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# Iran Daily

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Palestinians walk along al-Rashid Street, the main coastal road connecting southern and central Gaza to the north, as they return to their homes following the new ceasefire agreement between Israel and the Palestinian group Hamas in Gaza City, Gaza, on October 10, 2025.

• AFP

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## Iran should offer incentives to lure back India, others to buying crude

INTERVIEW  
EXCLUSIVE



As Washington turns up the heat on New Delhi to scale back Russian oil imports, India has reportedly asked the US for permission to resume crude purchases from Iran and Venezuela. Indian officials have warned that a simultaneous halt in imports from all three major producers—Russia, Iran, and Venezuela—could send global oil prices through the roof.

Data from India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry shows that the country imported a \$111 million cargo of Iranian crude in June 2025—its first official purchase since 2018, when US sanctions forced Indian refiners to stop taking Iranian crude. Meanwhile, reports suggest that India has proposed buying around 10

million barrels of Iranian oil annually, signaling a desire to diversify its energy sources and reduce reliance on Russian crude.

For Iran, long squeezed by unilateral US sanctions on its petroleum industry, the move could present a breakthrough. Yet India's ability to finalize such a deal under American pressure—and Iran's capacity to cash in on the opportunity despite logistical and financial hurdles—remains uncertain.

To shed more light on the issue, Iran Daily spoke with energy analyst Amin Noorbakhsh.

IRANDAILY: Given the reports of India's renewed interest in Iranian oil despite US sanctions, how determined is New Delhi, in your view, to push ahead—and is it really ready to lock horns with Washington over this?

NOORBAKHSH: India used to be one of Iran's main oil buyers before sanctions came into play, but after the

restrictions were imposed in 2018, its imports quickly dropped to zero within just a few months. Following the war in Ukraine in 2022, however, India ramped up its oil imports from Russia—rising from almost nothing to about 1.5 million barrels per day, or possibly even more.

Now that the US is leaning on India to cut those volumes, Indian officials seem to be seeking an exemption that would allow them to buy oil from Iran. I saw the reports about the \$111 million shipment from Iran, but to me, that story doesn't look very solid—the sources are limited, and it doesn't sound highly credible. Without US authorization, it's hard to believe India would go that far. As for the proposal to buy 10 million barrels annually, that figure is too small to move the needle in Iran's overall oil exports. So, for now, I wouldn't call India a serious market just yet. But that doesn't mean Tehran should sit back and rely only on China. Iran needs to keep its options open, maintain its

market share, and actively pursue other potential buyers, including India, African nations, and beyond.

India certainly has potential, but it depends on how well Iran can set up workable mechanisms that allow some level of covert trade. Under current circumstances, I find it unlikely that the US will grant a waiver for Indian imports from Iran—unless other factors or diplomatic shifts make New Delhi willing to stand its ground against Washington.

And even if it happens, 10 million barrels per year is still modest. India has been importing between 1.5 to 1.8 million barrels per day from Russia—an amount that can't be replaced with a small annual deal. So, if Iran really wants to expand its oil markets, whether in India or elsewhere, it must think bigger and put real incentives on the table to make buyers interested, instead of waiting for global circumstances to force cooperation.

If oil trade between Iran and India does resume, what kind of transaction structure could make it work under sanctions? How could Iran receive its revenues?

It would have to be through a non-banking channel. For instance, one way could be to offset part of the payments through imports of pharmaceuticals from India—since Iran already buys a considerable amount of medicine from there. Another possibility is setting up a trilateral arrangement involving Russia, given India's current financial ties with Moscow.

Even if the US were to grant a waiver, it would still keep tight control over the payment channels. The most that could happen is allowing imports of certain Indian goods into Iran. So, Tehran needs to design a settlement mechanism that works outside Washington's reach, allowing it to expand trade later to non-sanctioned commodities as well.

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## Cease-fire deal takes effect

## Gazans trek toward wrecked homes as Israeli forces begin to retreat

## Iran voices support for initiatives aimed at ending genocide

## International Desk

A cease-fire between Israel and Hamas came into effect in Gaza on Friday after the two sides agreed a plan, proposed by US President Donald Trump, to end more than two years of devastating war on the Palestinian territory. Israeli forces declared the cease-fire and withdrew from some positions in Gaza as thousands of displaced Palestinians began to stream back home and the families of captives held in Gaza awaited news.

The Israeli occupation army said that its troops had ceased fire at noon (0900 GMT) "in preparation for the cease-fire agreement and the return of hostages."

The cease-fire marks a key step toward ending a ruinous two-year war that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, reduced much of Gaza to rubble, destabilized the Middle East, and left dozens of Israeli captives, living and dead, in the territory.

Iran's Foreign Ministry in a statement reaffirmed Iran's support for any initiative aimed at ending the genocidal war in Gaza, ensuring the withdrawal of occupying forces, facilitating the entry of humanitarian aid, freeing Palestinian prisoners, and restoring the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people.

It also warned the international community to remain vigilant against the "deception and breach of commitments" by the Israeli regime. Meanwhile, large crowds in Tehran and other cities across Iran held pro-Palestine rallies on Friday, expressing solidarity with Gaza and urging immediate delivery of humanitarian aid to the besieged territory.

Organizers described the events as a show of unity with Palestinians and opposition to global powers who have supported the Israeli regime during its genocidal war on Gaza.

## Israel begins pullback

Gaza's civil defense agency said Israeli troops and armored vehicles were pulling back from forward positions in both Gaza City and Khan Yunis, and displaced Palestinian civilians said they hoped to return home.

Thousands of civilians were walking along a raised route on Gaza's waterfront, as displaced Palestinians sought to return home after two years of intense fighting.

"We're going back to our areas, full of wounds and sorrow, but we thank God for this situation," 32-year-old Ameer Abu Lyadeh said in Khan Yunis.

"God willing, everyone will return to their areas. We're happy — even if we return to ruins with

no life, at least it's our land."

Israel had previously said all parties had signed the first phase of the agreement this week in Egypt, adding that Hamas freeing its remaining Israeli captives alive and dead would "bring the end to this war."

An Israeli security official, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the withdrawal, said the military would control around 50% of Gaza in their new positions.

The agreement followed a 20-point peace plan announced last month by the US president, who plans to leave on Sunday for the Middle East.

Egypt is planning an event to celebrate the conclusion of the deal, while the families of 47 captives taken during Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack are waiting for their loved ones' return.

## Unresolved issues

Despite celebrations in Israel and Gaza and a flood of congratulatory messages from world leaders, many issues remain unresolved, including Hamas's disarmament and a proposed transitional authority for Gaza led by Trump. Senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan told Qatar-based broadcaster Al Araby the Palestinian movement rejects the idea.

Trump said the issue of Hamas surrendering



Iranians participate in a pro-Palestinian rally in Tehran on October 10, 2025.  
● IQNA

its weapons would be addressed in the second phase of the peace plan.

"There will be disarming," he told reporters, adding there would also be "pullbacks" by Israeli forces.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted in a televised statement Friday that the

next stages would see Hamas disarm and Gaza demilitarized.

Long columns of Palestinians, exhausted by two years of intense bombardment and what the UN warned were famine conditions, began a trek back from Khan Yunis in the south towards their shattered homes further north.

## 'Utterly outrageous': Russia raps reimposition of UN sanctions on Iran

## International Desk

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov denounced the Western countries' move to reimpose sanctions on Iran as "utterly outrageous," saying, "They punished a country that had not violated a thing."

In an interview with RT, the Russian top diplomat said, "The idea of re-imposing the sanctions which the West is trying to present as a legitimate legal procedure is utterly outrageous."

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 three European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal — France, Germany and Britain — triggered the "snapback" mechanism and accused Tehran of failing to comply with the agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The United States unilaterally abandoned the deal in 2018, and Europe failed to deliver on its commitments. Iran gradually reduced its obligations, while Western powers escalated pressure. In August, the European trio invoked the snapback mechanism to restore sanctions, a move Iran rejected as illegitimate.

The sanctions will again freeze Iranian assets abroad, halt arms deals with the Islamic Republic and target the country's defensive missile program. Lavrov argued that Iran had consistently shown restraint and flexibility, even after the US withdrawal from the nuclear agreement.

"As you may recall, the resolution approving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear program was not violated by Iran. The Islamic Republic had been fulfilling it since 2015 when it was first adopted. Then, in 2018, the United States said it did not like the deal and would no longer comply with it." Lavrov noted that European powers have been siding with Washington rather than defending their own agreement. "The Europeans, who were also obliged to fulfill the 'fruit of their own labor,' instead of taking a principled stand in favor of preserving the deal, chose to play along with Washington, persuading the Iranians not to take offence and to make more concessions," he said.

## Snapback mechanism

The Russian minister described the snapback mechanism as a tool designed to benefit those seeking to punish Iran regardless of its compliance. "They punished a country that had not violated a thing and had been fulfilling its obligations until the West walked away from the deal," he said. Lavrov also said the West has been deliberately blocking dialogue. "The West, however, is deliberately going to great lengths to prevent direct talks between Iran and the United States (although Tehran has always been open to them) and to block the resumption of normal cooperation between Iran and the IAEA, as if making a special effort to provoke a major conflict. Perhaps, that is exactly what some parties are looking for," he said.



Sergei Lavrov  
● RT

The broader context has only deepened Iran's mistrust as in June, the United States and Israel carried out attacks on Iranian peaceful nuclear facilities in a blatant violation of international law. Tehran responded by halting cooperation with the IAEA, citing the agency's failure to act against the aggression.

Later, Iran signed a new cooperation framework with the IAEA in Cairo, but officials warned it would not be implemented if sanctions were reimposed. Russia and China attempted to salvage diplomacy at the UN Security Council in September, but their proposal failed. Days later, Washington and its allies declared sanctions restored. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at the United Nations in a statement also reacted to the issues concerning Iran's nuclear deal, saying that it necessary for the definitive end of the provisions of Resolution 2231, which endorsed the JCPOA, to occur on schedule.

Recalling the importance of the spirit of cooperation and multilateralism that led to the adoption of Resolution 2231, NAM emphasized that all provisions of Resolution 2231 must end as scheduled.

## Tehran decries 'destabilizing activities' in Caribbean

## Venezuela urges UNSC emergency session over US actions

## International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry in a statement on Friday condemned the US destabilizing activities in the Caribbean and Latin American regions, describing them as a "clear violation" of the principles of the United Nations Charter and fundamental rules of international law.

The statement came after a series of US strikes on boats in the Caribbean, including at least three originating from Venezuela, that have killed more than 20 people since September.

Esmail Baqaei, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, slammed the US military actions as "provocative and destabilizing," warning against the repercussions of Washington's "increased acts of lawlessness and aggressive unilateralism" on global peace and stability. He condemned the US military attacks on fishing boats in the region and the threat of resorting to force against Venezuela's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Such actions are a "clear violation" of the principles of the United Nations Charter and fundamental rules of international law, he added.



Esmail Baqaei  
● TASNIM

According to the statement, the Iranian spokesperson called on the Security Council and the UN chief to immediately heed the "dangerous" situation arising from the "US insistence on illegal intervention in the internal affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as an independent member state of the United Nations." In a letter to the UN Security Council on Thursday, Venezuela's government requested an emergency session focused on the US military actions in recent weeks in the waters off the South American country.

So far, the US military has carried out four deadly strikes in the Caribbean since it increased its maritime forces for what President Donald Trump has declared an "armed conflict" with drug cartels.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## European troika says will seek to restart nuclear talks with Iran, US

Britain, France and Germany will seek to restart stalled nuclear talks with Iran and the United States, the three European countries said in a joint statement on Friday.

"We are determined to reinstitute negotiations with Iran and the United States towards a comprehensive, durable and verifiable agreement that ensures Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon," they said.

The three European countries activated a so-called "snapback" mechanism of the 2015 nuclear agreement with

Iran — a move that triggered the re-imposition of sanctions against Iran in September.

Since then, relations between Tehran and the three countries have hit a new low.

On September 9, Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reached an agreement aimed at paving the way for the resumption of cooperation which had been suspended following the unprovoked Israeli-American attacks against key Iranian nuclear facilities in June.

The agreement with the IAEA was signed as a goodwill gesture by Iran to prevent the activation of the snapback mechanism.

Despite Iran's efforts to prevent the European move, the three countries invoked the mechanism which paved the way for the reimposition of international sanctions that had been removed under the 2015 nuclear agreement. Iran has rejected the reimposition of sanctions as "entirely unfounded, unlawful, and invalid" claims by the United States and the European countries.



# China pledges to take ‘necessary’ measures against anti-Iran US sanctions

## Economy Desk

China's Foreign Ministry spokesman underlined on Friday his country's resolve to take "necessary" measures to protect the legitimate rights of Chinese enterprises and citizens in response to anti-Iran US sanctions.

Guo Jiakun told a regular press briefing in the capital Beijing that China will protect its energy security amid mounting US sanctions targeting Iran's oil trade with Chinese refineries.

"China has consistently and resolutely opposed illegal unilateral sanctions that lack any basis in international law and authorization from the United Nations Security Council. We urge the United States to abandon its erroneous practice of resorting to sanctions at the drop of a hat," Guo said.

"It is entirely legitimate and reasonable for countries to engage in normal cooperation with Iran within the framework of international law. China will take necessary measures to safeguard its energy security as well as the lawful rights and interests of its enterprises and citizens."

The spokesman also called on the

United States to stop resorting to sanctions against the Islamic Republic after the administration of President Donald Trump imposed on Thursday sweeping ban on about 100 individuals, entities and vessels, including a Chinese independent refinery and terminal, that helped Iran's oil and petrochemicals trade.

Among those targeted was Shandong Jincheng Petrochemical Group Co., a China-based refinery that the Treasury Department claimed to have purchased millions of barrels of Iranian oil since 2023.

Thursday's actions are the Treasury's fourth set of sanctions against China-based refineries since Trump's return to office in January, adding to the hundreds of people, firms and ships punished for their links to Iran as part of his administration's so-called "maximum pressure" campaign.

The new flurry of sanctions comes less than two weeks after the UN announced the invocation of the "snap-back" mechanism — under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — against Tehran over its peaceful nuclear and ballistic missile programs.



Guo Jiakun  
GLOBAL TIMES

The JCPOA required Iran to scale back some of its nuclear activities in return for sanctions relief. However, the US ditched the deal in

2018 before returning the illegal sanctions that it had lifted against Iran and launching the so-called "maximum pressure" campaign.

Following the US withdrawal, the European signatories to the JCPOA failed to uphold their commitments and made no efforts to save the agreement.

## Deputy minister: Ratification of Palermo, CFT key to economic boost



## Economy Desk

The secretary of Iran's Supreme Council for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing said on Thursday that national unity is vital to implementing the FATF action plan and helping Tehran leave the blacklist restricting its global financial ties.

Iran's accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) as well as the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), known as the Palermo Convention, had remained the final stage of the country's membership in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The Islamic Republic approved its conditional accession to the CFT on October 2 and to the Palermo Convention on May 14.

Hadi Khani said that ratifying these conventions is important and influential "in removing the obstacles to exiting the blacklist and in facilitating and hastening the process of alleviating economic isolation in

interactions with the world's financial systems."

The head of the Iranian Economy Ministry's Financial Intelligence Department rejected arguments that Iran's accession to the CFT and implementation of the convention should be made conditional on obtaining concessions from the other side, calling such an approach "superficial."

Khani warned that remaining on the list of high-risk countries for money laundering and terrorist financing has come at a heavy cost, saying it has created expensive financial conditions in dealings with other countries and reduced foreign investment — something he said "has been the wish of the country's enemies."

He also criticized public debate that, in his view, undermines diplomatic support. "Even raising such issues when friendly countries are trying to help us does not reflect well," Khani said.

Iran has no formal role in FATF regional groups and was placed on the watchdog's

blacklist after accusations of failing to complete its "corrective plan." That led FATF to call on all countries to impose restrictions on Iran until shortcomings were resolved.

Pointing to global practice, Khani noted that more than 190 countries have ratified the Palermo Convention and the CFT. "When more than 190 countries worldwide have ratified and joined Palermo and the CFT, it means these two conventions have become international norms, and we must also use the opportunities and manage and mitigate the threats rather than, out of concern over potential risks, remove international matters from consideration, because they cannot be removed," he said.

Khani called for a "whole-of-government" approach to counter what he described as hostile plots. "All regulatory, infrastructural and executive capacities of the country must act unitedly, convergently, and synergistically against the malign designs of enemies," he said.

## Rasht-Astara railway key to linking rail network to Europe: Official



IRNA

## Economy Desk

Iran's deputy minister of Roads and Urban Development said the Rasht-Astara railway project, a vital segment of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), will play a decisive role in connecting Iran's rail network to Europe once completed.

Houshang Bazvand, who also heads the Construction and

Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company, said the 160-kilometer route includes 63 bridges stretching a combined 41 kilometers and a 1,960-meter tunnel currently under construction, IRNA reported.

The line is designed for train speeds of up to 160 kilometers per hour and will have an annual freight capacity of 15 million tons.

The route will feature 10

stations between Rasht and Astara, with the Rasht and Astara terminals serving as operational hubs. The Lavan-devil station in Gilan will provide both passenger services and logistical support, he said. "The completion of this project will mark a major step in the northern province of Gilan's economic development and significantly boost Iran's share of international north-south transit," Bazvand said.

## Iran should offer ...

**Apart from China, what other potential markets could Iran realistically target under the current sanctions?**

Some African and Latin American countries could be feasible options. In Africa, nations with some degree of political alignment with Iran—such as Nigeria, Niger, and South Africa—could be viable markets. In Latin America, countries like Cuba and Venezuela might also be on the list, especially if Venezuela continues to need condensate imports. Of course, all this still needs thorough market studies and logistical

planning.

Under former president Ebrahim Raisi, there were reports that the Oil Ministry planned to rehabilitate refineries in African countries in exchange for guaranteed crude sales from Iran—a model that was already tested in Venezuela. Are similar projects being pursued under the current administration, or have they been shelved?

That approach is actually outlined in the Seventh Development Plan, which calls for Iran to build capacity for what's termed "overseas refining." Venezuela is the main

example of this model. However, based on the first-year performance review of the plan, there's been little to no follow-up on such projects beyond Venezuela.

The reasons for that lack of progress aren't entirely clear, but the performance review itself mentions nothing about developing overseas refineries elsewhere. Still, this is one of the most effective ways for Iran to lock in long-term buyers—by either purchasing shares in existing refineries or signing processing contracts that guarantee multi-year crude offtake. It's definitely a strategy that deserves renewed attention.



# Hamas pursues 'Yes, but' strategy in talks: **Former envoy**

## Iran's response to Gaza peace plan rational, constructive

### INTERVIEW

Two years after Hamas's Operation Al-Aqsa Storm and the martyrdom of over 67,000 people in Gaza — most of them civilians — due to the brutal response of Israel, US President Donald Trump came up with a plan in October 2025 meant to end the crimes and genocide carried out by the Zionist regime. The 20-point proposal, released amid much political and media fanfare, allegedly aims to bring about an end to a "300-year war" in the Middle East and pave the way for peace in Gaza.

Almost immediately, Hamas, as the governing movement in Gaza, responded positively yet conditionally to this plan, and then finally agreed to the plan on Thursday. Regional powers and other world governments have welcomed it, while the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite raising the alarm over parts of it and pointing out Israel's record of obstructionism and bad faith, has declared it will support any position that Palestinian resistance groups and the people themselves come down on regarding this proposal.

The key questions — how and under what terms Trump's so-called peace plan might play out, its practical consequences, pros and cons, and Iran's stance toward it — were the main focus of a conversation with Nosratollah Tajik, the former Iranian ambassador to Jordan and an expert on Middle Eastern affairs. The following is a translation of parts of that interview:



Nosratollah Tajik

In recent weeks, the US president has put forward a 20-point plan claiming that it will establish peace in Gaza. Iran, too, has reacted to this proposal, stressing that it has an eye on its dangerous aspects. The Iranian Foreign Ministry has also warned against a repeat of Israel's habitual backtracking and sabotage. What is your overall assessment of the plan and its clauses?

**TAJIK:** From my point of view, the plan presented by President Trump is a chaotic, sloppy piece of work lacking coherence or balance. Although in my opinion, the plan cannot be implemented, if it were ever to get off the ground, it would mean reverting Palestine to a state of mandate. Between the end of World War II and roughly a decade later, Palestine was under British mandate. Now, this proposal simply hands it over to an American one. Since Mr. Trump seemingly wants Tony Blair to step in somehow, we can say this plan places Gaza and Palestine under joint Anglo-American supervision. The plan is riddled with ambiguities; By saying it's unbalanced, I mean there's no built-in mechanism to specify what happens if Israel fails to meet its commitments. So, in my view, there are numerous obstacles in its path. Incidentally, Iran has zeroed in on this very point: on Israel's nature, its pattern of deceit, and whether its dissatisfaction is real or merely it is devising a ploy to bargain for more concessions. Two years ago, when Israel kicked off operations in Gaza, it announced three goals: freeing its captives held by Hamas, eliminating Hamas, and driving out Gazans from their own land. But it achieved none of them.

Now that Trump has jumped in with this plan, it indirectly shows Israel's military campaign has failed despite the scale of its massacres, which is unprecedented in history and even in the 77 years of Zionist crimes. None of its past atrocities has so deeply shaken or inflamed global public opinion. Since brute force has led nowhere, Trump has come forward with this peace plan. If Israel thought it could achieve its aims by continuing the carnage, this plan would never have seen the light of day — whatever Trump's motives may be. In fact, Trump himself admitted recently that Israel has lost global public opinion and turned it against itself. Clearly, then, there's little chance the plan will actually take off given all its flaws.

In response, Iran has stressed that any decision in this regard lies with the Palestinian people and resistance groups,



The illustration shows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (R) shaking hands with US President Donald Trump over the sight of a ruined Gaza.

NEW ARAB

and that it will back up whatever they decide. How do you interpret Tehran's stance?

In my view, the Foreign Ministry's statement is a constructive one. Iran has emphasized ending the suffering of Gazans and halting Israel's crimes, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. The statement also underscores Israel's responsibilities and commitments while reminding the international community of its duties. It ultimately leaves the final say to the Palestinian people — to decide whether to go along with it or not.

From the outset, Hamas has stuck to a "Yes, but" strategy in negotiations, meaning it agrees with plans in principle but insists on expressing its views. Iran has kept in line with that

same approach. Knowing that several points in this plan are practically unattainable, Iran has left it to Hamas, the Gazans, and especially the Palestinian resistance factions to decide.

In the end, Iran's reaction can be seen as rational, constructive, and geared toward easing Gaza's agony and pushing governments to shoulder their share of responsibility in making Israel fulfill its commitments. As many analysts note, the top priority for the US and Israel is to get rid of the bargaining chip that is Hamas's captives. Their main focus now is freeing them; Only after that will their real commitments begin.

Meanwhile, Hamas, though positive, sticks with its cautious "Yes, but" approach. In contrast, Trump, during a phone call with

Netanyahu, bluntly said: "This is a win. Take it!" His current strategy seems to be "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." That's precisely what has set off alarm bells for both Hamas and Iran: If Palestinians give this concession now, what will they actually get in return?

Many observers believe that once the captives are freed, Israel might ramp up its bombardment since it faces no real deterrent at the moment. This lingering doubt over US-Israeli compliance remains a dominant concern far beyond Iran. Arab and international experts have also flagged up this risk. It would make sense for Iran to team up with Arab and Islamic foreign ministers in bilateral or multilateral diplomacy to help

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Now that Trump has jumped in with this plan, it indirectly shows Israel's military campaign has failed despite the scale of its massacres, which is unprecedented in history and even in the 77 years of Zionist crimes. None of its past atrocities has so deeply shaken or inflamed global public opinion. Since brute force has led nowhere, Trump has come forward with this peace plan. If Israel thought it could achieve its aims by continuing the carnage, this plan would never have seen the light of day — whatever Trump's motives may be.

shore up Hamas's position in seeking firm guarantees.

**What prerequisites does Trump's peace plan need to become actionable?**

This plan is hardly a coherent one, and no single judgment can sum it up as good or bad. Parts of it draw on America's 2003 experience in Iraq, when Paul Bremer was brought in as Washington's appointed civil administrator in Baghdad — an example with disastrous consequences. Beside elements from fruitless past Hamas-Israel negotiations that have been woven into the final 20 points, Trump's dreams and Kushner's ambitions have also found their way in. Nevertheless, the sections promising to put an end to the war have been welcomed by Hamas and Iran alike. After all, Hamas has always sought an end to the conflict, tying the release of captives to a full cessation of hostilities. Israel, by contrast, was only seeking a cease-fire — hence the recurring deadlocks.

Stopping massacres and bombings, ending the war, and freeing the captives are all positive elements — points both Iran and Hamas can get behind with no issue. The real sticking points are conditions Hamas is unlikely to accept, such as accepting an international administration for Gaza. Hamas refuses to hand over Gaza's control to any entity that excludes Palestinian figures. So, while it goes along with the initial positive steps — which Trump has touted as victories — it has insisted that further discussions must follow on the unresolved issues.

To my mind, we face a long, uncertain, and murky process ahead. Even if international mediators like Qatar or Egypt come up with solid guarantees that Israel and the US will honor their word, thorny matters like arms and captives remain unresolved. Hamas knows these are its last bargaining chips and cannot give them up easily. It will not sign off on any deal until it secures tangible international guarantees, meaning both the plan and talks could still fall through.

Thus, the first essential condition is a firm, regionally and internationally backed guarantee from mediators and involved states to ensure that Israel and the US actually live up to their obligations. Yet even with such assurances, I'm not too optimistic that they'll really stick to their commitments — or follow through once the ink dries on any possible agreement. Perhaps I'm somewhat skeptical.

The full interview first appeared in Persian on IRNA.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (front-R) and his delegation meet with US President Donald Trump (front-L) and the American officials at the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, D.C., the US, on September 29, 2025.

WHITE HOUSE



# Gaza plan: Looks like peace, acts like occupation



By Carol Daniel-Kasbari  
Expert on conflict analysis and resolution

## ANALYSIS

In Deir al-Balah, a mother told me her son now counts the seconds between blasts. Policy, to her, isn't a debate; It's whether trucks arrive and the night is quiet. Donald Trump's 20-point plan promises cease-fire, captives home, Israeli withdrawal, and reconstruction. It sounds complete. It isn't.

Without enforceable mechanics, maps, timelines, phased verification, and real local ownership, it risks being a short-lived show, not a durable peace.

On paper, the plan strings together familiar parts: a cease-fire tied to captive releases, withdrawal linked to disarmament, and a multinational stabilization effort to guard rebuilding. Used well, those tools can buy civilians time to breathe: a tranche-based exchange that releases captives as pauses begin and expands aid corridors with each verified step; and a properly mandated, regionally-backed stabilization presence that keeps fighters away from families, protects convoys, and secures reconstruction sites so hospitals, schools, and water systems can function. Modest instruments — not magic — but correctly sequenced, they save lives.

The design breaks down where hard agreements usually do. First, it effectively treats disarmament as surrender, demanding that an armed actor relinquish leverage before credible political guarantees and security protections exist. Durable settlements don't start with a leap of faith over a void.

Second, the withdrawal language is vague. If a "pullback" arrives bundled with continuing perimeter control, airspace, crossings, or security carve-outs, residents will experience it as occupation under a new brand. Independent analysis notes the text lacks concrete timelines and operational granularity past the opening phase.

Third, enforcement leans on statements rather than machinery. Without mapped guarantor responsibilities, triggerable penalties, and pre-positioned logistics, promises turn into press releases. Reporting on the Palestinian Authority's potential role underscores how preconditions and sequencing could stall implementation.

There's a deeper political absence, too. This deal does not deliver what Palestinians actually hope for: self-determination and a say in their future. After high-profile recognitions of Palestinian statehood, offering a Gaza-only fix that sidelines political rights makes those gestures look symbolic rather than substantive. Having Israeli institutions effectively able to veto consequential steps feels like Oslo all over again: process without power-balancing.

That is how interim arrangements harden into permanent limbo — deference to political will instead of instruments,



ALBERTO MIER/CNN

asymmetric leverage left intact, and verification without consequences. Analyses of the current proposal also point to how leaders can convert hesitation into de facto veto power.

If Trump is serious about peace, Jerusalem and the West Bank must be inside the plan, not promised to some later round. Facts on the ground are moving the other way. The UN Security Council has said settlements lack legal validity and violate international law. The UN humanitarian office has documented widespread settler violence and access restrictions that corrode daily life and any negotiated horizon.

Independent Israeli media and NGOs describe accelerating de facto annexation trends. A plan that ignores this landscape will not produce the security it promises.

I don't say this as a spectator. For three decades, and, crucially, from 1994 to 2012, I worked across Israel and the Palestinian territories, running dialogues, designing confidence measures, and trying to push fragile agreements into daily reality. I arrived at Oslo

believing its interim architecture could be saved. Hard experience taught me why it often wasn't: Interimism without enforcement calcifies, asymmetry invites spoilers, and externally-driven programs that sideline local voices manufacture the very grievances violence feeds on. Those are not lamentations; They're operating instructions.

So, what would a plan that acts like peace look like? Start with measured, verifiable sequencing. Convert the captive-for-peace idea into a tranche ladder with objective indicators. Tranche 0: a 72-hour humanitarian pause and release of the most vulnerable captives, independently verified.

Tranche 1: further releases and sustained relief corridors.

Tranche 2: armor out of GPS-mapped grid squares; municipal functions transferred to neutral civil administrators.

Tranche 3: localized arms-reduction pilots paired with trained community policing.

Tranche 4: broader demobilization tied to political benchmarks. Publish indicators per tranche, names returned, coordinates va-

cated, tonnage of aid delivered, verified hand-ins, police trained, on a public dashboard so guarantors act on facts, not spin.

Next, replace applause with commitments on paper. Regional states and major donors should sign a concise guarantor treaty with annexes that spell out who does what when breaches occur: logistics deployed within 48 hours, escrowed funds released or frozen, proportionate sanctions, or a rapid-response element under hybrid command.

Add an escalation ladder, a dispute-resolution clause, and a small guarantor secretariat that tracks readiness daily. Tie money to verification outcomes so incentives are immediate and reversible. Established policy work already frames these sequencing and governance choices — use it to draft the legal plumbing.

Then give the monitoring real teeth. Stand up a Verification & Rapid Response Authority (VRRRA) with three pillars: a Technical Verification Unit (remote sensing, forensics, chain-of-custody); a Civilian Observers Network (local monitors and NGO liaisons); and a Rapid Re-



This deal does not deliver what Palestinians actually hope for: self-determination and a say in their future. After high-profile recognitions of Palestinian statehood, offering a Gaza-only fix that sidelines political rights makes those gestures look symbolic rather than substantive. Having Israeli institutions effectively able to veto consequential steps feels like Oslo all over again: process without power-balancing.

sponse Wing (pre-positioned transport, medevac, engineering). When the VRRRA issues an evidence packet — geolocated imagery, metadata, documented hand-ins — it should automatically trigger the agreed guarantor response. Monitoring that cannot cause action is theater; People in Gaza do not have time for theater.

Demobilization must not be coerced by a vacuum. It should be gradual, conditional, and reversible — and paired with a transitional political compact that guarantees participation, association, and a mapped route to representation. Pilot DDR alongside livelihoods, public hiring, micro-grants, reconstruction jobs, and community-led policing reforms so neighborhoods feel safer, not abandoned. Field reporting shows that sequencing PA governance and security responsibilities will make or break feasibility; Treat that as a design constraint, not a footnote.

Reconstruction must rebuild institutions, not patronage. Create a Donor Compact & Reconstruction Authority (DCRA) with pooled escrow and a multistakeholder board, Gaza municipalities, West Bank civil society, donors, independent auditors, and a VRRRA liaison. Use digitized public procurement, local-first contracting, community sign-off on major projects, and payments contingent on VRRRA-verified delivery. Coverage of an Arab-backed multibillion-dollar plan illustrates how donor politics can fragment; A compact like DCRA keeps money honest and visible to the people it is meant to serve.

Finally, coherence or collapse: A Gaza-only fix will not hold. Pair Gaza tranches with West Bank protections, temporary settlement constraints tied to compliance, increased international monitoring at checkpoints, and targeted support for communities under strain because what happens in one arena cascades into the other.

If negotiators want something immediate and practical to insist on, here it is: Redraft the plan into a tranche protocol with mapped withdrawals and a public verification dashboard; Sign the guarantor treaty and pre-position logistics and escrow, with an explicit escalation ladder; And stand up the VRRRA and DCRA with legal charters, independent boards, and automatic triggers so verification leads to action, not statements. Gaza's families don't need grandeur; They need a night without terror, a clinic with light, a school bell that rings. Recognitions of Palestine should mean voice and agency, not just new communiqués. A plan that looks like peace but acts like control will fail them. Put Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and the West Bank inside the deal. Build the scaffold, measured tranches, mapped withdrawals, independent verification, and accountable reconstruction, and you buy time for politics, dignity for civilians, and a future Palestinians can recognize as their own.

The article first appeared on Responsible Statecraft.



Palestinian policemen celebrate upon entering Jericho, one of the first cities handed over to Palestinian Authority control in accordance with the Oslo Accords, on May 13, 1994.

YOSSI ZAMIR/FLASH 90



## IWF World Championships:

## Moeini sets new world record as Iranian duo wins three medals

## Sports Desk

Iran's Alireza Moeini and Ali A'alipour won first medals for the country at the IWF World Championships, collecting a snatch gold and double silvers in the men's 94kg class on the eighth day of the competition in Forde, Norway.

Reigning Olympic champion Karlos Nasar of Bulgaria, meanwhile, finished empty-handed in the snatch but rounded off the day with a clean & jerk and total gold.

It was an all-Iranian one-two in the snatch event, with Moeini walking away with the ultimate prize thanks to a 182kg lift with on his third attempt – becoming Iran's first world record holder since Sohrab Moradi.

A'alipour took the snatch silver with 176kg – one kilogram clear of Colombian bronze winner Jokser Alborno, who impressed from the B Group with three medals.

Nasar settled for a fourth-place finish with 173kg after failing with his final two snatch attempts.

The Bulgarian sensation, however, went on to dominate the C&J showdown with a new world record of 222kg, with Alborno (215kg) and Romain Imadouchène (211kg) of France in the following spots.

A'alipour missed two attempts to finish fourth in the C&J with 211kg – two kilograms above fifth-placed Moeini.

On 173-222-395, Nasar finished four kilograms clear of Moeini, while secured his second bronze of the day with 390kg.

"I endured seven months of hard training to prepare for the World Championships," Moeini said, adding: "I had a clear goal here and that was to make six successful efforts and set a new snatch world record in Iran's name. I dedicate these medals and the world record to all of my dear fellow-Iranians."

"Nasar is a great champion and an Olympic gold medalist, but I don't focus on that when we compete. My only goal is to do my best and secure the top spot for my country," Moeini said of his Bulgarian rival. On improving on last year's

clean & jerk campaign at the world event, Moeini said: "I had a poor performance in Bahrain due to a shoulder injury. However, head coach Behdad Salimi and [the head of the federation] Sajjad Anoushiravani helped me a lot to recover and lift decent weights this year. I just hope to have even a stronger finish in the future competitions."

A'alipour, meanwhile, threw down the gauntlet to the Bulgarian champion, saying: "I'm deeply disappointed with my clean & jerk efforts. If I can just replicate my training numbers on the platform, the gold medal will belong to me next year. I've already set sights on sweeping Nasar aside."

Another familiar face for the Iranians in Thursday's event was Kianoush Rostami, who won an Olympic gold for the country in Rio 2016, but had a night to forget under the Kosovo flag, posting 172-205-377 to finish fifth.

The final day of the World Championships will see Iran's former Olympic silver medalist Ali Davoudi, who bagged triple



world medals last year, and Ayat Sharifi – fresh off double Asian golds in May – vie for glory in the +110kg event, which will also feature Arme-

nian Varazdat Lalayan and Gor Minasyan of Bahrain – silver and bronze medalists to Georgian great Lasha Talakhadze at the Paris Olympics.

Iran's Alireza Moeini poses after setting a new world record in the men's 94kg snatch event at the IWF World Championships in Forde, Norway, on October 9, 2025. **IWF**

## World Para Powerlifting Championships:

## Hosseini wins historic women's gold on Day 2



Iran's Atiyeh Hosseini poses for a photo after winning a women's gold medal at the World Para Powerlifting Championships in Cairo, Egypt, on October 10, 2025. **ISNA**

## Sports Desk

Atiyeh Hosseini etched her name into history books of the Iranian sport on Friday by grabbing a

first women's gold for the country at the World Para Powerlifting Championships in Cairo, Egypt.

Representing the country in the rookie and next gen 61kg contests, Hosseini began her campaign with an 85kg lift and then posted 90kg with her second attempt.

The Iranian girl failed with the 94kg attempt but still did enough to walk with the ultimate prize, finishing above contestants from the United States and Uzbekistan, who settled for the silver and bronze, respectively.

The rookie and next gen event in Cairo, featuring 124 athletes from 28 national paralympic committees, concluded on Friday, with the elite competitions starting today, and continuing across 20 men's and women's weight classes until Friday.

## WTT Youth Contender Tunis II 2025:

## Shirvani stands third in U13 boys' singles event

## Sports Desk

Iran's table tennis prodigy Nikan Shrivani settled for a third-place trophy at the WTT Youth Contender event in Tunis.

Representing the country in the under-13 boys' singles event in the Tunisian capital, Shirvani enjoyed an emphatic run to the semifinals before suffering a 3-2 loss (9-11, 11-7, 10-

12, 11-9, 11-7) to Russian Matvei Manankov, who competed as a neutral athlete.

The Russian finished as the runner-up after a 3-1 defeat (8-11, 11-4, 12-10, 15-13) against Kirill Kantaev – also a neutral contestant – in the final showpiece. Shirvani defeated the host's trio Aws Riahi, Iyed Tayachi, and Yaakoub Marnissi without conceding a single game to finish atop the Group 2 table and progress to the knockout round.

The Iranian was given a bye in the round of 16, and then defeated Tunisian Moemen Sghaier 3-1 (11-6, 5-11, 11-6, 11-7) in the quarterfinals.

More Iranians will be in action across different age groups on the final day of the WTT event at the Multidisciplinary Hall of Rades today.



**IRTF**

## Iran bids to host 2029 Islamic Solidarity Games

## Sports Desk

Iran made an official bid to host the seventh edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games in 2029. The Islamic Solidarity Sports Association (ISSA) confirmed on Thursday.

Joining Iran in the race to host the multi-sport event will be Uzbekistan and Malaysia.

The ISSA will conduct a series of on-site inspection visits to the three countries, which will represent a key milestone in the continued development of the Islamic Solidarity Games, as ISSA works to strengthen the event's future and expand opportunities

for countries to host major multi-sport events.

ISSA Secretary General Nasser Majali welcomed the strong interest from the candidate countries, noting that it reflects the growing stature of the Islamic Solidarity Games and their increasing role in advancing sport at both regional and international levels.

"It is extremely encouraging to see three passionate and capable countries come forward to host the next edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games," said Majali.

"These inspection visits represent a key phase in the evaluation process to ensure the Games



**IRNA**

are delivered to the highest standards for our athletes and National Olympic Committees, in full partnership with the host country.

"They also reaffirm ISSA's commitment to enabling more member countries to benefit from hosting major international sports events and contributing to the continued development of sport across all regions."

Following an initial evaluation process, six member countries submitted formal letters of interest to ISSA to host the next edition of the Games. After further discussions and assessments, Uzbekistan, Malaysia and Iran

proceeded to submit their full hosting bids.

The inspection visits are being led by the ISSA Secretary General, accompanied by members of the ISSA Sport Commission, to review the candidate countries' facilities, infrastructure and organizational plans ahead of the final hosting decision.

The upcoming Islamic Solidarity Games – starting November 7 in Riyadh – will welcome around 3,500 athletes from 57 countries, competing across 23 sports, marking the event's return to Saudi Arabia two decades after the inaugural edition in 2005.



# Natural, historical features make Mehriz unique city in heart of desert

By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

## INTERVIEW

Mehriz is one of the summer resort cities of Yazd Province. Thanks to its unique natural and historical landscape, it is considered one of the most distinctive cities in Iran and, due to these features, has the potential to be recognized globally as a historic garden city. Mehriz is located about 30 kilometers south of Yazd, near the foothills of Mount Shirkuh. The continuation of the Shirkuh Mountain range along the western part of the city, which remains snow-covered for much of the year, has led to the formation of rich underground aquifers and a milder climate compared to other parts of Yazd Province. These climatic characteristics have turned Mehriz into a green jewel in the heart of the desert, making its recreational areas popular destinations for visitors and tourists from across the province and even the country. The lush, tree-filled nature of Mehriz is such that upon entering the city, one feels as though they have stepped into a vast village. In every corner, fruit trees — especially pomegranates — extend their branches over the garden and house walls, creating beautiful green canopies and shaded lanes that add to the charm of Mehriz's traditional garden alleys. Many historical and traditional gardens still stand in Mehriz today. Among them, the Pahlavanpour Garden is one of the most beautiful, and together with the Hassanabad Qanat of Mehriz, which runs through it, they are both inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The global registration of these natural and historical sites makes Mehriz a strong candidate for recognition as a historic garden city. Regarding the unique nature and landscape of Mehriz, Iran Daily conducted an interview with Ali Dehqan Mongabadi, head of the Department of Natural Resources and Watershed Management of Mehriz.



Ali Dehqan Mongabadi

**IRAN DAILY:** Please explain the climate, natural environment, and attractions of Mehriz.

**DEHQAN MONGABADI:** Mehriz, along with Taft, is one of the summer resort destinations of Yazd Province. The climate of this region, influenced by the foothills of Shirkuh Mountain, is cooler and milder compared to other cities and areas of Yazd. Most of Yazd Province's summer resorts are located in Mehriz and Taft counties.

Mehriz, with an area of over 670,000 hectares, contains vast gardens — so much so that gardens occupy more than 50% of the city's area. Pahlavanpour Garden is just one of the many historical gardens in Mehriz, and numerous others are scattered throughout the city.

In addition to the city itself, there are many summer resort villages located in the Miankuh and Tangeh rural districts of Mehriz, which enjoy very pleasant weather. Due to its temperate climate throughout the year — especially in summer and during holidays — Mehriz and its surrounding villages host many visitors from across the country.

Mehriz is home to several excellent natural and historical attractions, such as the Gharbalbiz Spring located on the slopes of Shirkuh Mountain. This spring is not permanent, but during rainy seasons and wet years, water flows from it, adding beauty



Shirkuh Mountain  
tishineh.com

to the area. Gharbalbiz Spring is also an ancient site; beside it lies an underground city that was once used as a fortress and refuge. Near this underground city, tombs have been discovered containing remains of human bodies buried in the fetal position, just as they were in the womb.

**How would you describe the plant and animal life of Mehriz?**

Over 90% of the city's lands are natural resource areas, of which about 650,000 hectares have been designated as national land and host rare plant and animal species. The region's vegetation includes sweet asafetida (*Ferula asa-foetida*), rhubarb, tamarisk, wild pistachio, mountain almond, cumin, wild fig, and more. One remarkable site is Dasht-e



Dasht-e Rivas  
yjc.ir

Rivas (meaning Rhubarb Plain) located above Aliabad village in the Ernan district of Mehriz. The entire area is covered with rhubarb plants, and in May, when the rhubarb blooms, the red flowers create a breathtaking view. Every year, many tourists



Pahlavanpour Garden  
alibaba.ir

visit the Rhubarb Plain to enjoy its natural beauty. Mehriz is also rich in wildlife. Over one-third of the city's natural resource lands are managed by the Department of Environment. Rare species such as wild cats, Asiatic cheetahs, and Per-

sian onagers inhabit these areas. Camera traps installed in Mehriz's protected zones have repeatedly captured images of rare species like cheetahs, caracals, Pallas's cats, and sand foxes. Additionally, there is a breeding site for Persian onagers in the region. The city's Department of Environment has also established several private wildlife reserves managed by local nature enthusiasts. There are currently two to three such reserves in Mehriz, considered exemplary nationwide. Thanks to the efforts of environmental rangers and wardens, the population of wild species in the city has grown in recent years. Moreover, over 100 traditional grazing lands have been designated across Mehriz's natural lands. Each has an official registry, and herders must obtain

permits specifying the type, number, and grazing period of their livestock before being allowed to use the rangelands.

**Tell us more about Mehriz's gardens and natural environment. Can this city be registered as a "Garden City"?**

As mentioned earlier, a large portion of Mehriz is covered by gardens, making it unique in Iran. Within the city, there are numerous almond, fig, and especially pomegranate trees; almost every home has a courtyard with several fruit trees, particularly pomegranates.

Mehriz's pomegranates — especially those from Saryazd — are well-known across the country. The historic Mehriz Garden City is already registered at the national level, and given its distinctive features, it certainly has the potential to be inscribed globally as a historic garden city.

Officials from the city's Cultural Heritage Department, the Municipality, and the Governor's Office are pursuing this goal, and the Department of Natural Resources of Mehriz is fully committed to supporting the effort. The global registration of Mehriz as a historic garden city would not only promote the city and attract more tourism and revenue but also help prevent illegal construction, protect existing gardens, and preserve the city's natural landscape by discouraging tree cutting.

## Reviving historical buildings to breathe life into cities

### Iranica Desk

A heritage restoration expert believes that bringing historical buildings back to life helps preserve the cultural identity of cities, revitalizes their spirit, and serves as one of the most effective tools for urban regeneration and tourism development.

Ahmad Razavi, a historical restoration specialist and university professor, told Mehr News Agency: "Restoration means returning a building to its original and stable state, but revival goes a step further. In the process of revival, we strive to reintegrate a historical structure into contemporary life so that it regains a social and economic role within the urban fabric. For instance, an abandoned caravanserai can be transformed into a traditional guesthouse or cultural center."

He continued, "Reviving cultural properties marks the beginning of urban regeneration. When an old structure is brought back to life, the surrounding neighborhood also flourishes. Local businesses emerge, people move around more, and the sense of belonging

to the area grows stronger." According to Razavi, local businesses are those economic activities created and operated by residents within their own neighborhoods. He explained, "When a historic house is revived, cafés, handicraft workshops, or souvenir shops often emerge nearby. Local residents become guides, shopkeepers, cooks, or even drivers for visitors. In essence, the revival of heritage buildings fuels the local economy and promotes sustainable employment."



Razavi emphasized that "reviving buildings is not merely about protection; it acts as a driving force for urban tourism. Tourists seek tangible experiences of a city's history and culture, and the revival of historic buildings provides exactly that. When a visitor steps into a traditional bathhouse turned teahouse, or walks through a restored mansion converted into a museum, they not only enjoy the experience but also connect emotionally with the past."

Regarding the high costs of revival

projects, Razavi said, "This is one of the real challenges in the field of heritage preservation. Many owners or residents of old properties lack the financial means to restore them, particularly when the buildings are registered as national heritage sites, where strict regulations limit reconstruction or alterations. At first, these projects may appear expensive, but in the long term, they become valuable cultural and economic investments. A revived building can generate dozens of jobs and attract both domestic and inter-



MEHR

national tourists." The university professor added, "In reality, reviving architectural landmarks is practically impossible without the participation of the government and public institutions. The private sector alone cannot bear the full financial burden, especially for nationally registered monuments that involve technical and legal restrictions. Therefore, collaborative models must be developed — where the government provides legal and financial frameworks, and the private sector or local communities

take part in implementation." He further suggested, "Municipalities can encourage restoration by offering tax exemptions, low-interest loans, or service incentives. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage could establish support funds to cover the specialized costs of restoration. This approach has proven successful in many countries, including Italy and France, where it has preserved historic districts and attracted tourism investment."

Razavi stressed that "neglecting historical structures not only erases urban identity but also multiplies future reconstruction costs. Timely involvement by governmental and public institutions is, in fact, a preventive measure against the destruction of cultural heritage, not merely an expenditure." He concluded, "Reviving historical buildings is, in truth, a bridge between the past and the future. When a city preserves its historical memory, it builds an identity-rooted and sustainable future. Each revived monument brings a fragment of the city's soul back to life."



# Ilam Province brings handicrafts to Iraq's Kut in push for regional ties

## Arts & Culture Desk

An exhibition of Ilam provincial handicrafts formally opened October 10 in Kut, the capital of Wasit Province, on the occasion of Iraq's National Day. The week-long event features 15 standout Iranian artisans, placing on display kilims, leather marquetry, pottery, woven fabrics, copperware, local dolls and other traditional works, IRNA reported. The exhibition is jointly organized by Ilam's governorate and its Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, with collaboration from Wasit provincial authorities. The aim is to showcase Ilam's creative strengths and bolster trade, tourism and cultural exchange between the two neighbors. Abbas Mirzad, Ilam's deputy coordinator for economic affairs, called the

event a "bridge" to connect markets and minds. He said the provincial delegation held talks with the governor general of Badreh and local officials, during which issues of export, tourism and university cooperation were weighed. He noted that both sides "stressed the need" to finalize a memorandum of understanding soon. Head of Ilam Cultural Heritage Department Farzad Sharifi described handicrafts as a "common language" across borders. He added that this was the third time Ilam had arranged such trade-cultural exhibitions in Iraq — once in Sulaymaniyah, twice in Wasit already. He said the government is keen to see its border provinces play an active role in regional trade. Mirzad also announced that Wasit of-

ficials have been invited to participate in a fam-tour in Ilam, to visit its tourist and cultural sites. The intention is to familiarize Iraqi delegates with Ilam's potential and lay the groundwork for sustained cooperation. At the opening, Ilam's delegation—comprising Sharifi, Mirzad, deputies, and Qazi Zahedi, head of the Foreign Ministry's office in Ilam—was greeted by Wasit dignitaries, including Jafar Malekshahi, the governor general of Badreh. Ilam shares about 430 kilometers of border with Iraq, touching Wasit, Maysan and Diyala provinces. Cultural, linguistic and religious commonalities have long connected border communities on both sides. Many residents across the line trace ancestry to Ilam, speak Southern Kurdish (known in Iraq as Feyli), and hold strong ties to Iran.



● BORNA

## Iran's 'Punishment' globetrots from Sharjah to US screens



## Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian short film 'Punishment' by director Pouya Mofid was selected for screenings at three international festivals this autumn, beginning in Sharjah on October 5 and culminating in the US in November. From 5 to 12 October, 'Punishment' will screen three times at the Sharjah International Children's and Youth Film Festival in the UAE, at Vox City Centre Al Zahia, where Mofid will walk the

red carpet, ILNA reported. The film then moves to Orange County, for the 26th Newport Beach Film Festival, held from October 16 to 23. Its US screening is scheduled for October 23 at 15:30. Next stop is Delaware for the 27th Rehoboth Beach International Film Festival, running November 3–9, where 'Punishment' will be shown on November 8. 'Punishment', produced and distributed worldwide by Madakto Pictures, had earli-

er been screened in Ningbo, China, and at DokuFest in Kosovo. Mehdi Asghari Azghadi, who penned the screenplay, described the film as arising from "a few human questions" including how the next generation reflects what we have handed to them, and whether silenced voices echo back a mirror of ourselves. He pondered whether a seemingly simple "punishment" might cause the collapse of character in a child or adult. He added that Mofid, on his first directorial venture, embraced the emotional complexity of the script, navigating the challenge of working with child actors and sensitive scenes. The film stars Mohammad Sedighi Mehr and Sahar Aghasi. It centers on an incident in an elementary school where a Black child—after harsh correction by a teacher—develops a severe stutter traced by doctors to psychological trauma. The family pursues legal action against the teacher.

## Hungarian novelist Krasznahorkai wins 2025 Nobel Prize in Literature

Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai, 71, whose works including 'Satantango' and 'The Melancholy of Resistance' were translated into Persian, was awarded the 2025 Nobel Prize in Literature for his "compelling and visionary" body of work that reaffirms the enduring power of art amid apocalyptic fear. The Swedish Academy said the prize recognized his creation of "works that, in the midst of apocalyptic dread, emphasize the everlasting force of art." Born in Gyula, Hungary, on January 5, 1954, Krasznahorkai is celebrated as one of the foremost living postmodern writers. His prose is marked by extraordinarily long, flowing sentences, often without traditional paragraph breaks, producing a musical, relentless narrative rhythm. Critics highlight his unflinching depiction of societal collapse, existential despair, and the anxieties of modern Eastern Europe. Krasznahorkai first gained international attention with 'Satantango' (1985), a novel portraying the disintegration of a remote Hungarian village. The story was later adapted into a celebrated 1994 film by director



Béla Tarr. His other major works include 'The Melancholy of Resistance' (1989), 'War and War' (1999), and 'Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming' (2016). In 2015, he became the first Hungarian author to win the Man Booker International Prize, cementing his global literary stature. Several of his novels have been translated into Persian, including 'Satantango,' translated by

Sepand Saedi and Zahra Vossoughi, 'The Melancholy of Resistance' by Ali Masoumi, and 'Animalinside,' 'The Last Wolf,' and 'Chasing Homer,' translated by Nikzad Norpanah. Krasznahorkai's work has drawn comparisons to Franz Kafka, Thomas Bernhard, and Herman Melville, and continues to influence contemporary literature, film, and the visual arts worldwide.

## Coral revival as Chabahar reefs show recovery after three years

## Social Desk

Director General of Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Protection at Iran's Department of Environment Shahrnam Fadakar announced that a three-year monitoring effort has confirmed the successful revival of coral reefs planted in the Gulf of Chabahar. Over the past four days, Fadakar's expert team, along with regional coastal offices, carried out fresh underwater surveys at the transplantation sites in Chabahar Bay, along Iran's south-

eastern coast. Those reefs were first planted in late 2022. The results have exceeded expectations, IRNA reported. "All three coral species are showing excellent growth and full health," Fadakar reported. He said extensive, vibrant colonies now cover large areas, and even the natural seabed surrounding the plantings has become colonized. Concrete blocks left on the seabed from earlier efforts are now "completely covered" by brain corals,

transformed into living reef structures. The natural recovery process, he said, is unfolding on its own. In the same survey, the team recorded a "substantial" return of reef fish populations, benthic species and invertebrates—clear signs that the habitat is regaining its vitality. To bolster this, they planted about 200 new coral fragments on spider-style frames, enhancing structural complexity and long-term stability. Based on current data, Fadakar believes the region's natural capacity for

reef regeneration has been restored. The next step is to formally designate the area as a marine protected zone to ensure long-term conservation and sustainable use. The revival comes despite decades of pressure on Chabahar Bay corals—from port construction, dredging and bleaching linked to warming waters—documented in scientific studies on local reef decline. Nevertheless, this new success offers a rare marine conservation win in the Gulf of Oman region.

