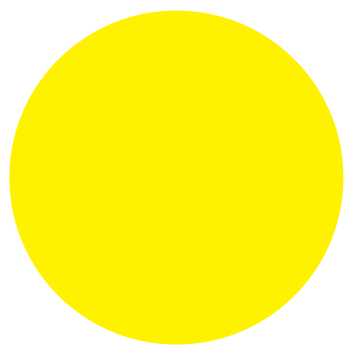


At Minex 2025 expo
Iran breaking mold
to woo investors:
Officials



US excessive demands barred resolution of nuclear issue: *FM*

Minister hails growing ties
with EAEU as free trade deal
takes effect



Iran to learn from
underestimating World
Championships:
Hazratpour



Netanyahu's show for empty seats

OPINION



Echoes of
Persian
luminaries
in Iran's
civilizational
quest for soft
power



**PERSPECTIVE
EXCLUSIVE**

Pezeshkian says capitulation to coercion 'not in our nature'



President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) meets with Iranian wrestlers in Tehran on September 30, 2025, after Iran made history by winning team titles in both freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling at the World Championships in Zagreb, Croatia.
● President.ir

Iran's deputy foreign minister for economic diplomacy answers

Will China and Russia's silent veto paralyze UN sanctions?

By Maryam Salari
Staff writer

PERSPECTIVE

The UN Security Council recently witnessed one of the most fraught and decisive showdowns in recent memory. A draft resolution tabled by Russia and China to extend the expiration date of Resolution 2231 was blocked, failing to pass. For many observers, it was nothing less than the formal collapse of the Iran nuclear deal, even as Tehran doubled down on its position that triggering the so-called "snapback" mechanism was neither legally sound nor consistent with the spirit of the agreement — an accord that Western powers, by reneging on their commitments, had already pushed to the brink. From Tehran's perspective, the three European signatories forfeited the right to invoke such a mechanism, whose very purpose is predicated on the full

compliance of all parties, the moment they failed to live up to their obligations. The legal and logical grounds for their claim, Iran argues, are shaky at best and logically speaking, highly questionable. Moscow and Beijing echoed this reasoning, sending a joint letter to the Security Council president on August 28. In it, they stressed that the European trio lacked any legal standing to set in motion the snapback process. The letter went further, warning that any attempt to revive lapsed resolutions as binding measures would pull the rug out from under the legal foundations of global compliance. Consequently, the international community could no longer be expected to adhere to such enactments. In short, their message was stark: reinstated resolutions would command no universal legitimacy, and neither Russia nor China would feel bound to enforce them. With Western members of the Council voting down the Russian-Chinese pro-

posal to prolong the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and Resolution 2231 by six months, the sanctions machinery has swung back into place. This raises a crucial question given the existing legal structures: what future lies ahead for the specialized committees and expert panels, set up under Paragraph 18 of Resolution 1737 and referenced in Resolution 1929, that were tasked with monitoring and implementing sanctions? And can Moscow and Beijing, as sitting members, throw a spanner in the works of decisions targeting states trading with Iran?

Disruption in sanctions committees

Hamid Ghanbari, Iran's deputy foreign minister for economic diplomacy, paints a far more complex picture of how UN sanctions mechanisms operate than a first glance might suggest. "Resolutions such as 1737 and 1929 embed their own enforcement struc-

tures," he notes. "These often take the form of sanctions committees or expert panels, mandated not only to draw up initial lists of persons and entities subject to sanctions but also to monitor implementation and review those lists over time. In effect, the Security Council hands the keys to these committees to determine who should be penalized and how." "But the process does not stop there," he adds. "Member states are required to file regular reports with these committees, spelling out the strengths, weaknesses and hurdles in implementing sanctions. These submissions become the raw material for committee deliberations, based on the consensus of the Council members and in the participation of representatives of the five major powers." He emphasizes that, in practice, the functioning of these bodies is contingent upon the will and cooperation of the Security Council's permanent mem-

bers. Here lies the rub. If China and Russia, both critical of Western approaches, withhold cooperation or reduce their involvement to a token presence, the machinery grinds to a halt. "The wheels stop turning," Ghanbari says. "Lists go out of date, decisions are delayed, and sanctions end up existing only on paper." Still, he cautions that "Western powers are well aware of this gap and are unlikely to sit on their hands. Proposals to establish a new coalition or a parallel committee are likely to be tabled—a mechanism that would operate without the participation of China and Russia." But such a move, as the diplomat warns, would crack the very foundations of international law. Any parallel mechanism would be the product of political alliances rather than a Security Council mandate — a precedent unseen in the UN's 70-year history and potentially a dangerous turning point.

US excessive demands barred resolution of nuclear issue: *FM*

International Desk

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Monday that Iran, the US and European powers failed to reach a compromise on Iran's nuclear issue in New York due to Washington's excessive demands.

Speaking to reporters before leaving New York for Tehran, Araghchi characterized the approach of the Western parties to the 2015 nuclear deal as an attempt to extract "unreasonable and unachievable concessions" from the Islamic Republic.

He said Iran had presented its own "completely reasonable" proposals, which, he added, European parties had also acknowledged were fair.

On September 19, the 15-member Security Council failed to adopt a resolution that would have prevented the re-imposition of UN sanctions on Iran after the E3 triggered the "snapback" mechanism and accused Tehran of fail-

ing to comply with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

A subsequent resolution, which sought to grant a six-month extension to both the JCPOA and Resolution 2231, also failed to pass at the Security Council on Friday.

"An attempt was made to reach a settlement between the proposals of the two sides, but due to the excessive demands of the Americans and the support of the European countries, we were unable to reach a settlement," Araghchi stated.

Araghchi also revealed that "messages were exchanged with the Americans, both directly and indirectly." He stated that officials were "relieved that we did what was necessary and it was confirmed."

Diplomatic solution

In a separate interview with CNN, the Iranian official reiterated that diplomatic solution is the only way to re-

solve Iran's nuclear issue, stressing that military action and the sanctions will only complicate the situation.

Araghchi said Iran has previously proved that it is not seeking nuclear weapons and accepted the US invitation for negotiations. Five rounds of talks were held, but Israel attacked Iran two days ahead of the planned sixth round of the negotiations, and the US accompanied Israel in the aggression, he added.

Iran has had two "unpleasant experiences" with the US, the Iranian foreign minister told CNN. Once, an agreement was reached but the US withdrew from it, and another time, Iran entered negotiations with Washington but came under attack, the top diplomat said.

Araghchi said that the US struck the Iranian nuclear sites in June and caused severe damage to them, but the military action failed to resolve the standoff since Iran possesses indige-



Abbas Araghchi
● DPA

nous nuclear technology and has not relied on imports.

If there are concerns about Iran's nuclear program, the solution goes

through diplomacy and Iran has always been ready for dialogue and a negotiated settlement of the issue, Araghchi said.

Top general: Naval forces ready for 'possible confrontation'

International Desk

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi said during a visit to the country's naval units that the forces are fully ready for a "possible confrontation" in the future.

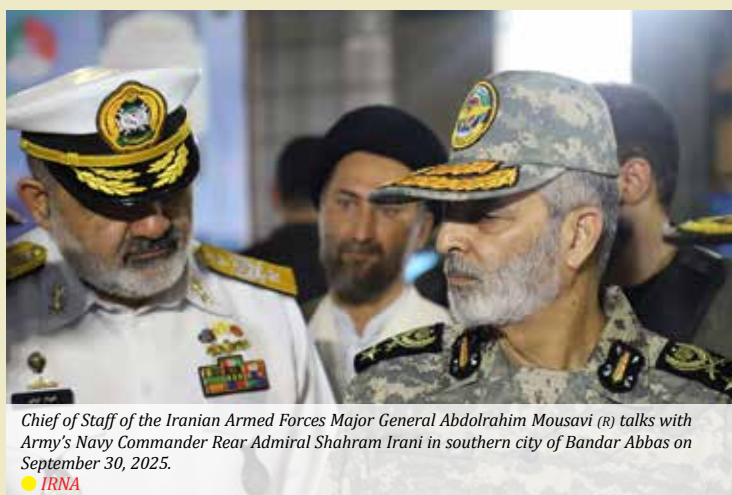
Mousavi toured surface, subsurface, commando, and aviation units of the Army's naval forces as well as combat and operational divisions of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy in the southern city of Bandar Abbas and held talks with commanders and personnel.

Speaking to the Army's naval forces, he underlined their high preparedness across domains, saying, "This strategic force enjoys complete combat readiness at sea, on land, and in the air."

"The Army's brave sailors in the south of the country are fully prepared to carry out assigned missions, and all defensive and offensive plans to confront the enemy are being constantly exercised and updated."

Touring the IRGC Navy's units, the top general highlighted the combination of "faith, motivation, knowledge, experience, and perseverant and revolutionary spirit" among its personnel.

He said such spirit reflects "the one hundred percent readiness



Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi (R) talks with Army's Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani in southern city of Bandar Abbas on September 30, 2025.
● IRNA

of the IRGC Navy in various defensive and offensive domains," adding that the force "is prepared for any kind of defense or offense against the enemy."

Referring to recent developments, Mousavi noted the progress achieved in the short span of time since the 12-day war of aggression imposed by the Israeli regime and the United States against the country in June.

"In this short period, great work has been carried out in the IRGC Navy. What we witnessed today was extraordinary preparedness for a possible confrontation," he asserted.

Israel launched an unprovoked

aggression against Iran on June 13, triggering a 12-day war that killed at least 1,064 people in the country, including military commanders, scientists, and civilians. The US also assisted Israel and joined the regime's aggression by bombing Iran's nuclear facilities. In response, the Iranian Armed Forces targeted strategic sites across the occupied territories as well as the Al-Udeid air base in Qatar, the largest American military base in West Asia.

On June 24, Iran, through its successful retaliatory operations against both the Israeli regime and the US, managed to impose a halt to the terrorist assault.

Pezeshkian says capitulation to coercion 'not in our nature'

National Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday referred to recent international sanctions reimposed on the country by the UN Security Council, saying, "Surrendering is not in our nature."

"The world is pressuring us to surrender, but surrendering is not in our nature. We will stand for Iran until the last breath and will not bow our heads," he said during a meeting with the national freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling teams which won the 2025 World Championships.

The president referred to economic sanctions and restrictions imposed on the country, urging reliance on domestic potential. "When we draw on our capabilities and capacities, we will certainly achieve our goals," he added.

Pezeshkian praised the athletes for setting an example for the country's youth. "You can be role models for the young generation through your conduct and character," he said, stressing that Iran remains determined despite mounting challenges.

In separate remarks on the reimposition of sanctions on Monday, the Iranian president said the enemies are seeking to sanction Iran because the country refuses to bow and will not accept humiliation.

"They want to force us to submit to base and vile people, but even imagining that has no place in my mind," Pezeshkian



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian shakes hands with wrestlers at a ceremony held in Tehran on September 30, 2025 to honor the national freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling teams for their recent world championship victories.
● president.ir

said. "Bringing Iran and our people to their knees is a pipe dream."

Last month, France, Britain, and Germany triggered the snapback of all UN sanctions against Iran that the 2015 nuclear agreement had lifted under the pretext of non-compliance on Tehran's part, despite Washington's unilateral withdrawal and violation of the terms of the pact.

The UN Security Council restored the bans on Sunday. It came nearly two days after the United States and its allies vetoed a draft resolution submitted by China and Russia on delaying the so-called "snapback" mechanism.

Iran has vowed to take reciprocal action against the hostile move.

120 US-deported Iranians to arrive home in coming days: *Ministry*



Hossein Noushabadi
● TASNIM

International Desk

The Iranian Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that 120 nationals being deported from the United States under President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown will arrive home this week. Foreign Ministry's consular affairs offi-

cial Hossein Noushabadi said necessary arrangements for their return have been made and consular services have been provided to them.

"The US immigration service has decided to deport around 400 Iranians currently in the United States, most of them after entering illegally."

"Based on our information, their consent to return to the country has been obtained."

He said that the Iranian migrants have legally left the country but how they went to the United States is another matter, Noushabadi said, adding that some of them have illegally entered the US through the Mexican border.

Noushabadi noted that some of the Iranians who have been deported had legal

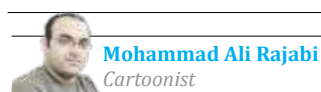
residency in the US.

The New York Times reported that some 100 Iranians who had sought refuge in the United States were being deported to their homeland under an agreement between Washington and Tehran.

It said the rare deal between the longtime foes was the fruit of several months of negotiations.

The newspaper said an aircraft chartered by the US authorities had left the southern state of Louisiana on Monday evening and was expected to land in Tehran later Tuesday after a stopover in the Persian Gulf state of Qatar.

Earlier this year, the United States already deported a number of Iranians, many of them Christians, to the Central American countries of Costa Rica and Panama.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



At Minex 2025 expo

Iran breaking mold to woo investors: Officials

Economy Desk

Iran is stepping up efforts to attract international investment into its mining sector, officials said on Tuesday at the opening of the 14th International Exhibition on Investment Opportunities in Iran's Mining and Mining Industries (Minex 2025) in Tehran. "Our outlook in the mining sector has moved beyond traditional frameworks, and we are now forming constructive economic relations with neighboring countries," said Mohammad Reza Bahraman, head of Iran's Mining House at the international expo. "Today, interaction with countries such as Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, South Africa, Poland, South Korea, Nigeria and Turkey is underway, with representatives of these countries actively present at the exhibition," he said. The Mining House head emphasized on Iran's "valuable place in the global mining geography," and called it "a good opportunity for boosting the sector." He added that there is "serious willingness to expand trade cooperation and joint investments

across various fields," which he described as a chance to open new paths for economic and cultural ties between Iran and other nations. The country, with an estimated \$27.3 trillion in mineral capital, ranks as the world's fifth-largest holder of mineral reserves and the 15th-largest mineral-rich country overall. It has 81 types of minerals, according to official data. Iranian policymakers frequently call mining the backbone of industrial development and argue it should replace oil as the primary source of revenue. With the aim of showcasing the latest domestic and foreign mining technologies, machinery and services, and introducing investment opportunities, the four-day exhibition is being held across seven sections: mining, machinery and equipment, stock exchange and economy, exploration, health and environment, mineral industries, a special section on precious and semi-precious stones, and universities. Meanwhile, the head of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture

Head of Iran's Mining House Mohammad Reza Bahraman addresses the inauguration ceremony of the Minex 2025 in Tehran on September 30, 2025. ● IRNA

described the Tehran exhibition as "an opportunity to remind the country's broader goals for the mining sector, and a platform for dialogue among private players, policymakers and government officials." The large presence of foreign ambassadors, Samad Hassanzadeh said, underlined the international importance of the event and the cooperation potential it offered. Addressing the opening ceremony, Hassanzadeh noted that Iran, with about 1% of the world's population, holds 7% of global mineral reserves. He said that more than 75% of the country's mineral production is carried out by the private sector, according to data from the chamber's research center. "This shows the private sector's strong capacity, but to achieve real growth and impact, it requires support and stability in



diverse mining and mineral industries investments," he added. According to him, "Iran's Seventh Development Plan has set a target of 13% growth for the mining sector, which is achievable with incentive policies and

programs to attract investors." On the sidelines of the exhibition, Mohammad Aghajanjou, head of state-owned mining and metals holding IMIDRO, said about \$2.5 billion has been allocated this year to complete

and launch mining and infrastructure projects. He added that significant steps in building power plants and developing gas fields were also underway to push the industry toward greater self-sufficiency and efficiency.

Minister hails growing ties with EAEU as free trade deal takes effect



Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad Atabak (2nd Right) poses for a photo with counterparts at the Eurasian Economic Union Council of Prime Ministers in Minsk, Belarus, September 30, 2025. ● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iran's trade with member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is accelerating, and the Islamic Republic is preparing to take a more active role in the bloc, Industry Minister Mohammad Atabak said on Tuesday. "The operational process of the free trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union began in May this year," Atabak told the intergovernmental council of EAEU prime ministers in the Belarusian capital of Minsk. "The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to take a stronger role in the union's mechanisms and actively propose new ideas," IRNA reported.

The EAEU signed a three-year roadmap with Iran on Friday to enhance economic cooperation across various sectors. The event followed the implementation of Iran's free trade agreement with the EAEU, which took effect on May 15, 2025, eliminating tariffs on approximately 87 percent of goods traded between Iran and the bloc. Atabak noted that while trade with EAEU members is expanding rapidly, it still "has far to go to reach an optimal level." He stressed that broadening cooperation with neighboring and regional countries remains a cornerstone of Iran's economic diplomacy. "Active participation in EAEU meetings underscores the importance of

member states in Iran's economic diplomacy and foreign policy, reflecting our commitment to developing bilateral cooperation," he said. The minister added that such collaboration "will enhance the welfare of peoples in the region, strengthen multilateralism, and promote lasting peace." He described the full implementation of the free trade agreement and the creation of a free trade zone with the EAEU as "a milestone in the history of trade and economic relations of the member countries." To support Iranian companies entering the EAEU market, the Tehran Chamber of Commerce said it will host the Fourth Iran-Eurasia Strategic Forum on October 22 in Tehran under the theme "Trade, Diplomacy and the Emerging Regional Order." The forum will focus on leveraging new technologies and smart strategies to help Iranian firms access the regional market.

Strengthening regional trade ties
Meanwhile during his visit to Be-

larus, the Iranian minister held intensive consultations with prime ministers and senior officials of the Eurasian Economic Union, with a focus on strengthening regional trade ties. Atabak, who chairs the Iran-Belarus Joint Economic Committee on behalf of Tehran, represented First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref at the EAEU Council of Prime Ministers. He also held separate discussions with Belarusian ministers and senior economic and industrial officials. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Minsk International Innovations in Industry Exhibition, Atabak told the assembled EAEU prime ministers, ministers, and officials that the region's future depends on the determination of its leaders and decisions made in the interest of their people. He stressed the need to harness new technologies and to foster greater convergence among regional states through scientific capacity. "The Islamic Republic of Iran, relying on its scientific and technological strengths and with a forward-looking approach, is determined to open a new path for fair, sustainable, and peaceful development alongside its neighbors and partners," he said. Atabak added that the pursuit of this path would lead to a future where science, industry, and technology serve the welfare.

Foreign trade tops \$54b in H1 calendar year as import values dip: IRICA



Economy Desk

Iran's foreign trade reached \$54.31 billion in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year, which began on March 21, with the value of imports falling compared with the same period last year, the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said on Tuesday. Foroud Asgari said that during the stated period, Iran exported \$25.94 billion worth of non-oil goods and imported \$28.37 billion. The total weight of exported goods was 74.997 million tons,

compared with 18.757 million tons of imports, as reported by IRNA. According to the deputy finance minister, non-oil exports rose six percent in weight compared with the same period last year, while their value remained largely unchanged. Imports increased slightly in weight by two percent but declined in value by roughly 15 percent. Asgari also highlighted that Iran maintained trade relations with more than 100 countries during the first half of the year, reflecting the country's broad international commercial network.

Will China and ...

"This rupture would have consequences far beyond Iran," Ghanbari warns. "If Council decisions lose credibility at the hands of certain major powers, the very legitimacy of the UN as the cornerstone of the post-war international order will be called into question. The Charter was written to resolve disputes between states, not to man-

age fractures among the great powers." That makes the current crisis a make-or-break test for the Council — one that could either restore its authority or fatally undermine it, heralding a new era in international relations. **Hard road back to 'maximum pressure'**
In this climate, observers ar-

gue that the recent votes laid bare more than just divisions. They underscored the emergence of a relatively cohesive bloc: Russia, China, Algeria and Pakistan lined up on one side, showing that their alignment could play a decisive role in more sensitive arenas, such as sanctions committees. What makes this crucial is the decision-making rule: these bodies operate not by majority

vote but by consensus, meaning even a single dissenting voice can block the path forward. Consequently, seemingly mundane and procedural matters — such as appointing a committee chair — could be brought to a standstill where the gentle demonstration of power, through a silent veto or calculated silence, proves far more effective than formal instruments.

The same logic applies to the expert panel established under Resolution 1929, designed to monitor sanctions implementation. Reviving this mechanism would require a collective decision of the Council — and just one "no" from Russia or China could pull the plug, leaving a body that could have acted as the Security Council's eyes and ears on the Iran file effectively

confined to paper. In the end, while Russia's rotating presidency of the Council may not by itself bring sweeping changes, the strategic alignment of Moscow and Beijing at the committee level could tie Western ambitions in knots. It could make the road to restoring "maximum pressure" on Iran far bumpier — and far less certain — than many in the West had hoped.

Netanyahu's show for empty seats



By **Mohammad Mohsen Fayezi**
Expert on
Palestinian affairs

OPINION

In recent years, Netanyahu has put on shows, with props, graphics, and calculated stunts during his speeches at the United Nations General Assembly. These moves have clearly played up his media team's focus on digital diplomacy, and despite becoming a laughing stock, they have etched lasting images of his speeches into the public mind.

So, some of the images of Netanyahu that have stuck with you are from those sessions. For instance, one can recall the cartoonish sketch of a bomb with a red line at the top, or the moment he held up a Persian-language book by the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution on Palestine.

This year's UN speech by Netanyahu was no different; it was once again full of theatrics. In fact, given Israel's unprecedented political situation in global public opinion — especially in Europe — and with the surge of momentum after the recognition of Palestine as a state, one of the knock-on effects of October 7, Netanyahu had prepared even more elaborate stunts.

One such spectacle, which even caught the eye of Hebrew media, took place before the speech began. Netanyahu's office issued several statements, declaring that as part of Israel's public diplomacy, Netanyahu has instructed that loudspeakers be installed in Gaza to broadcast "the prime minister's historic UN speech". Hebrew outlets also quoted the army saying that thousands in the Gaza Strip would receive Netanyahu's address directly to their cellphones. During his talk, Netanyahu underlined that his words were broadcast in Gaza, saying, "Free the hostages! All of them. The whole 48. Free the hostages now! If you do, you will live. If you don't, Israel will hunt you down."

These recycled lines drew ridicule from Avi Ashkenazi, a military affairs analyst at Maariv. After the speech, he wrote, "The same Israel that today hacked Gazans' phones to force-feed them Netanyahu's message is the one that only two years ago failed to gather any intelligence from Gaza and couldn't even make sense of how Hamas fighters with slippers and a Kalashnikov managed to activate SIM cards." Meanwhile, Hebrew outlets, by publishing photos, made it clear that contrary to



the Israeli Prime Minister's Office claim, the loudspeakers were mounted on military cranes and trucks along the borders rather than set up for Gaza's population centers.

But the most impactful moment of Netanyahu's UN speech came when various delegations walked out, leaving row after row of empty seats. For several seconds, this left Netanyahu at a loss for words. Trying to make up for this embarrassment, the unusually large Israeli delegation in the hall and balcony made a lot of noise, applauding loudly in an attempt to paper over the cracks.

Ben Caspit, the prominent right-

wing Israeli journalist and commentator, posted a wide-shot photo of the empty seats and sarcastically quipped, "A historic speech in front of historic seats!" Meanwhile, the hardline Israeli daily Yedioth Ahronoth ran the headline: "International media gave little weight to Netanyahu's remarks, focusing instead on the empty seats at the General Assembly."

As in past years, Netanyahu did not let the props go. At one point, he held up images highlighting Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Iran in red, checking each off as he mentioned Israeli assassinations and military strikes in those

countries. But he seemed to have overlooked adding Qatar to his own sketch.

He then displayed two additional graphics with multiple-choice captions: "Who has murdered Americans and Europeans in cold blood?" and "Who shouts 'Death to America'?" He checked the box for "All of the above," naming Iran, Hamas, Ansarullah (the Houthis), and al-Qaeda.

In another part of his speech, Netanyahu went after Europe's stance on the two-state solution. He said, "Nearly 90% of Palestinians supported the attack on October 7th... Last year, there was a vote in the Knesset, our

parliament, whether or not to oppose the imposition of a Palestinian state. You want to guess what the results were? Out of the 120 members of our parliament, 99 voted against. And only 9 supported. That's over 90%. It's not a fringe group... Western leaders may have buckled under pressure. I guarantee you one thing, Israel won't."

The events of October 7 revived the Palestinian cause, long swept under the rug, on the global stage, and they made noticeable the grim realities of life in Gaza.

The article first appeared in the Persian-language newspaper Iran.



Many seats are empty at the UN General Assembly Hall in New York, the US, on September 26, 2025, because delegations walked out before Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) spoke on the fourth day of the 80th session of the General Debate.

● PETER FOLEY/UPI



The most impactful moment of Netanyahu's UN speech came when various delegations walked out, leaving row after row of empty chairs. For several seconds, this left Netanyahu at a loss for words. Trying to make up for this embarrassment, the unusually large Israeli delegation in the hall and balcony made a lot of noise, applauding loudly in an attempt to paper over the cracks.



IOF speakers are loaded onto trucks to broadcast Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's United Nations General Assembly speech, in the Gaza Strip on September 26, 2025.

● X

Netanyahu's humiliation, moral isolation of Israel

OPINION

Israel, despite its military might and international backing, now finds itself caught up in a void of moral isolation. This moment stands as a historic chance for Arab states and Palestinians to join forces and alter the course of history.

The Zionist regime, which for years covered up its crimes thanks to its military strength and the endless support of the United States, always tries to hog the spotlight on the world stage. But today, because of its policies toward Palestinians and sweeping human rights violations, it has come under un-

precedented criticism. Israel's regime has not only lost ground in terms of moral credibility in international circles, but has also ended up in isolation. This situation gives Arab and Muslim countries a golden opportunity to pull together and dramatically change the course of history. Recent remarks by Netanyahu and other Israeli officials, framing war crimes as acts of self-defense, have failed to brush up Israel's image in the eyes of the world. In fact, its repeated attempts to distort reality and mislead global public opinion have only fueled Israel's growing isolation.

One telling sign of that isolation was the boycott of Netanyahu's speech at the UN. This boycott laid bare the depth of Israel's moral defeat worldwide. If used wisely, this moment could serve as a turning point in reshaping the way the global community views Israel and its policies.

Netanyahu's racist policies, rejection of Palestinian state

A central feature of Netanyahu's policies is his outright refusal to accept even a stripped-down, non-sovereign Palestinian state. The Israeli premier has made it clear that no Palestinian entity

— even in the form of a state deprived of sovereignty — would be accepted. This outlook not only lays bare Israel's racist and colonial policies but also signals a grave threat to the future of the Palestinian people and their national identity.

In reality, Netanyahu is deeply wary of granting any legitimacy to an independent Palestinian state. He knows full well that even the existence of a limited Palestinian state on historic Palestinian soil could spell the end of the Zionist project. This makes clear that Israel is not only going after Palestinian land but is also hell-bent on erasing

Palestinian identity and rights altogether.

Arab states: from reaction to action

As Israel blatantly carries on with its human rights abuses and war crimes, Arab and Muslim countries — alongside the wider international community — must seize global opportunities to pile pressure on Tel Aviv. Although some European leaders, like French President Emmanuel Macron, have pointed out Palestinians' rights and freedom in their speeches, such words have so far failed to translate into serious or practical

measures. Sadly, many countries still choose silence in the face of Israeli crimes and remain stuck in passive positions.

Yet such silence and inaction are in no way to the advantage of Palestinians. Muslim countries must step in with unity and coordination to confront Israel. Halting normalization with Israel remains one of the most effective tools in this regard. Should Arab states call off these normalization deals, they could bring significant economic and diplomatic pressure to bear on Israel. Normalization not only plays into the hands of the Zionist project indirectly but also



Delegates leave the UN General Assembly Hall in New York, the US, on September 26, 2025, as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu steps up to the podium to speak at the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly.
● STEFAN JEREMIAH/AP

weakens global support for the Palestinian cause. To challenge Israel, Palestinian

institutions must shift their approach — from desperate pleas to a clearer, legal, and humani-

tarian language. Instead of settling for conditions that push aside Palestinian rights, they

should decisively invoke the principles of international law, the right to self-determination,

and full territorial integrity. In today's climate, Palestinians cannot afford to pursue a non-sovereign, dignity-stripped state. Rather, their demands must be legally and firmly set forth, anchored in universal human rights — including the right to a fully independent and sovereign state.

Role of The Hague and International Court of Justice

The Hague Group and the International Court of Justice are currently pursuing cases related to Israel's crimes, which could serve as powerful tools for holding the regime to account. While Palestinian institutions have been waiting on some sort of robust global reaction, they must also realize that foot-dragging could end up costing Palestinians even more. If Arab countries and Palestinians can effectively make use of these legal mechanisms, they may help break the vicious cycle of injustice and push the world toward a fundamental shift in its policies on Israel.

The article first appeared in Persian on Student News Network (SNN).



Silence and inaction are in no way to the advantage of Palestinians. Muslim countries must step in with unity and coordination to confront Israel. Halting normalization with Israel remains one of the most effective tools in this regard. Should Arab states call off these normalization deals, they could bring significant economic and diplomatic pressure to bear on Israel. Normalization not only plays into the hands of the Zionist project indirectly but also weakens global support for the Palestinian cause.

Israel main source of instability in Middle East

By Paul R. Pillar
Scholar
O P I N I O N

Is conflict in the Middle East at an inflection point? It might seem so, given how international outrage over Israel's lethal conduct in the Gaza Strip has become increasingly intense and widespread in recent weeks. Several major Western countries that previously had declined to join most other members of the United Nations in formally recognizing a Palestinian state used the opening of the current session of the General Assembly as the occasion to take that step. Popular demonstrations in the West in support of the Palestinians have been as large and conspicuous as ever, and recent polls show a sharp decline in the American public's support for Israel. Such responses are the least that can be expected in the face of new lows in barbarous Israeli actions against the residents of the Gaza Strip. An Israeli military assault on Gaza City has added to the rubble to which most of the city had already been reduced. The assault has given remaining inhabitants the choice of suffering and perhaps dying in place or fleeing once again to someplace else in the Strip with still no assurance of safety. The armed attacks and imposed starvation have seen the death toll of Gazans increase to what is now probably several times the officially reported figure of about 65,000. The international responses, including diplomatic recognition of Palestine by Western governments, fall short of eliciting a constructive Israeli response. The recognition of a Palestinian state has been the target of criticism from some Palestinians who rightly point out that it does nothing to alleviate the immediate misery on the ground. Diplomatic moves and street demonstrations do not speak the only language that Israel appears to understand, which is one of force and compulsion. The Israeli response to the latest diplomatic moves has been one of defiance and threats to inflict still

more depredations on the Palestinians. The Israeli national security minister, right-wing extremist Itamar Ben-Gvir, is pushing to make annexation of the West Bank the main Israeli response to Western recognition of Palestine. Most Israelis, and not just their cabinet or the extremists within it, see international pressure as just more evidence of bias against Israel and of the need for Israel to use force to protect itself, regardless of worldwide outrage. Survey research shows that most Israelis believe there are "no innocents" in Gaza and favor expulsion of residents from the Gaza Strip. An appeal to morality will not get a positive response from a cabinet that has this population as its political base. Only the imposition of significant costs and consequences on Israel would lead it to change its policies. Although we may not be at an inflection point regarding the Palestinian-Israeli tragedy, the thinking of Arab regimes in the region has reached an inflection point of sorts in recent weeks. The Israeli attack in early September on the territory of Qatar, in an unsuccessful attempt to kill Hamas leaders



Displaced Palestinians walk through a muddy road amid the destruction in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip on February 6, 2025.
● BASHAR TALEB/AFP

engaged in Gaza-related negotiations, shocked that thinking. The attack in Qatar comes amid a fusillade of Israeli armed attacks against regional states, including Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iran, in addition to the carnage in Palestine. These and other regional states (such as Iraq and Egypt) have been the targets of Israeli attacks

— both overt military and clandestine — for many years, but it is the near-simultaneity of some of the attacks over the past month that has added to the shock. The attack in Qatar demonstrated to the Arab governments not only that Israel is the most destabilizing entity in the region but also that any one of their own nations could be similarly attacked. Qatar's security relations with Israel's prime backer, the United States — which has a large military presence at the Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar — did not protect it from the Israeli aggression. Although Arab governments may be showing signs of fatigue in their decades-long support of the Palestinian cause, they are highly concerned about the possibility of any assault on their own territories. The concerns of Egypt — party to the first Arab peace treaty with Israel — are great enough for Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to label Israel an "enemy" in his remarks at an emergency Arab summit following the attack in Qatar. Egypt, like Qatar, has mediated cease-fire talks on Gaza, and could become another target of Israeli determination to kill Hamas officials wherever they may be, even ones involved in peace negotiations. Egypt also fears consequences for its own security of continued Israeli ethnic cleansing

of the Palestinian residents of the Gaza Strip, which adjoins Egypt. Jordan has similar fears regarding how increasingly aggressive Israeli moves against Palestinians in the West Bank could push them eastward and upset Jordan's already fragile domestic situation. One result of these events is to remove, at least for now, the possibility of more diplomatic normalization agreements between Arab states and Israel, to add to the ones that Bahrain, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates signed during President Trump's first term. There might even be some retreat from cooperation by governments that did sign such agreements. The UAE responded quickly to talk in Israel about annexing the West Bank by warning that annexation would cross a "red line". A benefit of this development is to help debunk the notion, which one sometimes hears in the United States, that the upgrading of relations with Israel — the so-called "Abraham Accords" — represents progress and even a step toward Israeli-Palestinian peace. To the contrary, such upgrading is an alternative to Israel making peace with the Palestinians. It is a way for Israel to enjoy, and be seen by the world to enjoy, full relations with regional neighbors while continuing the subjugation of Palestinians and occupation of their

territory. Given the Israeli inclination also to view such agreements as the core of an anti-Iranian alliance, these supposed "peace agreements" also have sharpened lines of conflict in the Persian Gulf. An implication for the United States is that it should discard the fixation, which has characterized both the Trump and Biden administrations, on seeking more normalization agreements between the Israelis and the Arabs. Given the other circumstances in the region, including what is transpiring in Gaza, such agreements do nothing to advance peace and security in the Middle East or other US interests. Another implication flows from the decreased value that Arab governments are almost certainly placing on security cooperation with the United States. The Israeli attack in Qatar, a small state that had implicitly placed much of its security in the hands of the United States, has amplified the Arab doubts. The United States may need to prepare for lesser military access to Arab territories. It is good for US interests that a new formal security agreement with an Arab state, such as what the Biden administration pursued with Saudi Arabia, has become less likely than before. This development helps to minimize the risk of the United States getting ensnared in conflicts not of its own making. But as the Qatar episode illustrates, even just an implicit guarantee entails costs and risks. With Israel primed to repeat such attacks anywhere in the region, the United States, owing to its close association with Israel, may again be put in a difficult position. The United States needs to get beyond the familiar mantra about Iran supposedly being the biggest source of instability in the Middle East. It needs to consider what other entity actually has started more wars and attacked more nations — and is currently killing more civilians — than any state in the region, and to fundamentally reappraise its relationship with that entity.

The full article first appeared on Responsible Statecraft.



● AL JAZEERA

Iran to learn from underestimating World Championships: *Hazratpour*

Sports Desk

Iranian libero Mohammadreza Hazratpour said the national team must learn from underestimating the recently-concluded Men's Volleyball World Championship after missing out on a historic last-four spot at the sport's flagship international event in the Philippines. Iran's rollercoaster campaign in Pasay City came to an end following a 3-1 loss (22-25, 27-25, 25-20, 25-21) to Czechia in the quarterfinals last Thursday.

The Asian powerhouse was stunned by Egypt (3-1) in their Pool A opener, but managed to beat Tunisia in four sets before pulling off a dramatic fightback to edge the host in an epic five-setter to progress to the round of 16. Iran again had to come from behind twice to defeat Serbia in a thrilling five sets for a place in the quarterfinals.

"We did not have a decent start to the World Championship, and even struggled in the group stage. It was all finished for us against the Philippines, but a net fault by a Filipino player gave us a lifeline from above. We fought our way back into the tournament and ended up facing Serbia. In that match as well, the game turned around at a moment when we were on the verge of losing," Hazratpour told Varzesh3.

"Overall, I feel we underestimated this tournament. We thought the World Championship would be like the Volleyball Nations League and that we would find it easy against other teams. But all these events became a significant learning experience for our young team. Team Iran was the sec-



● MOJTABA ZAKIZADEH/volleyball.ir

ond-youngest squad in the World Championship, so some struggles were to be expected given the team's youth.

"I'm sure that the Czechia defeat was a major lesson for us, and it will benefit the team greatly in the coming years. Please see this defeat as a formative experience for our young team, one that will serve us well in the future. Next year, we have to compete in the Asian Championship in Japan, where the winner qualifies for the Olympics. The experience from this World Championship

will be a great asset for us in that tournament."

The tournament in the Philippines was Iran's second major competition in two months under new Italian head coach Roberto Piazza, following the annual Volleyball Nations League, where the team produced some impressive performances despite failing to advance to the VNL Finals.

Drawing a comparison between the two events, Hazratpour said: "The VNL and the World Championship are completely different competitions. The teams that

were at the World Championship performed at a much higher level than in the Nations League. The reason is simple: the World Championship carries more prestige; it's the second most important tournament in volleyball after the Olympics."

"I'm not saying that the teams in the Nations League didn't give their all, but at the World Championship, there were truly no weak teams. The Philippines, Tunisia, and Egypt were all fully prepared, and that's precisely why powerhouse nations like Brazil, Japan,

France, and Cuba were eliminated in the group stage."

Hazratpour also believes that playing with a whole new system proved costly for the Iranian team. "It was a system implemented by Mr. Piazza – one we were unfamiliar with and found difficult to execute. However, by the latter stages of the tournament, we were starting to get used to it," Hazratpour said, while rejecting the idea of a dip in form in the Iranian team compared to its VNL campaign.

"It had nothing to do with our

form. I just think the other teams came into the tournament with a better mindset and were able to perform better."

Hazratpour was one of Iran's standout performers at the world event, with the pinnacle of him campaign against Serbia, where he delivered a superb defensive display to play his part in the victory.

"During his five months with the team, Mr. Piazza held numerous sessions with us about coverage, reception, and defensive positioning. It has become a global trend in volleyball. Just look at the final match between Poland and Italy; the defensive coverage ultimately decided the outcome.

"Reception is a cornerstone of Mr. Piazza's philosophy, something he emphasized to us every single day. He repeatedly told us that one successful dig could completely turn the tide of a match. I personally have understood and internalized these lessons from Piazza, and I am trying to apply them in the domestic league so I can execute them more effectively with the national team.

"Piazza has introduced a new system to our volleyball, and we all must work together to ensure our domestic league also moves toward this system. In a way, Piazza is similar to [former Iran coach] Julio Velasco. He even works with players on the psychological aspect of the game. We must appreciate the value of this coach.

"I will say it again: the World Championship was a major lesson for us. You can be sure we will use this experience to our advantage in future competitions."

World Para Athletics Championships: Iran's Salehi bags bronze in women's shot put



● IRNA

Sports Desk

Elham Salehi claimed a second bronze medal for Iran at the World Para Athletics Championships, finishing third in the women's shot put F54 event on the fourth day of action in New Delhi, India. Salehi's best effort came with her first attempt, as she registered a 7.17m throw to secure her third bronze at major tournaments in 12 months – following last year's javelin throw medals at the World Championships and the Paris Paralympics.

Reigning Paralympic champion Gloria Zarza of Mexico defended her world title, thanks to a 7.97m throw with her final attempt, with Brazilian Elizabeth Rodrigues Gomes – a silver medalist in Paris – settling for the runner-up spot on 7.78m.

Amanollah Papi got Iran off the mark in

New Delhi on Sunday, winning a bronze in the men's javelin throw event.

Representing the country in the F57 class, Papi saved his best for the last attempt, registering a season-high 51.55m effort to win a consolation bronze.

Turkey's Muhammet Khalvandi and Yorkinbek Odilov of Uzbekistan grabbed the gold and silver medals, finishing on with 53.3m and 52.06m, respectively.

There was disappointment for Iranian Alireza Mokhtari – a Paralympic bronze medalist last year – in the men's shot put F53 contest on Monday, after he was stripped of the silver medal due to a successful protest against his efforts. More than 1,000 athletes from 104 countries will compete in the 12th edition of the World Championships at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium until Sunday.

AFC Champions League Elite: Skocic has mixed feelings as Tractor, Al Wahda share points

Sports Desk

Tractor head coach Dragan Skocic praised his team's performances but rued missed opportunities as the Persian Gulf Pro League champion and the UAE's Al Wahda played to a goalless stalemate at the AFC Champions League Elite in Tabriz on Monday.

Both sides came close to breaking the deadlock on several occasions, with the best chance coming Tomislav Strkalj's way in the 88th minute, but Tractor striker rattled the crossbar from the edge of the six-yard box.

This was Tractor's second draw in as many games at the Asian elite clubs' competition, following a first-day 1-1 result against Emirati champion Shabab Al Ahli in Dubai.

"The result was not satisfying, but the players' performance was excellent," Skocic said after the game, adding: "They played exactly the way I wanted, both defensively and offensively."

"We wasted many chances, but the team played well. Al Wahda's squad is more expensive than ours, and of course we felt the absence of (Mahdi) Torabi and Domagoj (Drozdek)," added the Croatian. "We had analyzed all aspects of their game, including their long balls. Sometimes, we built up with three players at the back, and at times we changed our shape. Our performance was good, but we were also unlucky."

Skocic's opposite number Jose Morais – the former head coach of Iranian club Sepahan – felt his team competed well throughout the 90 minutes and the Portuguese was proud with how



Tractor captain Shoja Khalilzadeh (3) goes up for a header during a goalless draw against Al Wahda in the AFC Champions League Elite at the Yadegar-e Imam Stadium, Tabriz, Iran, on September 29, 2025.
● MOJTABA SALEH/AFC

his side were able to handle the atmosphere at the jam-packed Yadegar-e Imam Stadium.

"From the very first minute, there was a real fight between the two teams," said Morais. "The pace of the game was very high, and the outcome was uncertain until the very last moment. In the end, I think justice was done, and the draw was fair." "Fortunately, our defense performed well for most of the match, and we managed to stop Tractor's attacks. They are a strong team who transition quickly from defense to attack. I must congratulate my players because they played very well."

Tractor will be chasing a first victory

of the campaign when playing away to Sharjah FC on October 20, while Al Wahda will host Al Duhail SC of Qatar on the same day.

Elsewhere on Monday, Marcos Leonardo struck 11 minutes from time as Al Hilal sealed a dramatic 3-2 win over a stubborn PFC Nasaf in Qarshi, Uzbekistan, to maintain their perfect start to the league phase of the competition. Al Duhail and defending champion Al Ahli Saudi both had the lead but eventually had to settle for a 2-2 draw in Al Rayyan, while Spanish striker Jose-lu and Ferjani Sassi were on target in the second half as Al Gharafa defeated Iraq's Al Shorta 2-0 at home.

Boldaji Gaz revitalizes sweet-making heritage



● IRNA

Iranica Desk

When it comes to Gaz, the name Boldaji Gaz instantly comes to mind, evoking a sense of sweetness that delights people's palates. For over half a century, Gaz producers in Boldaji, a city in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, have significantly transformed the Gaz market in Iran and beyond by establishing themselves in this industry and registering the "Boldaji Gaz" brand. Their efforts have not only revitalized the market but also contributed to alleviating some of the country's employment challenges while boosting the regional economy.

Gaz is regarded as one of Iran's most important traditional sweet confections, with roots tracing back to the Qajar era. It was during the reign of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar that Gaz was introduced as an export product to international markets, marking its entry onto the world stage. Throughout various historical periods, Gaz has carried many meanings, one of the most well-known being its association with a shrub of the same name, of which approximately 30 species have been identified. Among these,

Gaz-Angabin is the most famous, flourishing in desert areas around Isfahan, Khansar, and several parts of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, including Boldaji in Borujen. The sap extracted from this shrub is the key ingredient used to produce authentic Gaz, chtn.ir wrote.

Traditionally, Gaz has been made using natural raw materials, prepared with time-honored tools and methods. Nowadays, however, exporting this unique sweet requires meeting strict international production standards. The first Gaz sweet was crafted in Isfahan by blending sugar, Gaz-Angabin sap, egg whites, and nuts such as pistachios and almonds. Despite Isfahan's historical significance, Boldaji has become especially renowned for its Gaz production, earning a distinguished reputation both domestically and internationally. Boldaji, situated 70 kilometers from Shahr-e Kord — the capital of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province — is home to more than 90 Gaz production workshops, ranging from small to large scale, employing nearly one thousand workers. Of these workshops, 15 op-



erate within the industrial zone, while the majority are scattered throughout the city. The very first Gaz workshop in Boldaji was founded in 1973 by Ahmad Tahmasebi and his brothers, laying the groundwork for a thriving local industry. In recent years, the acquisition and solidification of the Boldaji Gaz brand, combined with the growth of production facilities and the formation of a cohesive business cluster, have elevated Boldaji Gaz to a nationally — and increasingly internationally —

recognized brand. Today, many lovers of this delectable sweet regard Boldaji as the capital of Gaz in Iran, synonymous with the finest quality and flavor. Boldaji Gaz is exported to several countries, including Armenia, the Persian Gulf and Malaysia. Additionally, permanent stores dedicated to Boldaji Gaz products operate in Oman and Russia, spreading its fame further abroad. Travelers and tourists visiting Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province often bring Gaz home as a treasured souvenir, capturing

one of the world's sweetest and most delightful confections. This gesture sweetens their memorable experiences in what is known as the "roof of Iran." Historically, production levels reached at least 15,000 tons annually, with about a quarter of this volume sold during Nowruz celebrations. However, current economic challenges — including raw material price fluctuations — have increased production costs, leading to market slowdowns and a reduction in sales by up to 50 percent.

One tourist visiting Boldaji remarked, "Boldaji Gaz tastes different from other kinds of Gaz and offers a more pleasant flavor." Pegah Rahimi, a visitor, shared, "I had heard much about Boldaji before, so I traveled here and visited one of the Gaz workshops. Gaz is one of my favorite sweets, but I had never experienced the flavor of Boldaji Gaz in any other Gaz before." She explained, "Boldaji Gaz melts instantly in the mouth, and no matter how much you eat, its sweetness never burns the throat or causes discomfort."

"Many of my friends, upon learning of my trip to Boldaji, insisted I bring Gaz back for them," Rahimi added. "I will take Boldaji Gaz as a gift to my friends and family in Semnan." She continued by acknowledging that while Gaz from other Iranian provinces also maintains good quality and taste, the distinct sweetness, quality, and flavor of Boldaji Gaz likely stem from unique production techniques or specific raw materials prepared according to a precise formula.

A local resident of Boldaji stated, "Boldaji Gaz is the finest gift the people of this city can offer to the

people of Iran and the world."

Mohammad Torkiyan emphasized, "Boldaji Gaz truly deserves to be introduced as the ultimate souvenir for friends and family. Sweetening people's palates has always been one of the most cherished customs and traditions of our ancestors, celebrated for generations at joyful gatherings. The people of Boldaji are proud to preserve this heritage through the production and distribution of Gaz."

He added, "Presenting Gaz with the intention of sweetening people's lives is one of the greatest blessings bestowed upon the people of Boldaji. Today, few in the country don't know Boldaji Gaz, but to maintain this reputation, officials must address the supply of raw materials at affordable prices to prevent producers from shutting down their workshops."

Torkiyan concluded, "Boldaji may confidently be called the only city in Iran — and perhaps the world — where every street, alley, and passage is infused with sweetness and delight from the moment you arrive until the moment you leave."

Explore story of historic Sardar Jalil House in Sari

Farahabad, with its splendid natural beauty and the scenic coast of the Caspian Sea, along with its rich array of historical monuments, makes Sari one of the prominent centers for tourism in the region. Besides notable Safavid-era structures such as the bridge, public bath, castle, and mosque, Sari, Mazandaran Province, is home to several other historical landmarks including various mosques, bazaars, and traditional water reservoirs known as Ab Anbars. The city also boasts historic houses like Kalbadi and the residence of Sardar Jalil, which reflect its architectural heritage. Starting from Clock Square and heading onto Jomhuri Avenue, there is an alley known as Sardar Alley

named after one of the major landowners and local commanders who once governed a significant area here. Under the command of Sardar Jalil, Isfahani architects constructed a three-story house with a rectangular layout and an elegant brick facade. The design balances traditional and Qajar architectural elements, exhibiting details that highlight the transition in styles during that era, visitiran.ir wrote. The first floor of this building contains three rooms connected by wooden doors. The second floor mimics this arrangement but features nine doors that allow light to enter, enhancing the interior brightness. Similarly, the third floor consists of three rooms and is encircled by

a terrace, which historically offered relief and was used during the hot summer nights. Traditional materials such as cobblestone, wood, sarooj (a type of traditional mortar), lime, and pottery were carefully used throughout the construction. Lime was strategically applied to prevent moss accumulation in the building's foundation. The wood used in the roof and the supporting columns carries the ceiling's weight, and notably, no iron was employed anywhere in the construction process. The roof is beautifully covered in pottery tiles, complementing the structure's historical character. Covering an area of about 2,500 square meters, the house is arranged into two main sections: An-

daruni (the private quarters) and Biruni (the public quarters). The heart of this complex is the three-story rectangular building featuring two entrances. One main door opens onto Sardar Alley and served as the entrance for the residents, their guests, and the owners, while the back door leads to Bahram Atar Alley and was used by peasants and to manage animals. Interestingly, despite the size and complexity of this residence, it does not have a traditional bathhouse, which is unusual for buildings of its kind. Before the Islamic Revolution, the house was repurposed as a school for a period of time. In 1980, it was purchased by a person named Mirnejad, who lived there afterward. Over the following years, the



● visitiran.ir

structure suffered extensive damage due to heavy rains and storms. Despite

its deteriorated condition, this significant building has been registered on the

Iran's National Heritage List, recognizing its cultural and historical importance.



President hails Shams, Rumi for guiding humanity toward peace, dialogue



Tomb of Rumi
● IMNA



Tomb of Shams
● IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday commemorated the towering Sufi figures Shams Tabrizi and Jalal al-Din Rumi, describing them as “two peaks of Iranian culture” whose legacy continues to illuminate human history. In a message issued for the national observance of Shams Tabrizi and Rumi on September 29 and 30, respectively, Pezeshkian said Iran, drawing on such pro-

found cultural Tomb of Rumi, could play a central role in building a world free from violence and rich in peace, dialogue, and cooperation, president.ir reported. The president’s address outlined a vision for a renewed discourse inspired by the two mystics. Pezeshkian wrote that their teachings offer a path “centered on love, justice, spirituality, and wisdom,” a dialogue he described as vital not only for Iran and its neighbors but for “all free

peoples.” He portrayed the commemoration as an opportunity to reflect on the enduring heritage left by Shams and Rumi, which, he said, transcends national and cultural boundaries. Highlighting the historical and geographical reach of the two thinkers, Pezeshkian traced their influence from Balkh to Konya, from Tabriz to Kabul, from Tehran to Istanbul, and extending to the Balkans, Europe, and the Americas.

He noted that countless individuals continue to engage with Rumi’s poetry and Shams’ spiritual insights, “shedding tears of joy and dedicating their hearts to the pure waters of love and knowledge.” For the president, this cross-border admiration exemplifies a cultural legacy that promotes unity over division, dialogue over discord, and humanity over enmity. Pezeshkian described Shams as a relentless seeker of truth, whose penetrating insight and impassioned speech “brought Rumi to an inner revolution and opened new horizons before him.” Rumi, in turn, “a singular star of literature and mysticism,” spread a flame of love and knowledge that continues to inspire generations. The president portrayed them as two facets of the same universal truth, guiding humanity beyond superficial divisions to the “boundless sky of love and unity.” In the context of contemporary global crises, Pezeshkian emphasized the urgent relevance of Shams and Rumi’s philosophy. He argued that the world, facing conflict and multiple forms of violence, must return to the “pure sources” of wisdom that these mystics embodied. Their emphasis on human dignity, spiritual enlightenment, and mutual respect, he wrote, provides a clear roadmap for constructing a future dominated by empathy and understanding rather than hostility and separation. The president called on the Iranian people to embody the principles of love, courage, and

spiritual insight exemplified by Shams and Rumi in everyday life. “If the contemporary individual, from any nation or region, applies even a fraction of Rumi’s love and Shams’ courage,” he said, “a new world can emerge—one where borders and distances dissolve before the truth of love.” He also praised the efforts of scholars, cultural officials, and organizers of the commemoration, noting that their dedication ensures that the legacy of these two figures remains alive and continues to strengthen cultural identity and international friendship. Pezeshkian reiterated that Shams Tabrizi and Rumi are enduring “peaks of Iranian culture” whose teachings, once used to illuminate the human soul in their own time, can continue to light the way for future generations. He expressed hope that, inspired by these luminaries, Iran can contribute to a global dialogue grounded in compassion, reason, and coexistence, where “empathy surpasses mere shared language” and humanity is united in the pursuit of peace.

Tajikistan selects Iranian director’s ‘Black Rabbit, White Rabbit’ for Oscar race



‘Black Rabbit, White Rabbit,’ a mystery drama by Iranian filmmaker Shahram Mokri (‘Fish & Cat’), was selected to represent the country of Tajikistan in the best international feature film category at the Oscars. The news follows the film’s International Film Festival of India – Vision Asian Award honor at the Busan International Film Festival. The movie next screens at the BFI London Film Festival and Chicago International Film Festival, The Hollywood Reported wrote.

The film, a co-production between Tajikistan and the United Arab Emirates, was made with the support of Tajikfilm in Tajikistan and produced in Tajik and Persian. The cast includes a group of prominent Tajik actors, namely Babak Karimi, Hasti Mohammadi, Kibriyo Dilyobova, and Bezhan Davlatov. Mokri wrote the screenplay with Nasim Ahmadpour. The producer is Negar Eskandarfar. “A suspicious film prop, a mysterious audition, a conspiratorial road incident and multiple rabbits are woven together in this bold and beguiling drama from Tajikistan,” reads a synopsis of the movie. “A film armorer suspects a fake firearm is real. An actor arrives on set demanding a role. A car crash victim fears her accident was deliberate. Three seemingly disparate stories weave into an enigmatic whole, with flowing, expertly cho-

reographed takes, no small amount of droll humor and flashes of magic realism punctuating Iranian director Shahram Mokri’s playful, subtly provocative meta-mystery.” The DreamLab Films production is the fourth movie that Tajikistan has submitted for the international Oscar race. The Central Asian country has never been nominated. ‘Black Rabbit, White Rabbit’ is Mokri’s fourth feature film. His feature debut ‘Fish & Cat’ (2013) won a special award in the Orizzonti (Horizons) section at the Venice Film Festival. The director went on to direct ‘Invasion’ (2017), which screened at the Berlin International Film Festival, followed by ‘Careless Crime’ (2020), which screened at Venice and won the jury prize at the Chicago International Film Festival. The 98th Oscars take place Sunday, March 15.

Canadian audience to welcome Ghorbani’s concert ‘My Iran’

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian vocalist Alireza Ghorbani is set to bring his acclaimed concert tour, ‘Iranam,’ which literally means ‘My Iran,’ to Canada this October. The tour will begin on October 4, at Vancouver’s Queen Elizabeth Theatre, followed by performances in Calgary on October 7 at the Jack Singer Concert Hall, Montreal on October 10 at Place des Arts, and conclude in Toronto on October 12 at the Coca-Cola Coliseum, inn.ir reported. Iranam showcases a repertoire of Persian classical and contemporary music, featuring lyrics from poets such as Rumi, Amir Khus-



row, and Ahmad Shamlou. Ghorbani is accompanied by composers Hosam Nasiri, Alireza Afkari, and Mahdiyar Alizadeh. The program includes pieces like ‘Sheyda,’ ‘Forgive Me,’ and ‘Arghavan’ reflecting the rich tapestry of Persian musical heritage.

The tour follows a successful run in Tehran’s Azadi Complex earlier this year, where over 7,500 attendees gathered each night. Subsequent performances took place in Istanbul and Yazd, further solidifying Ghorbani’s international acclaim.

Echoes of Persian luminaries in Iran’s civilizational quest for soft power

By Abed Akbari
Guest contributor

PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

The Persian months of Mehr (September-October), in Iran’s cultural calendar, recalls great names etched into the depth of history and the collective conscience of the Iranian world; from the day commemorating Rumi, the universal mystic from Balkh who rests in Konya, to the day honoring Hafez, the “Tongue of the Unseen” from Shiraz whose words remain a universal language of love and wisdom. This symbolic simultaneity is not

merely a remembrance of the past; it is an occasion to rethink Iran’s cultural diplomacy on the basis of its civilizational luminaries—diplomacy that can revive and reimagine Iran’s soft power across a span from Balkh to Konya. Cultural Iran, as a vast civilizational sphere, carries a shared heritage of Persian language, mysticism, poetry, philosophy, and art stretching from Central Asia to Anatolia, from Khorasan to the Caucasus, and from India to Mesopotamia. This expanse, transcending today’s political borders, is the product of centuries of interaction, dialogue, and cultural synergy. Figures such as Rumi, Nizami, Bidel

Dehlavi, Rudaki, Ferdowsi, Sa’adi, and Hafez are the connectors of this historical memory. They are not merely cultural icons; they are the bearers of a common civilizational language that can serve as a foundation for renewed regional and transregional engagement. In today’s world, where hard competition and political disputes often lead to distrust and division, the diplomacy of eminent figures can act as a smart tool for broadening mutual understanding and reducing tensions. Nations that have successfully harnessed their cultural heritage—China with Confucius, India with Tagore, and Turkey with Rumi—have elevated

their national image and grounded their international relations in cultural respect. Iran, with its treasure of globally celebrated luminaries, holds a unique capacity for cultural soft power; a capacity that can complement foreign policy and reinforce the country’s regional and global standing. The opportunities ahead are extensive. Multilateral cultural cooperation with countries of the broader Iranian sphere, hosting joint festivals and commemorations of luminaries, establishing research and cultural foundations in related countries, producing multilingual works in Iranian literature and philosophy, and

strengthening cultural tourism in cities such as Shiraz, Balkh, Nishapur, Samarkand, Herat, and Konya can all foster a network of civilizational synergy. Yet, effectively tapping these capacities requires a strategic outlook, coordination among cultural and policymaking institutions, and the institutionalization of a discourse of “cultural diplomacy” alongside official diplomacy. Along this path, emphasis on shared cultural elements, avoidance of possessive approaches, and portraying Iranian heritage as a platform for dialogue, peace, and coexistence are essential. The diplomacy of eminent figures

can transform the past into capital for the future. Just as Hafez’s poetry knows no borders and Rumi’s thought inspires both East and West, a conscious engagement with these treasures can present an inspiring and human face of Iran on the global stage. In a tense world, where dialogue has been displaced by hard rivalries, Iran can, through its cultural heritage and civilizational luminaries, build a bridge of understanding and convergence—a bridge stretching from Balkh to Konya, carrying a message that resonates beyond politics, in the language of poetry, wisdom, and love.