to the knock-on effects.

To begin with, there are the implications of domestic Iranian politics. The current President of Iran Masoud Pezeshkian is from the so-called Reformist Camp in Iranian politics. This political movement appealed to more liberal leaning Iranians and advocates opening up ties with the West, making the JCPOA one of their primary projects.

Under the former leadership of Hassan Rouhani, the Iranian negotiating team that was headed by Javad Zarif, managed to pull off the Nuclear Deal with the administration of then-US president Barack Obama. At the time, it was hailed as a major deal and had even convinced many Iranians that the path of pursuing cordial relations with the West was not only possible, but favorable.

It wasn’t long, however, until the agreement began to come under greater scrutiny, due to an American-European refusal to implement their sides of the bargain. Then came the presidency of Donald Trump, who, in 2018, decided to unilaterally withdraw from the deal and



The photo shows a mural depicting an Iranian official and an American official sitting across a negotiating table, painted on the outer walls of the former US embassy in Tehran.
● MAJID SAEEDI/GETTY IMAGES

impose a “maximum pressure” sanctions campaign on Iran instead. At this stage, not only did it appear that the deal had completely fallen apart, but now the sanctions that were being imposed were even more severe than they were prior to the JCPOA in 2015. Yet, there were still efforts being made between the Iranian government and its European counterparts, despite the lack of the EU nations’ willingness to disobey the United States.

Meanwhile, the sanctions against Iran were blocking vital medical supplies from entering the country and further impacting their already suffering economy. Amidst this, the US attempted to stir civil unrest inside of Iran and, in 2020, launched an assassination strike against Iran’s top general, Qassem Soleimani, of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)’s Quds Forces.

When it came time for a political change inside the United States, during Joe Biden’s campaign, he had promised to revive the Iran deal. Yet, he failed to follow up on this pledge upon taking office in 2021. Instead, he continued to implement the sanctions of his predecessor.

According to the JCPOA itself, Iran at this point had its own mechanisms that it could trigger

in the event that the other side refused to respect the deal. Tehran, seeing that its Western partners had walked away and were not fulfilling their commitments, decided to pursue the course of uranium enrichment.

There were two primary drivers behind the Iranian enrichment efforts: The first was as a means of responding to the violations of the deal, the other was to create a bargaining chip — that being the highly enriched uranium — which they would be able to use in future negotiations. Evidently, uranium enrichment also brought Tehran closer to the threshold of creating nuclear weapons, yet it had not created such a program.

In August of 2021, the failure of the JCPOA and Iranian Reformists helped lead to the election of Ebrahim Raisi, who was a man from the Principalist political bloc. Raisi pursued a policy of pivoting eastwards, yet when the Biden administration opened up the opportunity for nuclear deal talks, he still pursued them, understanding that a segment of the Iranian public sought their government to continue along that path.

Ultimately, the Biden administration stalled and failed to achieve any breakthrough, refusing to revive the deal, instead requesting all kinds of additional elements that were consid-

ered non-starters by Iran. On May 19, 2024, tragedy struck inside Iran as its president and other prominent officials were killed in a helicopter crash. This led to a new election cycle, where the Reformists yet again gained power.

Iran’s President Massoud Pezeshkian has repeatedly made it clear that he seeks to open up relations with the West and, through his foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, has sought to make this happen.

When the Trump administration took power, it was clear that the Israelis and the US sought to attack Iran, not to pursue genuine dialogue. Yet, the Reformist government pursued diplomacy regardless, as Oman stepped in to mediate talks between delegations headed by Araghchi and his American counterpart Steve Witkoff.

During the course of these negotiations, on June 13, the Israelis decided to launch an attack that assassinated Iranian generals and scientists, while striking Iran’s nuclear project. This led to the imposed 12-day war, as it is now being called. The Iranian public, whom the Israelis and US had expected to rebel against their government, did the very opposite and decided instead to rally behind the flag.

The US decided to participate in the Israeli attack, even further



A firefighter calls out to his colleagues at the scene of an explosion in a residential compound in northern Tehran, Iran, on June 13, 2025, the day Israel illegally attacked Iran unprovoked.
● VAHID SALEMI/AP

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Iran is the target of an Israeli conspiracy to commit regime change; The US Trump administration is committed to fulfilling Tel Aviv’s desires on this front. Therefore, it is likely that the IAEA is about to be rendered irrelevant as an institution, and then will lose much of its funding that comes from the US and the West for the sake of its role in Iran. Also, the NPT will become an irrelevant treaty, and the idea of creating a nuclear-free region will be nothing more than a pipe dream.

weakening the credibility of the United States. What’s more is that Iranian military officials had accused the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi of providing the Israelis with sensitive information about Iran’s nuclear program.

As a result of this, the Iranian parliament passed a bill that barred the IAEA from the country, as various lawmakers called for pressing legislation that would lead to Tehran’s withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Instead, the Reformist government decided to still desperately pursue talks with the Europeans, signed another agreement that re-invited the IAEA into their country to monitor the nuclear program, and reached out to try to pursue talks to revive the JCPOA.

This brings us to the broader implications of the UNSC vote and where it leads.

The E3 decided to slap the Reformist president’s efforts in the face, pursuing snapback sanctions. The IAEA agreement was supposed to only go into effect in the event that the snapback sanctions were not implemented, while the US and its allies posture even harder against Iran. What this means is that Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi had desperately attempted to seek de-escalation, even after the IAEA Chief Grossi refused to condemn Israel’s illegal strikes against Iran and doubled down on his insulting rhetoric. The result has been that the credibility of the West is now lower than ever before.

For those who are new to the discourse surrounding the JCPOA (Nuclear Deal), what this translates to is that Iran seemingly has two main options to deal with this predicament. Either it attempts to offer more concessions to the West in a desperate attempt to delay the onset of Western sanctions and collapse of UN resolution 2231 (JCPOA res.), which is only a temporary solution that will likely be interrupted by another Israeli attack. Or, it can withdraw from the NPT and commit itself to solid action, which could include a nuclear test.

Either way this goes, the result is going to be conflict, and the more that the Reformists attempt to desperately negotiate, the more aggressive the US and Israelis are likely to be. What this UNSC vote signals is a major shift that has just occurred, from which there can be no going back.

Iran is the target of an Israeli conspiracy to commit regime change; The US Trump administration is committed to fulfilling Tel Aviv’s desires on this front. Therefore, it is likely that the IAEA is about to be rendered irrelevant as an institution, and then will lose much of its funding that comes from the US and the West for the sake of its role in Iran.

Also, the NPT will become an irrelevant treaty, and the idea of creating a nuclear-free region will be nothing more than a pipe dream. This is all Israel’s doing as it refused to even sign the NPT and currently possesses anywhere between 80 and 300 nuclear weapons, according to most estimates.

Iran has desperately tried to pursue the path of negotiations but has been betrayed, insulted, sanctioned, and physically attacked for its efforts.

The article first appeared on The Palestine Chronicle.

Wrestling World Championships: Saravi reclaims 97kg title, Sohrabi bags consolation bronze

Sports Desk

A memorable World Championships campaign continued for Iranian wrestling on Saturday as reigning Olympic champion Mohammad-Hadi Saravi grabbed the Greco-Roman 97kg gold in Zagreb, Croatia.

Danial Sohrabi, meanwhile, recovered from a last-eight heartbreak to finish with a consolation bronze in the 72kg event. Earlier on the penultimate day of the competitions, Saied Esmaeili (67kg) and Alireza Mohmadi (87kg), who won the Olympic gold and silver medals last year, respectively, progressed to the final showpiece of their respective weight classes, while Mohammad-Mahdi Keshtkar suffered a last-four defeat (5-3) against South Korea's Chung Han-jae to head into the bronze-medal bout in the 63kg division on his debut at the Wrestling Worlds.

Saturday's results were enough to secure the Greco-Roman crown and a historic men's team title double for the country of the final day's outcome in Zagreb – a feat previously achieved only by the Soviet Union and Russia.

Drought ends

Saravi ended a four-year wait for the world title by scoring an early takedown and going on to defeat Russian Artur Sargsian, who competed as a neutral wrestler, 3-1 in the final showdown. "In my opinion, this tournament

wasn't easy at all; it was one of the most exciting and diverse competitions I've ever been part of," Saravi said. "There were new opponents, and some wrestlers reached the finals and repechage rounds that I honestly hadn't expected. The level was much higher than I thought it would be."

After winning the world gold in Oslo in 2021, Saravi had to settle for bronze medals at the 2022 and 2023 editions in Belgrade, falling in the semifinals on both occasions.

But he righted the ship for the Paris Olympics, where he defeated long-time Armenian rival Artur Aleksanyan in the final to add the gold to the Olympic bronze he won in Tokyo in 2021. In Zagreb, while Aleksanyan and defending champion Gabriel Rosillo of Cuba, who defeated Saravi in the 2023 semifinals, fell by the wayside, Saravi marched into the final without pomp or drama, winning his matches by such scores as 4-0, 1-1 and 3-1.

"In this weight class, the champions are among the greats of wrestling: Artur Aleksanyan, Cuban Rosillo, and of course, my final opponent, Artur Sargsian, who is a very well-known and skillful wrestler," Saravi said. "But with my preparation, I was able to execute my plans and win."

His meeting with Sargsian in the final was a rematch of their first-round match at the 2021 World Championships, which Saravi



Iran's Mohammad-Hadi Saravi (red) celebrates after winning the Greco-Roman 97kg gold medal at the Wrestling World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia, on September 20, 2025.

● IAWFIR

won 6-4 en route to his first world gold.

On Saturday, the 27-year-old Saravi drew early blood when he used an arm drag to get behind and force Sargsian down at the edge for a 2-0 lead. He made it 3-0 with a passivity point, but was unable to turn Sargsian from par terre.

That left the door open for Sargsian, when he was put in par terre in the second period. But he also could not budge the Ira-

nian, who then ran out the clock for the win.

"As we had planned with my coaches, even though some of my expected rivals didn't make it to the later rounds, with the analysis we had done we were able to plan well and make it to the final," added Saravi, who is also a three-time gold medalist at the Asian Championships.

"I had wrestled [Sargsian] twice before, and with the strategies we had, I managed to beat him.

Thankfully, this time, too, I was able to execute my plans perfectly on the mat and win the match."

Saravi reflected on coming up short at the two previous World Championships.

"I think in the two World Championships where I won bronze, I had some technical weaknesses," Saravi said. "I was able to fix those before the Olympics and keep that level through this year's Worlds.

"I hope I can keep improving for the upcoming tournaments and continue winning big medals."

In the 72kg category, Sohrabi, who had beaten former world and Olympic champion Mohammadreza Geraei in the Iranian world trials, appeared in unstoppable form in the Croatian capital, beginning with back-to-back superiority victories. However, a controversial loss to Ibrahim Ghanem of France, in which the Iranian was disqualified for exceeding the four-minute bleeding timeout, cost Sohrabi a place in the semifinals on Friday.

Sohrabi still managed to bounce back to beat Armenia's Gor Khachatryan and Kazakhstan's Mery Maulitkanov in emphatic fashion to share the third podium with Abdullo Aliev of Uzbekistan.

"Thank God that I managed to win a medal for my country and will not return home empty-handed," Sohrabi said.

"In my bout against the high-profile French wrestler, I suffered some hard blow to my head and face, which went unnoticed by the officials. However, I didn't let that break my focus. I kept my motivation high and fought until the very end."

"I came into this tournament with extra motivation for my brother, who is sick and having a tough time. I wanted to win this medal to make him happy, and to make my parents proud after they worked day and night for me all year long. I hope this small success brings them some comfort."

UAE Pro League:

Azmoun strikes last-gasp winner for Shabab Al Ahli on return from injury

Sports Desk

Iran international striker Sardar Azmoun announced his long-awaited return from injury in style, scoring a stoppage-time winner to lead Shabab Al Ahli to a massive 1-0 away win against Al Nasr at the UAE ADNOC Pro League on Saturday.

Making his first appearance in 122 days, Azmoun came off the bench with 13 minutes from normal time before rising high to head home Federico Cartabia's corner-kick in the fifth minute of added time, as defending champion Shabab Al Ahli continued its unbeaten start to the new Emirati top-flight season.

The former AS Roma and Bayer Leverkusen striker bagged 26 goals and 10 assists in 39 appearances across all competitions in his debut campaign for Shabab Al Ahli, helping the club win a second league title in three seasons in May, as well as the UAE President's Cup and Super Cup trophies.

Saturday's victory moved Shabab Al Ahli to second in the league table with 10 points, with Al Ain on top on goal difference. Elsewhere, Iranian mid-



Shabab Al Ahli striker Sardar Azmoun celebrates his goal during a 1-0 win against Al Nasr in the ADNOC Pro League in Dubai, UAE, on September 20, 2025.

● X

fielder Ahmad Nourollahi provided Venezuelan Renne Rivas with a 53rd-minute assist, before Ahmed Abunamous found the net in the second minute of added time as Ittihad Kalba came from behind to defeat Dibba away from home and move to fifth in

the table with seven points. Nourollahi's fellow-Iranian Shahriar Moghanlou was introduced as a 68th-minute substitute, while Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi and Samam Qoddous missed the game in Fujairah with injury and Amirhossein Samdaliri was an unused substitute.

WTT Feeder Series:

Iranian girl Safaei wins historic third-place trophy in Cappadocia

Sports Desk

Iranian table tennis girl Shima Safaei won an impressive third-place trophy at the latest WTT Feeder Series event in Cappadocia, Türkiye – the country's first women's title in the history of the competition.

Safaei defeated some prominent opponents en route to the women's singles semifinals, before suffering a 3-0 loss (11-5, 11-4, 11-8) to Asuka Sasao of Japan.

Sasao settled for a runner-up finish after a 3-1 defeat against top-seeded Hitomi Sato in an all-Jap-

anese showdown, while Safaei shared the third place with Tan Zhao Yun of Indonesia.

Safaei began her campaign with a straight-game victory over Uzbekistan's Markhabo Magdieva, and went on come out victorious against eighth-seed Brazilian Laura Watanabe by the same scoreline in the round of 32.

Safaei continued with a 3-1 win against the host's Sibel Altinkaya, and then held off a fightback from second-seed Dian Meshref of Egypt in a five-game thriller (12-10, 12-10, 5-11, 9-11, 11-8) to advance



● BORNA NEWS

to the last four. Mahshid Ashtari and Elina Rahimi were the other Iranian contestants in women's singles draw. Ashtari suffered a 3-0 defeat (11-7, 11-6, 11-5) against

Japanese Sato in the last 16, while Rahimi crashed out in the round of round of 32, courtesy of 3-2 setback (7-11, 11-7, 6-11, 11-8, 15-13) against Turkish girl Ece Harac.

Persepolis closing on contract with ex-Newcastle fullback Lewis

Sports Desk

Persian Gulf Pro League club Persepolis is nearing a deal to sign former Newcastle United fullback Jamal Lewis as a free agent.

The 27-year-old Northern Ireland international is in Dubai to undergo medical tests ahead of joining the Iranian top-flight heavyweight, Varzesh3 reported on Sunday.



● BARRINGTON COOMBS/PA

Lewis joined Newcastle from Norwich City in September 2020, though his contribution in The Magpies shirt was limited to 36 appearances across all competitions.

He left Newcastle to join English second-tier club Watford on loan for the start of 2023/24 season, before a second loan spell saw him make six appearances for Brazilian Série A outfit São Paulo last year.

Persepolis is fourth in the Iranian top-flight table with six points from four games.

Siahkal combines nature, heritage, spirituality in Gilan Province

Iranica Desk

Siahkal, located in eastern part of Gilan Province, is recognized as one of the key tourist destinations in northern Iran due to its pristine nature, valuable historical sites, and numerous religious centers. Combining natural beauty, cultural heritage, and spirituality, it attracts thousands of visitors annually. It borders Lahijan and Astaneh to the north, Rudsar, Langarud, and Amlash to the east, Rudbar and the Alamut (in Qazvin Province) to the south, and Rasht to the west. The distance from Siahkal to Rasht, the provincial capital, is 44 kilometers.

Siahkal lies about 45 kilometers from the Caspian Sea and covers an area exceeding one million square kilometers. The population mainly speaks Gilaki. The lowlands feature the standard Gilaki dialect, while in the mountainous areas such as Deylaman, the Deylami dialect — a branch of Gilaki — is more common, IRNA wrote.

Most residents are Shia Muslims, and the presence of Imamzadehs and Shia religious centers in both the city and villages of Siahkal confirms this.

The Siahkal–Deylaman forest road is one of the most beautiful forest routes in Iran and a top destination for nature enthusiasts in eastern Gilan. This 45-kilometer route passes through lush landscapes, abundant rivers, and diverse vegetation, leading tourists from the eastern Gilan plains in Siahkal to the highland pastures of Deylaman in the Alborz Mountains.

Due to its varied climate, natural scenery, and distinctive flora, the road draws many visitors annually. The journey begins amid rice paddies and tea gardens, passes through dense forests and cascading waterfalls, and ends in the cool, mountainous highlands of Deylaman.

Loonak Waterfall, located 25 kilometers from Siahkal along the Siahkal–Deylaman road, is one of Gilan Province's most stunning and popular natural attractions. Nestled deep in dense forests of



Siahkal Forest
● snaptrip.com



Loonak Waterfall
● snaptrip.com

the Alborz Mountains, it attracts many tourists yearly.

Loonak consists of two parallel waterfalls that drop approximately 20 meters before joining the Shim River. Situated at mid-elevations, the surrounding area is rich with forest trees and mountainous views.

This waterfall is impressive throughout the year: in spring and summer, it flows powerfully amid green nature and cool air; in autumn, it displays a thousand shades of forest colors and mist; and in winter, the falls often freeze, creating a unique snowy spectacle.

Thanks to easy road access and its location in pristine nature, Loonak serves as a main stop for travelers en route to Deylaman. Its proximity to attractions like the Titi Caravanserai further

boosts the region's tourism appeal.

Baba Vali Waterfall is another spectacular natural site in Siahkal, offering nature lovers a serene mountain setting accented by the soothing sound of flowing water.

This seasonal waterfall, about 20 meters tall, lies near Baba Vali village, on the banks of the Pakrud River. Its flow peaks during the warm months when mountain snow melts, while in winter the water often freezes.

Unlike many Gilan waterfalls that run through dense forests, Baba Vali cascades over steep, dark rocks, giving it a distinctive rugged rocky bed.

The surrounding landscape features the Pakrud River, seasonal springs, tall trees such as walnut and native forest species, and



Titi Caravanserai
● snaptrip.com



Siahkal–Deylaman Road
● snaptrip.com

lush greenery near rocky outcrops.

To visit Baba Vali, one must reach the village first and then walk about 15 minutes along a usually rocky, steep, and damp path, so proper footwear and gear are essential.

Larikhani Forest and Spring lie about eight kilometers along the Siahkal–Deylaman road. The Larikhani Mineral Spring is located at the forest's end, accessible only by walking through the forest path. This area's foothill elevation near the Deylaman Mountains leads to gradually cooler climate with altitude. The spring water is fresh, potable, and partially piped to a public water source for general use.

Pirkuh village, located in the Deylaman district, is known

for its cool climate, rich history, mountainous nature, lush scenery, and historical sites. Nestled deep in the dense forests of the western Alborz Mountains, Pirkuh experiences long snowy winters and cool summers. Historically, its proximity to trade and military routes in Deylaman gave Pirkuh strategic importance.

The Titi Caravanserai, situated on the Siahkal to Deylaman tourism route, is one of Siahkal's oldest structures. Built of brick, mortar, and river stones, it is named "Titi" due to its location in a flowering area. It lies along the caravan route connecting Deylaman and Lahijan.

Constructed during Timurid era, the caravanserai dates back about six centuries. It was actively used until approximately

50 years ago, before modern roads and motor vehicles replaced traditional transport by horses and mules.

Garmavar Castle, located near Garmavar village in Deylaman, is a historic fortress in the mountainous highlands of Siahkal amid pristine nature. The area's vast views and rugged terrain made it ideal for military and defensive use.

Architectural evidence and its strategic position date the castle to ancient times, possibly early Islamic or earlier. Some scholars link it to the Ismaili period, when many fortresses were built in Gilan and Qazvin's highlands.

Today, only remnants of stone walls and towers survive. The castle was built using local stone and mortar, with traces of watchtowers still visible.

The historic Deylaman Bathhouse is another important example of traditional architecture in the mountainous Deylaman region of Siahkal. Located in Deylaman's old city fabric, it reflects the past importance of urban civilization and social life in the area.

Dating to the Safavid era, the bathhouse has undergone restoration and renovation over time. It is built from stone and brick, with mortar chiefly composed of sarooj (traditional waterproof mortar) and lime. The design includes a dressing room known as Sarbineh, warm room, bath pool known as khazineh, and oven (fire chamber for heating water). Vaulted and domed ceilings efficiently ventilate steam and humidity, with light entering through small ceiling openings.

Historically, bathhouses served as social and cultural gathering places, not just washing facilities. Deylaman Bathhouse was a community hub for villagers and townspeople to meet and interact.

This building is registered on Iran's National Heritage List. Having undergone partial restoration, it remains one of Deylaman's cultural and tourist attractions, drawing history and traditional architecture enthusiasts.

Khal'at Pooshan Tower embodies ceremonial monument

Iranica Desk

About five kilometers east of Tabriz in Karkaj village stands the lofty brick Khal'at Pooshan Tower, a relic from the Safavid era. During the Qajar period, this tower served as a ceremonial monument where robes donated by the kings were presented to governors and servants. The tower is a hexagonal structure with three floors. The first and second floors are roofed, while the third floor remains open to the sky.

John Malcolm described the tradition connected to this monument, noting that Iranian governments have historically maintained traditional customs in their rule, resulting in many widespread ceremonies. For example, when a king donated a robe to a ruler, a welcoming procession would be held for



miles around, followed by the grateful wearing of the robe. Each governor had a designated place in the suburbs called Khal'at Pooshan, located about four miles from the city, where such ceremonies took place.

This practice reflects the importance of ritual and authority in Iran's political culture throughout history.

Architecturally, the Khal'at Pooshan Tower stands out due to its hexagonal design, a form



● kojara.com

that is both aesthetically pleasing and symbolically significant, reflecting the geometric sophistication of Safavid-era construction. The open third floor likely served as a ceremonial platform or observation

point during these important events, allowing dignitaries and attendees to witness the ritual bestowal of robes.

The tower's survival through centuries of political change underscores its cultural and

historical value. It not only symbolizes political power but also serves as an architectural testament to Safavid and Qajar ceremonial traditions, blending historical function with distinctive design. Its preserved state offers insight into the social and governmental customs of its time, making it an important cultural landmark near Tabriz.

Furthermore, the Khal'at Pooshan Tower exemplifies how material culture was intertwined with governance in Iran. The giving of robes was more than a gift; it was a public affirmation of loyalty and status, reinforcing the hierarchical structure within the ruling elite. Such monuments thus played a vital role in the visual and ritual expression of power, linking architecture, ceremony, and political legitimacy in Iranian history.



Persian play wins three top prizes at Italy's Sele Teatero Fest

Arts & Culture Desk

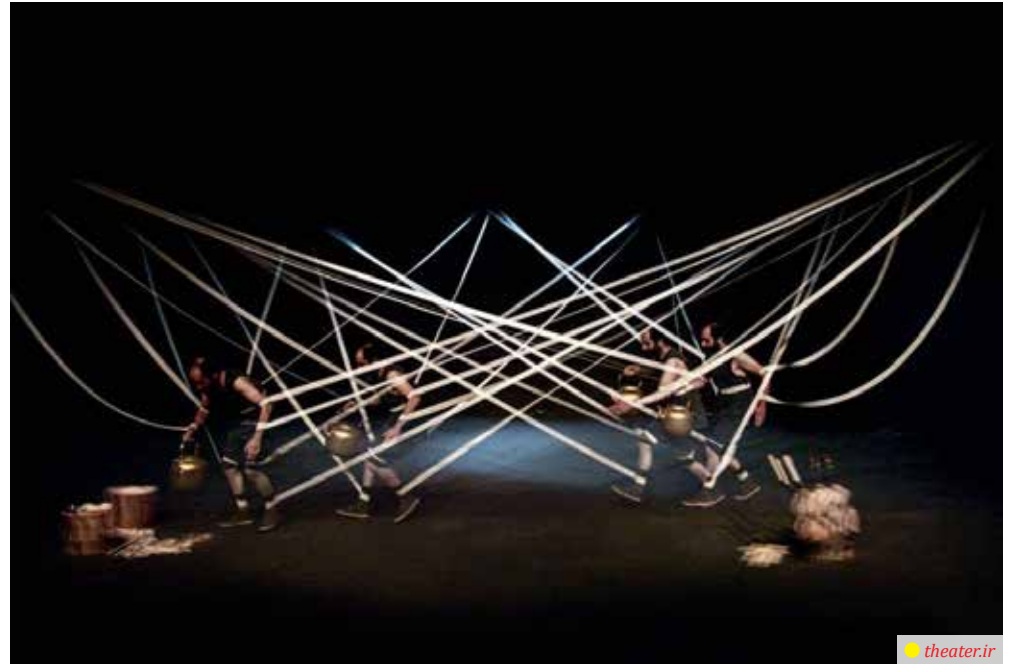
Iranian playwright and director Jafar Mahyari took home three major prizes at the 27th Sele Teatero Fest in southern Italy, with his performance piece 'The Love' sweeping best play, best direction and best stage design. The festival, part of the larger 41st Sele d'Oro cultural gathering in Campania, draws international theater troupes each September, ILNA reported.

Mahyari's Tehran-based company represented Iran this year with a work described by the jury as a daring mix of body movement, live music and narrative form. The international jury – Joeke Albers of the Netherlands, Quinto Romagnoli of Italy, Jonas Bucevicius of Lithuania and Slovakia's Silvia Bartáková Komaromiová – awarded the production.

The organizers hailed the piece's "transformative" treatment of routine, taboo and love. 'The Love' tells the story of a man worn down by the emptiness of his daily routine, caught in the grip of hidden taboos, until an unexpected encounter with love steers him toward transformation. The play, carried by Mahyari's own performance, unfolds through physical movement rather than dialogue, accompanied by live Santur (hammered dulcimer) and Daf (Persian frame drum). Other contributors included assistant and international coordinator Hamideh Barmakshad, poster designer Mehdi Raygani and media adviser Mahmoud Nouraei. The project was staged under the patronage of Barmak Cultural and Artistic Institute, directed by Mahshid Barmakshad. 'The Love' has previously been



staged in Europe, including Würzburg Neunerplatz Theater in 2017 and Lyon's Théâtre Les Carbones in 2019, before a run in Tehran in mid-2022.



theater.ir

Iran sets out heritage tourism strategy at Ankara COMCEC meeting



IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran outlined a series of proposals on sustainable heritage tourism at the 25th meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group in the Turkish capital on Sunday, officials from Tehran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts said.

The Ankara gathering, convened under the Organization of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), drew representatives from more than a dozen member states including Iraq, Qatar, Lebanon, Libya, Burkina Faso, Azerbaijan, Mozambique, Malaysia, Egypt, Albania, Oman, Uganda and Sri Lanka, IRNA reported.

It focused on "improving the sustainability of heritage tourism", according to participants.

Moslem Shojaei, head of foreign tourism marketing at the ministry, said Iran used the forum to table strategies centered on responsible use of historic sites, legal frameworks for private sector engagement in restoration projects, and regional co-operation across OIC members.

"Iran, with its deep-rooted and diverse cultural heritage, has secured its place as a leading destination in the region," he noted, pointing to rising international demand for heritage-based experiences.

The Iranian delegation, led by Bita Sa-

deghzadeh from the ministry's foreign tourism office, presented a detailed report highlighting opportunities to draw international travelers through cultural festivals, intangible heritage events and local traditions.

Delegates were urged to register indigenous ceremonies in national tourism calendars to strengthen visibility and ensure long-term protection.

Other proposals included investment in rural tourism infrastructure while preserving vernacular architecture, promotion of UNESCO-linked heritage networks for knowledge-sharing, and expanded training to empower local communities in site management.

The report also recommended digital tools such as virtual reality, interactive mapping and online platforms to market heritage globally.

Shojaei stressed that economic spin-offs from heritage tourism – both direct and indirect – could play a significant role in development.

He argued that "strategic revision" of tourism policies, anchored in sustainability, was now essential for OIC countries that share cultural and civilizational bonds.

VP urges transparency, safeguards for national data

Social Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref on Sunday called for greater transparency and strict safeguards in handling the country's official data, stressing that the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) must operate independently and without political interference as preparations for the 2026 national census advance.

The remarks, delivered at the Supreme Statistical Council and the first steering meeting for the 2026 Population and Housing Census, underscored the government's attempt to shift from costly household surveys to a modern, registry-based model, fvpresident.ir reported.

Officials say the change, aligned with global practice, will cut costs, improve timeliness and provide a more accurate picture of Iran's social and economic landscape. Aref insisted that access to information for students and researchers would not be curtailed. But he argued strict protocols must regulate how sensitive material is stored and shared to block "rivals and adversaries" from exploiting economic data.

Aref stressed that the government would not "instruct" the SCI to massage figures for political convenience. "Any manipulation of data is treachery against science, the people and the nation's



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (C) attends the Supreme Statistical Council and the first steering meeting for the 2026 Population and Housing Census on September 21, 2025.

fvpresident.ir

planning," he said, praising the center's "efficiency" and its corps of precise, "dedicated" experts. He warned against what he described as "unwarranted interference" by officials, arguing it alienates young people from national values. The SCI, he said, must release information in a "transparent" manner while guarding confidentiality. "Data are no trivial matter," Aref told the gathering. "Combined, they form the basis for strategic decisions, and must be safeguarded as the very honor of governance."

The registry-based approach, to be launched in 2026, will draw on 13 government databases, from civil registration and taxation to insurance and education records, while still employing limited fieldwork to fill gaps. Similar systems have long been adopted in Nordic countries, South Korea and Estonia.

Gholamreza Goudarzi, head of the SCI, said the overhaul is driven by le-

gal obligations, market demands for real-time data and global shifts towards digital governance. "The time has come to replace fragmented and ad hoc statistics with a coordinated, networked system," he noted.

Officials also highlighted the need for "statistical literacy" among managers and urged media to help build public trust in official figures, after years of skepticism caused by multiple competing data sources.

The meeting approved measures to reinforce the Supreme Statistical Council and endorsed the transition to a hybrid census model.

Hamid Pourmohammadi, head of the state planning and budget organization, compared sound statistics to "governing in daylight" and said all ministries would be compelled to feed into the SCI's secure systems. Before the session, Aref toured the SCI's quality-control room, where staff demonstrated how datasets are checked before publication.

Eight years of...

Pilots flew under extremely difficult conditions and braved intense enemy air defenses in numerous missions, including the downing of Iraqi Mirage fighters. Prominent commanders and heroes such as Martyr Abbas Babaei guided and advanced operations, introducing innovations that tipped the balance in Iran's favor.

Despite the hardships and the loss of comrades, the war ultimately strengthened the nation. It taught vital lessons: The necessity of long-term defense planning, the importance of continuous training, and the imperative of advancing military technology. Today, Iran's Armed Forces, bolstered by the rich experience of the eight-year war and steady improvements in equipment and capabilities, are positioned with the readiness to face any military threat. The lessons of the Sacred Defense remain a cornerstone in Iran's defense and military

planning.

In recent years, Iran has made significant strides in developing missile technology, building drones, and enhancing radar systems. Despite challenges such as international sanctions and restrictions on access to advanced technologies, reliance on domestic expertise has enabled Iran to steadily upgrade its defense technologies.

The Air Force, which demonstrated ingenuity during the Iran-Iraq war by carrying out complex operations and securing the nation's skies, continues today to maintain an active and ready presence. With a diversified fleet, domestic aircraft engineering projects, expanding drone development, upgraded defense systems, and the establishment of underground bases and missile facilities, Iran has strengthened its defensive posture and built a deterrent shield for times of crisis.

In sum, by drawing on the experiences

of the war with Iraq, continually modernizing equipment, and training new generations of personnel, Iran has built substantial readiness against external threats. This preparedness now spans not only combat power but also intelligence, electronic warfare, and cyber tools.

On the anniversary of September 22, the Day of the Sacred Defense, tribute is due to all those who, in the most challenging of circumstances, defended their homeland with resolve and solidarity, sacrificing their lives for the independence and territorial integrity of the country. More than a commemoration, this day is a reminder of the enduring importance of safeguarding sovereignty, security, and national values against hostilities. Preserving and passing down the memory of the Sacred Defense to future generations is a historic and national duty, for the lessons of that war continue to shield the country against any aggression.