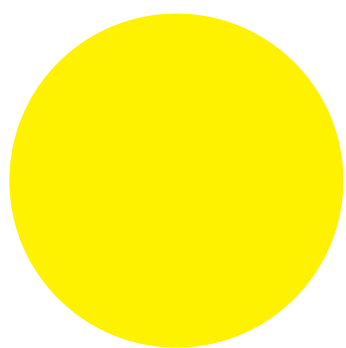


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# Iran Daily

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IRNA

## Trump's overture to Iran rooted in peace through strength vision

### INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE



In the early hours of his arrival in Tel Aviv on Monday, and before attending the signing ceremony for a Gaza peace agreement in Egypt, US President Donald Trump announced that his next agenda item would be "peace with Iran" and added that he was ready to hear Iran's reasons for pursuing its nuclear program. Those remarks come against a backdrop in which the United States, bombed Iran's nuclear facilities in June amid nuclear talks, an attack Trump later described as "complete annihilation." Following that strike, talks between Tehran and Washington were halted. Nonetheless, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told

a television interviewer that Tehran would consider any proposal that took Iran's national interests into account.

Trump's proposal of peace with Iran raises serious questions about the motivations and objectives behind the stance. International affairs expert Hassan Beheshtipour told Iran Daily that Trumps wanted to get peace via military might.

Accordingly, Iran Daily spoke with international affairs expert Hassan Beheshtipour to get his take on the matter.

**IRAN DAILY: What is Trump's real motive in raising the issue of peace with Iran? Is he seeking total surrender, or a deal that would also accommodate Iran's interests?**

**BEHESHTIPOUR:** To analyze the remarks, the definitions in Trump's mind must first be reviewed. Trump believes in achieving peace through strength.

That strategy stands in direct opposition to Iran's conception of peace, which is one through cooperation and by securing maximum benefits for all stakeholders. That view is precisely at odds with Trump's outlook. Trump and his ally, [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu, believe that peace can be produced by projecting military presence and power, whereas during the months since Trump became president, and in the four years he previously held the office, he has not been able to realize peace with that approach. On the surface, that strategy may bring about ceasefires, but the main issue is root causes and such a policy cannot yield sustainable, enduring peace.

When peace is imposed on one side and its demands are ignored, it will be naturally temporary and face serious mid- and long-term challenges. Thus, Trump's claim that he wants to make peace springs from his worldview. He seeks to obtain peace through strength,

not cooperation.

However, this proposal should not be dismissed out of hand. Dialogue should be engaged, even if he intends to impose the narratives frequently floated in the media, such as demands for zero percent enrichment, limits on Iran's missile program, or an end to Iran's support for regional resistance groups, which Iran can simply not accept.

**Given that Iran's Leader Ayatollah Khamenei declared negotiation with the US to be a "sheer dead end," do you think restarting talks with Washington is possible in this environment?**

The Leader's strategy has always been one of demanding rights and trying to present Iran's interests in maximal terms. The same approach was put forward in March 2025, and yet in April 2025 permission was granted for indirect talks to take place.

Celebrating National Day of Villages to empower rural communities in Zanjan

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**Eight historic mosques from East Azarbaijan nominated for UNESCO world heritage listing**

From stone sanctuaries to wooden marvels, Iran's NW preserves centuries of faith, art



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# Russia voices commitment to military cooperation with Iran



## International Desk

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reaffirmed Moscow's continued commitment to military-technical cooperation with Iran, stressing that such collaboration fully complies with international law and post-sanctions frameworks. Speaking at a meeting with Arab journalists, Lavrov noted that following the lifting of UN Security Council restrictions, Russia faces no legal barriers in developing defense cooperation with Iran. He emphasized that Moscow provides Tehran with the defense equipment it requires "in full conformity with in-

ternational law," RIA Novosti reported.

The Russian top diplomat's remarks came in response to a question about the supply of S-400 systems and fighter jets to Iran.

Without addressing specific details, Lavrov underlined that all aspects of Russia's cooperation with Iran are conducted transparently and within legal parameters.

At the instigation of European governments, the United Nations reinstated an arms embargo and other sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program on September 27. Russia has said it does not recognize the move.

In an interview with RT last

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

"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" mech-

anism 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.

## Palestinian detainees, Israeli captives freed as part of Gaza truce

### International Desk

Hundreds of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel and all 20 living captives held by the resistance movement Hamas walked free Monday as part of a cease-fire pausing two years of Israel's onslaught that decimated the Gaza Strip and killed tens of thousands of Palestinians.

Hamas said Monday it will hand over the bodies of four of 28 deceased captives. Israel said it freed more than 1,900 Palestinian prisoners as part of the Gaza cease-fire deal.

Speaking to the regime's parliament, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared he was "committed to this peace," raising hopes that the ruinous war, which triggered other conflicts in the Middle East, might come to an end. But fundamental questions remain over whether Hamas will accept disarmament and who will govern Gaza.

Cheering crowds greeted buses of released prisoners in the West Bank and Gaza, while families and friends of the captives gathered in a square in Tel Aviv, Israel and cried out with joy and relief as news arrived that the captives were free.

While major questions remain about the future of Hamas and Gaza, the exchange of captives and prisoners raised hopes for ending the deadliest war between Israel and Hamas. The cease-fire deal calls for a surge of humanitarian aid into Gaza which is experiencing famine.

The Israel's onslaught on Gaza began on October 7, 2023, after Hamas



launched an operation on the regime's positions in the occupied territories, killing some 1,200 people and taking 251 captives.

In Israel's offensive, more than 67,000 Palestinians have been killed, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The toll is expected to grow as bodies are pulled from rubble previously made inaccessible by fighting.

The war has destroyed large swaths of Gaza and displaced about 90% of its some 2 million residents. It has also triggered other conflicts in the region, sparked worldwide protests and led to allegations of genocide that Israel denies.

Tens of thousands of Israelis watched the captive transfers at public screenings across the occupied territories. Palestinians in the occupied West Bank rejoiced as buses carrying dozens of released prisoners from Ofer Prison arrived in Beitunia, near Ramallah.

Later, giant crowds were gathered to



A Palestinian prisoner makes the victory sign after being released from an Israeli prison as part of a cease-fire deal between Israel and Hamas, upon his arrival in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, on October 13, 2025.

● MAJDI MOHAMMED/AP

greet buses carrying other prisoners arriving at Nasser Hospital in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis.

The prisoners include 250 people serving life sentences for convictions in attacks on Israelis, in addition to 1,700 seized from Gaza during the war and held without charge. They will be returned to the West Bank or Gaza or sent into exile.

More than 150 prisoners were sent to Egypt by Israel and arrived at Gaza's Rafah crossing with Egypt early Monday afternoon, according to an Egyptian official, who had direct knowledge of the deal's implementation. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

## Tehran skips Cairo meeting in rebuke of 12-day war, US sanction threats



### International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi rejected an invitation on Monday to partake in an international peace summit on the Gaza Strip in Egypt's Red Sea city of Sharm el-Sheikh.

Araghchi said the Iranian officials cannot sit down with leaders who "have attacked the Iranian people and continue to threaten and sanction us."

Araghchi, in a post on X, expressed gratitude for Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's invitation but made clear that neither President Masoud Pezeshkian nor himself would meet with hostile counterparts.

Araghchi was referring to US airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities during Israel's 12-day war of aggression, as well as sanctions targeting the country's economy and energy sector.

In a televised interview on Saturday, the Iranian foreign minister reiterated that Tehran is ready to engage in nuclear negotiations if the United States is prepared for a "fair and balanced dialogue."

"Our position towards America has always been clear; if they are ready to negotiate from an equal footing, to achieve common

interests based on mutual respect, and if they do not mistake negotiation for dictation and are prepared for a fair and balanced dialogue, we too will be ready to engage in such negotiations," Araghchi said. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump on Monday pled for a peace deal with Iran, more than three months after Washington joined the Tel Aviv regime in striking the Islamic Republic's nuclear sites and civilian infrastructure during a 12-day war of aggression.

"You know it would be great if we could make a peace deal with them," Trump said of Iran during a speech to Israel's parliament (Knesset).

"Would you be happy with that? Wouldn't it be nice, I think. Because I think they want to."

Trump claimed that the ball was in Tehran's court for any agreement to come to pass.

"We're ready when you are," Trump said during his address which was briefly interrupted as two left-wing lawmakers were expelled, who called for the recognition of the State of Palestine and a halt to Gaza genocide.

Trump also defended pulling Washington out of an agreement brokered under ex-president Barack Obama on Iran's nuclear program.

"I terminated the Iran nuclear deal and I was very proud to do it," Trump said. He told the Knesset that, "The hand of friendship and cooperation is open" to Iran.

"They want to make a deal and we're going to see if we can do something," he added.

"Neither the United States nor Israel bear the people of Iran any hostility. We merely want to live in peace."



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

## Tehran offers to mediate Afghanistan-Pakistan border tensions

### International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman on Monday warned against the consequences of recent tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan beyond their borders, reiterating its readiness to mediate between its eastern neighbors.

"Among the important points for us is the issue of security and stability in neighboring states. Afghanistan and Pakistan are both our Muslim neighbors, and we believe that any estrangement in relations between the two countries can have consequences extending beyond their borders," Esmail Baqaei said during his weekly press conference. Dozens of soldiers were killed on

Saturday night in the most serious fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan since the Taliban came to power in Kabul.

The cross-border fighting erupted along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border after an attack by the Afghan Taliban on Pakistani military posts led to a heavy exchange of fire.

According to officials, Afghan troops opened fire on Pakistani army posts along the north-western border with Pakistan on Saturday night and seized several of the posts. The attacks came after the Taliban accused Pakistan of carrying out airstrikes on Afghan territory, including in the capital, Kabul, earlier this week.

Pakistan's military said 23 of its

troops and more than 200 Taliban and affiliated fighters on the Afghan side were killed in the clashes.

It also closed border crossings with Afghanistan on Sunday, Pakistani officials said.

However, Taliban have released different figures from the casualties. Taliban said their forces killed 58 Pakistani soldiers but gave no details on how it knew of the casualty figures. It also said that 20 Afghan troops were killed or injured.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has called for dialogue and restraint from both sides, and emphasizes that the differences between Afghanistan and Pakistan must be resolved through dialogue and interactions," Baqaei said on Monday.





# Tehran calls for joint action plan to boost INSTC transit to 15m tons

Energy ties, electricity corridor top Baku meeting agenda



Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq Malvajerd addresses a trilateral meeting of Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia in Baku on October 13, 2025.

Economy Desk

Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq Malvajerd told a trilateral meeting of Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia in Baku on Monday that a concrete action plan is needed to ensure freight stability and achieve 15 million tons of transit through the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) by 2030. “Guaranteeing cargo flow along the North-South Corridor is essential,” she said, adding that the trilateral cooperation in transportation, transit, and energy is of great importance, IRNA reported. The co-chair of the Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Commission also proposed that

the three countries finalize the action plan within three months and sign it at the next summit. The Baku meeting was attended by high-ranking officials from the three countries, including Azerbaijan’s Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev, Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk, and the Iranian minister. Participants emphasized expanding energy cooperation and creating an electricity corridor linking the national power grids of the three nations. Lauding the meeting as “an important initiative to strengthen transport, transit, and energy connectivity and deepen regional integration,” Sadeq Malvajerd said, “The

positive outcomes of this meeting can serve as a roadmap for developing transit infrastructure and improving connectivity among the three countries. Given the North-South Corridor’s importance as a key framework for cooperation, both hard and soft infrastructure development must remain a shared priority.” Launched in 2000 by India, Russia and Iran, the INSTC is a multimodal network of sea, rail and road routes connecting India and the Persian Gulf to Russia, Central Asia and Northern Europe.

**Infrastructure development projects**  
Detailing ongoing projects, the minister said the 160-kilometer Rasht-Astara railway — implemented with Russian support — is underway. “Eighty kilometers of the required land have been acquired and graded, and the remaining section will be completed and handed over to the Russian contractor by the end of the year,” she said. According to Sadeq Malvajerd, Iran and Azerbaijan have agreed to complete the Astara railway terminal by the end of 2025. She also pointed to progress on the Aras-road corridor connecting Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan via Iran. “The widening of the 107-kilometer Jolfa-Kalaleh road and construction of the Kalaleh-Aghband bridge are advancing. Based on our agreement, construction of the new border bridge will be completed by the end of this year.”

**‘Energy corridor’**  
In the energy session, she emphasized that the sector is a strategic area of cooperation and highlighted the need to expand the North-South Corridor into an “energy corridor.” Concluding her remarks, the minister described the corridor as “a unique framework for developing economic, transport, and energy relations among the three countries.” In the meeting, Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi, managing director of Iran’s Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution Company (Tavanir), emphasized the importance of linking the electricity grids of Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan. “This connection would enable the exchange of at least 200 megawatts of power among the three countries and strengthen regional energy security,” he said, according to ISNA. He added that the integration of power grids would not only improve network stability and efficiency but also create a reliable route for electricity exchange within the framework of the corridor. The initiative, he said, aligns with Iran’s strategic policy of expanding regional energy diplomacy and electricity cooperation, further enhancing the country’s role in the regional energy balance.

**Customs cooperation**  
Sadeq Malvajerd also proposed expediting the signing of a memorandum of understanding on customs cooperation among Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, and India, which has already been drafted. “Electronic exchange of cargo and vehicle data among the customs authorities of the three countries under the INSTC framework is vital,” she said, suggesting that a joint technical working group be formed next month to develop a mechanism for data exchange.

## Veep: Iran aiming to move from bypassing sanctions to eradicating bans

Economy Desk

Iran’s First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said on Monday that the country is working to move from merely circumventing “inhumane” sanctions to eradicating them altogether, calling circumvention costly and emphasizing the importance of national experience and resolve. Speaking at a ceremony marking National Guilds Day, Aref said that despite the intentions of adversaries, sanctions have not brought the Iranian nation to its knees, IRNA reported. “In the face of all sanctions and the West’s inhumane and brutal actions against the Iranian people, we have not only resisted but continued firmly on our path,” he said. Aref acknowledged that sanctions create challenges for the country, but said the government, supported by the Iranian people and the Iranian Chamber of Guilds, will continue its course. “Sanctions have not defeated the country, but we are moving from circumventing sanctions — which carries costs — to eradicating them,” Aref added. He expressed hope that, with the experience gained by the government and national determination, the country can remove the sanctions. Iran has been under Western sanctions for decades over its peaceful nuclear activities. Beyond affecting the oil and energy sectors, the embargoes have imposed costs even on humanitarian areas, including access to medicines. Despite sanctions, the country has managed its oil output and exports. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Iran increased crude shipments — primarily to China — in 2022 and 2023. The country raised crude oil output by about 1 million barrels per day from 2020 to 2023, while exports to China grew by almost 870 million bpd during the same period. In response, the US expanded sanctions in April 2024 to cover ports, vessels, and refineries involved in purchasing Iranian oil. These new sanctions allow for 180-day waivers “if restrictions interfere with US national security.” Analysts say that if all oil sanctions were lifted, Iran’s crude oil production could return to its full capacity, estimated at 3.8 million bpd.

## Iran’s oil output hit 3.45m bpd in September: US data

Economy Desk

Iran’s crude oil production climbed by 250,000 barrels per day (bpd) in September compared with August, reaching 3.45 million bpd, according to the US Energy Information Administration’s (EIA) latest monthly report. Citing data from the statistical arm of the US Department of Energy, the Iranian Oil Ministry’s news service Shana reported that the EIA’s Short-Term Energy Outlook showed the Islamic Republic’s output rise from 3.25 million bpd in August. The report also indicated that Iran’s average crude production in 2024 stood at 3.31 million bpd, up from 2.87 million bpd in 2023. According to the EIA, Iran pumped an average of 3.33 million bpd in the third quarter of 2025, compared with 3.37 million bpd in the previous quarter. The findings come despite US President Donald Trump’s so-called “maximum pressure” campaign, which sought to slash Iran’s oil exports to zero. Data from the US Energy Department, however, suggest that the effort has failed to curb Iran’s oil production significantly. The Iranian government does not release precise figures on oil production or exports, saying the data must remain confidential due to sanctions imposed on the country. However, Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad said last week that the country’s oil production had increased by 120,000 barrels per day in the year to September regardless of US sanctions. “Despite the restrictions and sanctions, new records have been set for exports and production of crude oil,” Paknejad told the state TV.

# Economy minister unveils six key projects to drive 8% growth under development plan

Economy Desk

Iran’s Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance Ali Madanizadeh said on Monday that six major projects were being led by the ministry to achieve the goals of the country’s Seventh Development Plan (SDP) in the next for year, including an 8% economic growth target. Speaking at a meeting with members of the Parliament’s Economic Committee, Madanizadeh said that six key projects had been selected to “maximize efficiency” during the SDP, ensure 8% economic growth and boost investment, IRNA reported. According to the minister, the projects

include digitalizing the tax system, automating customs operations, improving resource management and utilization, advancing investment development initiatives, launching a national credit scheme to support young couples in line with population policies, and developing an economic modeling framework. Madanizadeh said the projects were chosen for their broad impact on the population and their inter-agency importance. “These projects will be directly supervised by me,” he added, noting that their implementation would be carried out by relevant deputies and heads of affiliated organizations.



Iran’s Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance Ali Madanizadeh (c) chairs a meeting with the head and members of the Parliament’s Economic Committee, at the ministry building in Tehran on October 13, 2025.

## Trump’s overture to ...

This was a tactical decision. The Islamic Republic’s broader strategy is fundamentally anti-oppression and anti-hegemonic. But decisions about when to negotiate, with whom, and where are tactical. Therefore, the Leader’s stance on this issue should not be read as immutable; if new conditions emerge, negotiations can resume.

**If talks were to begin, what risks and opportunities would they present for Iran?**  
The most important opportunity is that Iran would be able to present

its views directly to Trump and to hear his non-media, off-the-record views, because this man has shown that what he says in private policy rooms often differs substantially from what is said in the media. Second, it would demonstrate to the world that Iran is willing to come to the table. Third, Iran’s positions could be conveyed directly to the American side rather than through the media. Fourth, in general nothing would be lost. Iran’s international credibility would not be damaged as some claim. Loss would occur only if concessions were accepted. The reason the US imposed war on

Iran was because Iran stood firm on its positions in five rounds of negotiations. But there was nothing wrong with entering negotiations.

**What message has Iran’s absence from today’s Gaza peace conference in Sharm el-Sheikh sent to regional countries and to the United States?**  
The decision to skip this conference served Iran’s best interests, because this was a top-down international gathering, not a forum where parties gather to arrive at a shared outlook. This conference was organized around a plan put forward by Trump

and its agenda was predetermined. Why would the Islamic Republic serve as a decorative presence at such a gathering? Iran should participate in meetings where it can influence the content, convey its message, and contribute to the session’s conclusions. Had Iran attended, its message would have been completely isolated among the 20 participating countries. Why give legitimacy to a conference whose foundation ignores and overrides the rights of the Palestinian people and imposes on the people of the Gaza Strip the demand that Hamas must be removed?



# End of diplomacy, start of crisis

## PERSPECTIVE

What was initially rolled out as an “anti-drug trafficking campaign” is now on the verge of becoming one of the most tense military confrontations for the United States in the Western Hemisphere. Every targeted boat, every unfruitful diplomatic letter, and every fresh accusation blurs the line between anti-cartel operations and a push for regime change in Nicolas Maduro's socialist government. Trump, who was furious over Maduro's refusal to step down voluntarily, called in his special envoy for Venezuela, Richard Grenell, and the head of the Southern Command during a meeting with senior military leaders. In that meeting, Trump personally ordered all diplomatic contact with Maduro's government to be called off.

This order spelled the end for a mission that had been going on for months to reach a diplomatic agreement. Grenell had been shuttling between Washington and Caracas in recent months, hoping to hammer out a deal to head off a wider conflict and pave the way for US companies to get at Venezuela's oil resources. But in the end, pressure from the hardline faction of the Trump administration, led by Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Marco Rubio, closed off the path for negotiations.

According to US officials, the Trump administration has drawn up numerous plans to ramp up military operations, from attacks on drug-trafficking vessels to scenarios for the direct ouster of Maduro's government. On October 3, US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced that four people were killed in the latest US Navy attack on a boat in international waters. This was the fourth recorded attack in Washington's new campaign against “narco-traffickers”. Rubio called Maduro “a fugitive from American justice” and announced the bounty for his capture had been upped to \$50 million. According to White House officials, Trump is prepared to use “every element of American power” to stop drugs from coming into



The illustration shows US President Donald Trump (R) and his Venezuelan counterpart, Nicolas Maduro. ● JEFF FRAMPTON/GZERO



Informed sources say the disagreement between Grenell and Rubio over the strategy for dealing with Caracas is part of a behind-the-scenes power struggle between two factions of the Trump administration. Grenell sought to avert a direct conflict and lay the groundwork for the return of US energy companies to Venezuela's oil fields, while Rubio and his allies insisted on Maduro's immediate fall from power.

the country, and his message to Maduro has been clear: an immediate crackdown on drug trafficking from Venezuela.

### Risk of war of attrition

While the circle close to Rubio speaks of the “need for decisive action,” supporters of diplomacy within the Trump administration warn that any move toward expanding military operations onto Venezuelan soil or a direct push for regime change could drag the United States into a new and protracted war. They point out that Trump himself had campaigned on a pledge to keep America out of “endless wars”. Nevertheless, the recent official notice of the Trump administration to Congress, which labeled drug cartels as “terrorist organizations” and their members “unlawful combatants,” is a sign of a fundamental shift in approach in Washington. This notice, alongside the breakdown of diplomacy, was read by many observers as a signal of the administration's intent to enter a new phase of conflict.

### Power play in shadow of oil

Informed sources say the disagreement between Grenell

and Rubio over the strategy for dealing with Caracas is part of a behind-the-scenes power struggle between two factions of the Trump administration. Grenell sought to avert a direct conflict and lay the groundwork for the return of US energy companies to Venezuela's oil fields, while Rubio and his allies insisted on Maduro's immediate fall from power. In response, Maduro, in a letter to Trump, denied the drug trafficking allegations and called for talks via Grenell to continue. But with his mission shut down, the path to any compromise was blocked off.

### Tension in warm Caribbean waters

In recent weeks, the US Navy has stepped up its presence off Venezuela's coast. Destroyers, submarines, and F-35 fighter jets are taking part in operations officially defined as a “war on drugs” but which have taken on a more military character. According to CNN, the US Justice Department has drawn up a confidential list of cartels and trafficking suspects, and, by issuing a legal opinion, has allowed the president to use “deadly force” against these groups. This docu-

ment provides the legal backing for a widespread campaign, the reach of which stretches from the Caribbean to the Mexican border and has even authorized the CIA to carry out covert operations.

But in Caracas, the Venezuelan government has called these attacks “extrajudicial killings” and a prelude to overthrow. Maduro has warned that Washington's real goal is “overthrowing the government,” not fighting drugs, and that the country is prepared to stand up for its sovereignty.

### False flag operation

Amid rising tensions, Maduro claimed Venezuelan security forces had foiled a plot to bomb the building of the closed US embassy in Caracas. In a television interview, he said two reliable sources — one domestic and one international — had warned that “right-wing extremist groups” were seeking to ramp up the confrontation with Washington by planting explosives in the embassy. According to Maduro, the aim of this action was to pin the blame on the Venezuelan government so that a “new phase of escalation” could kick off.

Although the US embassy has been closed since 2019, with only a few personnel looking after the building, the claim was immediately given wide coverage in state media.

### Shadow of Pope, oil

Maduro, who previously saw himself isolated against US accusations, has now sought to drum up religious and moral legitimacy for his position. In a letter to Pope Leo XIV, he wrote that he hopes the leader of the Catholic Church can help Venezuela hold on to its “peace and stability”. This effort is a sign of his search for international mediation. However, critics in Washington see it as a futile attempt to buy time.

As the US military campaign gears up, experts warn that any deployment of US forces on Venezuelan soil could have consequences similar to Iraq or Libya. Yet, within Trump's inner circle, some believe that maximum pressure is the only language that will be effective in making Maduro back down.

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

## Nobel Peace Prize recycles US intervention blueprint



By Omran Alizadeh

Expert on political affairs

## OPINION

The West does not really define peace as a human ideal, but rather as a tool for bringing about its own domination. The recent awarding of what can only be described as an “American Nobel” is a continuation of the very policy previously rolled out in Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian countries.

In a controversial move, this year's Nobel Peace Committee awarded the peace prize to Maria Corina Machado for her relentless efforts in promoting democratic rights and a peaceful transfer of power in Venezuela. While

this move is ostensibly a symbol of support for democracy, it is, in reality, part of a multi-layered scheme to soften up public opinion for US intervention in Venezuela.

Machado is a figure who, until recently, was not even well-known within Venezuela. However, in recent weeks, American and European media have talked her up as the opposition leader and the primary candidate to take over after Maduro. Numerous meetings between US officials and her on American soil confirm the hypothesis that the Nobel award is part of a larger plan to drum up international legitimacy for a puppet government. This is the West's recurring pattern of propping up seemingly pro-democracy figures to pave the way for interference in nations. Just as in Myanmar, where Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi was built up by Western media to be a symbol of



Venezuelan opposition politician Maria Corina Machado (C) speaks to the press as she attends a seminar in Lima, Peru, on March 24, 2014. ● CRIS BOURONCLE/AFP

democracy, only to ultimately become a tool for internal suppression and a smokescreen for military intervention, so too is Machado intended to play out a similar role in Venezuela. Under the guise of peace, the United States is angling for its own oil interests. Venezuela, with over three trillion barrels of oil reserves, has always been a primary target of Washington's expansionist policies.

The Nobel Peace Prize for Machado is, in fact, the same “American Nobel,” whose mission is gearing up public opinion for an economic and political



assault. It is crucial to zero in on the timing of this action, which coincides with

Washington ramping up pressure on Caracas. The US government needs a figurehead who can whitewash a



potential future attack. In the Iran dossier, Washington used reports from the International Atomic Energy Agency and figures like Grossi to find justifications for international pressure. Here, too, in the case of Venezuela, the Nobel peace laureate is meant to play the part of a charming pacifist, so that the stage is set for military intervention and regime change. The West holds a double standard when it comes to defining concepts like peace and democracy. When its interests demand it, it backs a dictator, and at other times, using the same media tools, it talks up a new face as a freedom fighter. In truth, the Nobel Peace Prize has been turned into a political instrument for legitimizing aggression and military interference. This year's award kicks off a new chapter in the soft war against independent Latin American governments. Washington pays lip service to democracy and a peaceful transfer of power, but in practice, it is bent on undermining national sovereignty and taking control of their resources. If you look closely, this year's Nobel Peace Prize is, in reality, hung around the necks of American politicians because its ultimate goal is shoring up US domination in the name of peace and freedom. America is foregoing its short-term interests to secure its long-term ones. What we are witnessing today in Venezuela is a rehash of the very policy carried out years ago in the Middle East and East Asia. In reality, behind the pacifist face of the Venezuelan Nobelist lies the true face of Trump and America's expansionist policies.

*The article first appeared in Persian on 8-Dey News.*

# Is US trying to revive petrodollar with Venezuela, Iran?

By Curro Jimenez  
Columnist

## OPINION

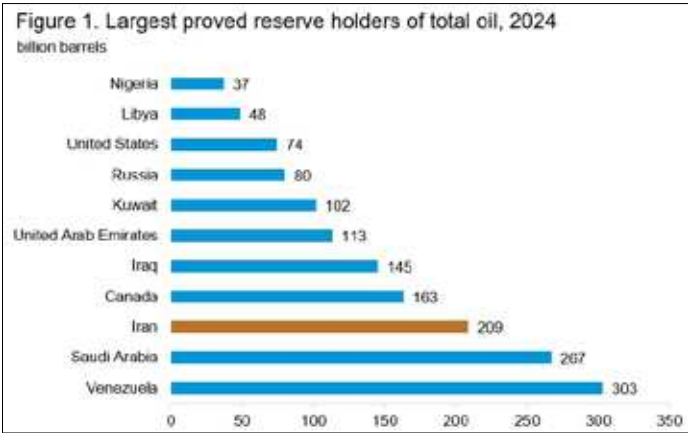
US pressure on Venezuela and Iran continues to increase. What these two countries have in common — oil, gas, and a government opposed to US imperialism — is the key to understanding why. Not because the US needs their oil for consumption, but because it needs it to sustain its financial hegemony. Trump has recently signaled that land operations against Venezuela are on the table. Of course, officially, they are to combat drug trafficking, but this excuse does not hold up. The goal is regime change. A recent article by the Financial Times is almost an admission. The piece features Corina Machado saying that thousands of people are joining her “underground movement,” and that they are in contact with the Trump administration to orchestrate Maduro's removal. She goes further to suggest — while evidence points to the contrary — that the army is not behind the president, and that is why he has called on the popular militias. The calculations about Venezuela, on both sides, are delicate. The Trump administration does not seem eager to intervene militarily in the country, but rather to put enough pressure on it to force regime change. It's difficult to predict the outcome and, as James Bosworth aptly argues, the online debate is not a reliable place to form an opinion as it's extremely polarized. What seems clear is the regime-change objective: to install a US-friendly government that gives priority access to Venezuela's vast natural resources, especially oil. Trump claimed, while campaigning, that if he had been president, US companies would already be drilling. Arguably, the US could achieve this without regime change as Maduro is allegedly more than willing to sell them oil, despite the rhetoric. But that would have meant lifting sanctions on Venezuela's government and admitting previous mistakes. However, this would have contradicted the Trump administration's refocus on its “sphere of influence” and renewed interest in making sure Latin American countries understand that the Monroe Doctrine still holds. The situation with Iran is similar. The US could achieve its objectives, to a degree, without trying to force regime change. The Iranian government has made it abundantly clear that it is willing to collaborate and negotiate. However, the standing US policy on the Middle East, dictated by Israel's interests, makes those negotiations destined to fail be-



The Venezuelan workers celebrate the arrival of the second oil tanker of an Iranian tanker flotilla carrying fuel for gasoline-starved Venezuela at a port in western Venezuela in late May 2020.  
● ERNESTO VARGAS/AP

fore they even start. The Israeli lobby has been at work with the US in building up the case for a new attack on Iran. European nations have activated the snapback mechanism under the JCPOA, reimposing UN sanctions on Iran as the agreement's initial 10-year term expired. Iran had previously warned that its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency would collapse if snapback occurred, signaling a breakdown in the deal's framework for monitoring nuclear activities. This means that diplomacy has stalled. Iran's Leader of Islamic Revolution declared negotiations pointless, while President

war objectives as he has already boasted. Critically, it does so without placing any economic, legal, or military strains on Israel, which would be free to focus all its attention and resources on Iran. Iran has the third-largest oil reserves and the second-largest gas reserves. If the US were to control Iran and Venezuela's oil reserves, it would control the first and third-largest oil reserves in the world, while the second and fourth — Saudi Arabia and Canada — are already under its influence. Having control and influence over the four largest oil reserves would allow the US not only to influence



Pezeshkian dismissed talks, citing the United States' unreasonable demands. Meanwhile, the US has bolstered Israel's missile defense, reportedly deploying four additional THAAD systems on top of the existing six, according to satellite images. The significant expansion of air defenses underscores the effectiveness of Iran's missile arsenal and highlights US and Israeli preparations for potential conflict. Trump's infamous peace plan for Gaza seems designed to allow Israel room to initiate a new attack. The plan rests on the complete submission of the armed group. It establishes a neoliberal international mandate over Gaza and achieves all of Netanyahu's

The chart shows the top 10 countries with the largest proven oil reserves in 2024.  
● OIL AND GAS JOURNAL

prices and distribution, but to dictate in which currency they are paid. And I believe that is the crucial point. Alistair Crooke points to this, saying that the US is worried about its debt and that operations in the Middle East, especially Iran, and in Latin America are largely to put vast resources under US control. I agree with the general argument but disagree on the particulars. I don't think that the US is generally worried about its debt.

Technically, the US could print enough dollars to pay it or choose not to and maintain the fiscal deficit. According to Varoufakis, this deficit, which he calls “The Global Minotaur,” is what fueled US hegemony after Nixon ended Bretton Woods. But the 2008 financial crisis and the 2014 operation in Ukraine that led to the current war with Russia, to mention two symbolic events among many, have altered the system financially and geopolitically. On the one hand, the crash destroyed confidence in the ability of American deficits to stabilize the world economy; On the other, nations have grown tired of US abuse of the system to maintain its hegemony. This means that other nations are not so willing to hold US dollars as reserve currencies or to use them for trade. When holding reserves, those reserves are generally parked in the US financial system, which strengthens the financial economy and, therefore, the government and military. And while using dollars for international trade, it also gives the US — which has a never-ending supply — the ability to outdo them. Hence, many, especially Russia and China, have called for and are establishing alternatives to the dollar-dominated system. This is what worries Trump and his administration, and he has made it explicit. If nations stop holding dollars and stop using them for trade, then US power would decrease exponentially. How does Trump think he can stop that from happening? By making other nations need dollars. And what is it that other nations can't do without at the moment and can't produce themselves? Oil. The Trump administration is conducting a double policy. On the one hand, it is devaluing the dollar so that the industry in the US can prosper. If this happens, it could create excess production and unmet consumption, which would allow them to continue

issuing dollars without the risk of excess inflation or crisis at home. Ironically, this is the same policy that Xu Gao, chief economist at Bank of China International, has argued for in a long paper titled “Where Are the Errors in Dalió's Understanding of National Debt?”. He proposes a Modern Monetary Theory approach to understand and deal with the national economy and debt. This approach works when a government can enforce the use of a currency within a state. But the US uses its currency as the backbone of its hegemony throughout the world, and for that, you need other nations to need dollars. Therefore, on the other hand, the US is trying to create demand for the dollar abroad. US assets and digital markets are, some would argue, overvalued. Tesla and AI are good examples. Digital technologies can be replicated. Russia and China have essentially developed different versions of the internet, and other countries are trying to build their own digital ecosystems. The US has long lost the industrial capability that once gave it an edge, and while it has plenty of resources, none that can't be found elsewhere. But what is it that no one can produce, grow, or copy and that everyone needs? Oil. If the US were to control or have influence over the four largest oil reserves in the world, it could enforce oil prices in dollars. That would assure a constant demand for its currency. For that, it needs Venezuela's and Iran's oil. This would directly affect China, which is the largest oil importer, affecting its flow of cheap oil, and Russia, Beijing's main seller, which, under sanctions, would continue to have to sell its oil at discounted prices. Both things would fit the US's aim to weaken Russia and contain China. This argument could also help explain other US foreign policy decisions: for example, the bailout of Javier Milei's Argentina, which has large untapped oil and gas reserves in the region of Vaca Muerta. The bailout is conditional on Milei winning the next legislative elections, which would ensure access to these resources. Now, of course, that this will work out for the US is not a given. In fact, achieving regime change in Venezuela and Iran is unlikely, and there are many other oil producers — especially Saudi Arabia — which are falling out of US influence. However, and taking into account many caveats, competing interests, and the agency of other nations, this simple logic seems to explain some of the major moves of the US's current foreign policy.

The US has long lost the industrial capability that once gave it an edge, and while it has plenty of resources, none that can't be found elsewhere. But what is it that no one can produce, grow, or copy and that everyone needs? Oil. If the US were to control or have influence over the four largest oil reserves in the world, it could enforce oil prices in dollars. That would assure a constant demand for its currency.

The article first appeared on Naked Capitalism.



# ‘Bright future’ ahead for Iranian weightlifting, says ex-world champ Baqeri

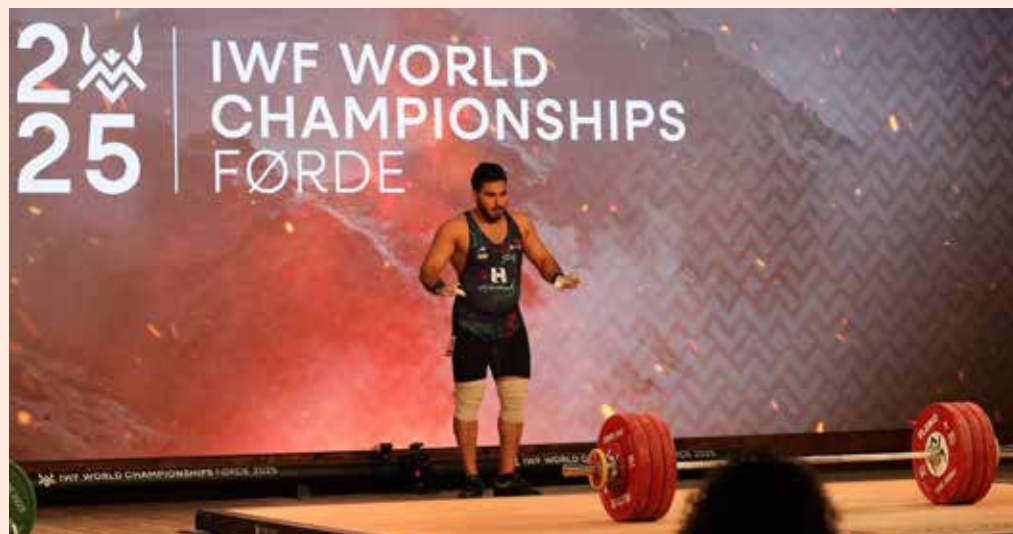
## Sports Desk

Former world champion Kourosh Bagheri believes a “bright future” lies ahead for Iran’s young weightlifting team, following the country’s success in ending an eight-year men’s title drought at the IWF World Championships in Førde, Norway.

A medal haul of one gold, four silvers, and one bronze saw the Iranian eight-man squad collect 387 points to beat North Korea (354pts) to the top spot in the men’s standing and secure only a second trophy in the history of the sport’s flagship international event on Saturday.

Alireza Moeini and Ali A’alipour won a gold and double silvers between them in the 94kg event, while young sensation Alireza Nasiri claimed a couple of silver medals in the 110kg class.

Former Olympic silver medalist Ali Davoudi, meanwhile, managed to win a snatch bronze in the superheavyweight class despite struggling with a shoulder



Iran’s Alireza Nasiri is seen in men’s 110kg action at the IWF World Championships in Førde, Norway, on Oct. 10, 2025. ● IWF

injury on the final day of the competition.

The pinnacle of the Iranians’ campaign came in Thursday’s 94kg showdown, when Moeini lifted 182kg to set a new snatch world record for the weight class. Nasiri, 20, also impressed by shattering two junior world

records to pip former world and Olympic champion Ruslan Nurudinov of Uzbekistan to the C&J and total runner-up places.

“More important than the team’s title victory was the success of three young Iranians in finishing on the podium in their respective weight classes,” Baqeri told IRNA.

“The outcome was somewhat expected, though I had anticipated Ali A’alipour would finish with a total medal, but unfortunately, that did not materialize.

“Ali Davoudi also faced a difficult challenge. He was considered one of Iran’s main hopefuls for a medal but could only secure

a single bronze,” added Baqeri, who won the 94kg snatch and total gold medalist at the 2001 World Championships.

On record-breaking performances by two Iranians, Baqeri said, “Moeini had already set a snatch world record in training in Tehran and replicated that feat on the world stage. He delivered an outstanding performance by completing all six of his lifts and securing the total silver. He pushed Bulgarian Karlos Nasar to his absolute limit.”

Reigning Olympic champion Nasar finished empty-handed in the snatch but bounced back to grab double golds, breaking the clean & jerk world record.

“Although Nasiri did not get the result he wanted in the snatch, he managed to stage a strong recovery in the clean and jerk. While many had predicted a C&J gold medal for him – a predic-

tion I did not share – he still did a great job to win two silvers and post an excellent total, which is a commendable achievement at such a young age,” Baqeri said.

On what to expect from this group of young weightlifters, Baqeri said, “The team’s average age is very low, giving us a strong and promising age composition. Abolfazl Zarei is 19 and still eligible to compete at the junior level. Nasiri can also lift in this age category.

“This promising situation indicates that as we move forward, these young talents will only gain more experience and strength. We can expect to see them mature into more polished and powerful contenders on the global stage – at future World Championships, Asian Games, and the Olympic Games. The future is definitely bright for Iranian weightlifting.”

Iliya Salehipour (88kg) and Abdollah Beiranvand (79kg) were the other two Iranians in the men’s event, but were unfortunate to miss out on the podium despite posting some decent lifts. Ayat Sharifi – winner of two Asian golds in May – was also unlucky to be ruled out of the +110kg contests after failing to recover from a knee injury.

## Iran advances to top 8 at Asian Table Tennis Championships

### Sports Desk

The Iranian men’s national table tennis team has made a strong statement at the 28th Asian Table Tennis Championships by advancing to the top eight teams of the tournament. The third day of the championship began with a crucial victory for Iran over Singapore, a result that secured their place among the continent’s elite.

Iran entered the second round after impressive performances in the group stage, defeating both Mongolia and the Maldives.

In the knockout stage, the team faced Singapore and emerged victorious with a 3-1 scoreline. The win was highlighted by the outstanding performance of Noshad Alamiyan, who secured two wins in the match. Amirhossein Hodaie added the third victory for Iran, while Benyamin Faraji was defeated in his individual match, according to Tasnim News Agency. This performance not only advances Iran to the quarterfinals but also confirms their qualification for the 2026 World Table Tennis Championships, which will



be held in London. In total, thirteen teams from the

Asian Championships earn the right to participate in

the global event, and by reaching the top eight, Iran has already secured its spot among them.

The Iranian national team, led by coach Jamil Lotfollahnasabi, has displayed remarkable consistency throughout the tournament. The women’s national team also had a notable campaign in Group D. They secured victories against Kyrgyzstan and Nepal in their first two matches, demonstrating skill and determination. However, in the third match, the team suffered a defeat at the hands of Malaysia.

## Karimi named best goalkeeper at Asian Aquatics Championships



● inn.ir

### Sports Desk

Hamed Karimi, the goalkeeper of Iran’s national water polo team, has been officially recognized as the best goalkeeper of the 11th Asian Aquatics Championships, highlighting his outstanding performance throughout the tournament.

According to ISNA, Karimi’s exceptional skills between the posts earned him this prestigious accolade, awarded by the organizing committee of the competition. His performance played a pivotal role in Iran’s successful campaign, helping the team reach the final and secure a silver medal.

Iran began the event with a 14-9 win against China in their Group A opener, and then went on to breeze past Hong Kong (22-10) and Uzbekistan (28-7) to progress to the knockouts as the group winner.

Iran hammered Thailand 21-6 in the quarterfinals, before edging out Japan – Asian champion in March – 19-18 for a place in the final showpiece. The 11th Asian Aquatics Championships were held from September 28 to October 10, 2025 in Ahmedabad, India.

Karimi’s recognition as the best goalkeeper of the tournament not only highlights his personal achievements but also reflects the growing strength and competitiveness of Iranian water polo on the Asian stage. The national team’s performance at this championship signals a bright future for the sport in Iran, inspiring both fans and young athletes alike.

## Iran names women’s volleyball roster for Islamic Solidarity Games



● SEPIDE ABDOLHAY/volleyball.ir

### Sports Desk

Iran head coach Lee Do-hee named a provisional 15-player squad for the women’s volleyball competition at the upcoming Islamic Solidarity Games – starting November 7 in Riyadh.

Iranian girls will head to the multi-sport event fresh off a historic title-winning campaign at the CAVA Women’s Volleyball Championship in

Uzbekistan earlier in October – captured a maiden international gold for Iranian women’s volleyball since the first national team was established in 1963. The triumph rounded off an emphatic run for the Iranian girls, who did not concede a single set throughout the tournament, breezing past Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and the host nation in the league phase.

Fatemeh Khalili, the Most Valuable Player at the CAVA tournament, was joined by middle-blocker Reihaneh Karimi and opposite-spiker Aytak Salamat in the CAVA Dream Team, and the trio will again headline the Iranian squad in the Saudi capital.

Iran settled for a runner-up finish in the previous edition of the Games in Konya 2021 after a straight-set defeat against host and women’s volleyball powerhouse Turkey in the final.

The following is Iran’s full squad:

Aytak Salamat, Zahra Karimi, Elaheh Poursaleh, Masoumeh Qadami, Ghazaleh Bostan, Sepinoud Dastbarjan, Zahra Moghani, Kimia Kiani, Reihaneh Karimi, Fatemeh Khalili, Zahra Salehi, Negar Hashemi, Shaqayeq Hassankhani, Shabnam Alikhani, and Soudabeh Baqerpour

## Women’s football teams making their mark internationally



### Sports Desk

Farideh Shojaei, Vice President for Women’s Affairs at the Football Federation of Iran, stated that all activities and programs of women’s national football teams are being carried out according to the approved schedule.

Speaking during a meeting with female members of the Iranian Parliament on Monday, she highlighted the ongoing efforts to strengthen women’s football at both the youth and senior levels, IRNA wrote.

She stated that Iran’s under-17 women’s national football team traveled to Saudi Arabia to participate in the preliminary qualifying matches for the AFC Women’s Asian Cup, competing against the national teams of Saudi Arabia, Lebanon,

and Kuwait.

“In addition, the senior women’s national football team is also preparing for international competition, with plans to travel to India to participate in a three-nation tournament against the national teams of Nepal and India,” Shojaei noted. She added that the Iranian women’s futsal team is scheduled to travel to Russia on Tuesday (Oct. 14) to play two friendly matches.

Expressing her appreciation for the continuous support of the Football Federation’s president, she underscored the importance of women’s presence in football management and decision-making roles.

Iran’s under-17 women’s national football team ● THE-FFIRI.COM



# Celebrating National Day of Villages to empower rural communities in Zanjan

Iranica Desk

The centralized and provincial organization of the festivals celebrating the National Day of Villages and Nomads in Zanjan Province — held from October 6 to 15 across fifteen rural and nomadic areas throughout the province — represents a purposeful and strategic initiative aimed at activating the hidden potential of rural and nomadic regions. These events directly impact two key economic sectors of the province: rural tourism and handicrafts. The festivals serve as an intelligent management instrument for achieving the province's goal of balanced development. By presenting a lively and dynamic image of rural life, these events open new doors to sustainable tourism, create direct marketplaces that bring handicrafts out of isolation, and connect them to the rural household economy. The continuation and expansion of these programs will be crucial for integrating Zanjan Province into the national tourism value chain, *chtn.ir* wrote.

The main declared objective of these festivals is to emphasize the role of villages in development and tourism. This aim is achieved through several mechanisms:

**Attracting visitors to lesser-known areas:** By organizing celebrations in various locations — including Su Kahriz village in Khorramdarreh as the starting point — national and provincial attention is drawn to villages with natural or historical tourism potential. This, in turn, motivates new groups of tourists to explore these areas.



● *chtn.ir*



● *chtn.ir*

**Showcasing accommodation capacities:** The festivals create opportunities to introduce eco-lodges, traditional guesthouses, and the authentic lifestyle of rural communities. Such exposure can significantly increase the occupancy rates of these facilities in future tourist seasons.

**Developing local infrastruc-**

**ture:** Concentrating events in rural areas encourages local authorities to invest in improving access, sanitation, and essential facilities — infrastructure that is indispensable for the long-term sustainability of tourism. The successful development of rural tourism must rest upon three main pillars: infrastruc-



● *mardomenoonline*

ture and accessibility, attractions, and marketing and management. Furthermore, the revival, support, and marketing of handicrafts are of vital importance. Organizing the festival celebrating the National

Day of Villages and Nomads provides a valuable platform for the commercialization of these traditional arts. By establishing both permanent and temporary marketplaces, the products of local artisans — such as carpets, jajim (tra-

ditional woven fabric), pottery, and distinctive agricultural goods — can be sold directly without intermediaries. This approach ensures that profits return directly to the producers, thereby increasing their motivation to continue production and innovation.

Live demonstrations of handicraft production during the festivals attract younger generations to these professions and help safeguard traditional skills from extinction. Moreover, by focusing on a specific product in each festival, a unique product identity is established for every participating region.

These festivals are not merely economic events; they are powerful instruments of cultural identity and social cohesion. Holding them within the villages strengthens residents' sense of belonging to their culture and heritage while encouraging greater community participation in preserving their environment and traditions. Additionally, the revenue generated through organizing such events — including booth rentals and the sale of local food products — is reinvested into the rural economy, thereby reducing exclusive dependence on agriculture.

The celebration of the National Day of Villages and Nomads greatly enhances social vitality, as it is deeply connected to the identity and sense of belonging of local residents. This national festival provides villagers with an opportunity to proudly present their culture, traditions, and achievements, thereby reinforcing their collective self-esteem and community pride.

## Gari Kouh Tower preserves legacy of southern Iran

Iranica Desk

The city of Bastak, situated in the northwestern part of Hormozgan Province, boasts a rich history and a deep cultural heritage. It is home to a remarkable collection of historical relics, traditional architecture, and enduring structures that reflect the region's long-standing significance. Historically, Bastak lay along one of the main routes connecting southern Iran to the central and western parts of the country. Its strategic geographical location contributed to the development of a diverse array of architectural and historical structures over various periods, leaving a lasting legacy on the region's cultural landscape.

With its ancient urban fabric, castles, watchtowers, caravanserais, historic mosques, and traditional houses, Bastak stands as a valuable treasure that embodies the history and artistry of the people of southern Iran. The region's distinctive architecture, constructed using local materials such as stone, wood, and sarooj (a traditional lime-based mortar), exemplifies the ingenious ways in which humans adapted to the hot and arid climate of southern Iran, combining functionality with aesthetic sensibility, *chtn.ir* wrote.

Gari Kouh Tower, located along the Bastak-Kuhij road on the slopes of Anjirband Mountain, is a silent and solid structure that serves as a valuable monument reflecting the military architecture of southern Iran. Despite being over a century old, the tower still retains traces of its former grandeur and historical significance.

This tower is situated approximately 40 kilometers west of the city of Bastak, within the mountainous terrain of the region. Bastak itself lies in the northwestern part of Hormozgan Province at an elevation of about 400 meters above sea level. Owing to its unique geographical position, the city has long served as a key point along the routes connecting the southern ports of Iran to the central regions of the country, reinforcing its historical and strategic importance.

According to an inscription visible on the wall of the tower's second floor, the year 1329 AH is engraved on it. If this date corresponds to the period of the tower's construction, its age would exceed 110 years, placing it among the monuments of the late Qajar era. However, certain architectural features and the tower's strategic location along the Bandar Lengeh-Lar caravan route also suggest the possibility that it dates

back to the Safavid period — an era when the construction of defensive towers and military caravanserais along southern trade routes flourished. This valuable monument was officially registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 2002. Gari Kouh Tower is a three-story structure, approximately nine meters in height, built on a rectangular plan using river stones and sarooj mortar. The building is oriented along an east-west axis, and its thick lower walls — measuring up to 80 centimeters — reflect its defensive function and the remarkable structural strength designed to withstand potential threats.

The ground and middle floors feature ceilings made of local wood and tree branches, while the third floor functions as an open rooftop, enclosed by tall walls to provide an optimal vantage point for observation. Movement between the floors was facilitated by a wooden ladder positioned in the southeastern corner of the tower.

With its solid construction, strategic location, and absence of decorative elements, Gari Kouh Tower stands as a prominent example of military architecture in southern Iran. The presence of arrow slits, battlements, and a commanding view of the surround-



● *IRNA*

ing plains indicate that the structure served a defensive and military purpose, likely intended for monitoring key communication routes and protect-

ing passing caravans. Gari Kouh Tower is not only a relic of Hormozgan Province's dynamic history along ancient trade routes but also a symbol of indigenous architectural knowledge and the skill of the region's inhabitants in adapting to the harsh, hot, and arid climate of southern Iran. It embodies both the historical significance and the architectural ingenuity of the region, making it an invaluable cultural and historical landmark.





# Eight historic mosques from East Azarbaijan nominated for UNESCO world heritage listing

## From stone sanctuaries to wooden marvels, Iran's NW preserves centuries of faith, art

By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

### INTERVIEW

From the turquoise domes of Tabriz to the carved stone columns of rural Asnagh, the mosques of East Azarbaijan stand as living testaments to centuries of Iranian art, faith, and craftsmanship. Nestled along ancient trade routes that once linked Persia to the Caucasus and Anatolia, the province is home to some of the country's most architecturally diverse houses of worship—many built of stone, wood, and glazed tile in styles that evolved through successive Islamic dynasties.

Now, eight of these historic mosques have been nominated for inclusion in Iran's new UNESCO World Heritage dossier, highlighting the enduring spiritual and cultural legacy of north-western Iran.

The deputy director of the East Azarbaijan Province Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department announced that eight historic mosques in East Azarbaijan have been selected in the final shortlist of the province's nominations for inclusion in Iran's UNESCO World Heritage dossier for mosques.

In a conversation with Iran Daily, Vahid Navadad explained that over the past few days,

evaluators from the ministry's world-heritage mosque dossier team visited these mosques across the province to study their historical and architectural features up close.

He said that preparations for inscribing Iranian mosques on the UNESCO World Heritage list began about two years ago, during which more than a thousand mosques throughout the country were evaluated. Through successive rounds of screening, officials from the ministry narrowed the field to 32 mosques across 14 provinces. These mosques date from as early as the 8th century AH through the Qajar era.

Navadad noted that the process includes the removal of later additions and obstacles within the precincts and buffer zones of the mosques, alongside necessary restoration work—tasks overseen by the ministry's evaluators in support of the global nomination.

He added that under the umbrella of the Iranian Mosques World Heritage dossier, selected mosques from across the country are under review. Once the dossier is fully drafted, it will be submitted to UNESCO. Initially, the East Azarbaijan heritage office put forward fifteen candidate mosques, but subsequent evaluation and consolidation reduced that number to eight.

Referring to the list of East

Azarbaijan mosques in the UNESCO dossier, he named the following, Blue Mosque (Tabriz), Sheikh Shahab al-Din Ahari Mosque (Ahar), Jameh Mosque of Sarab, historic village mosque of Asnagh, Stone Mosque of Tark in Miyaneh, Molla Rostam Mosque (Maragheh), Mehrabad Mosque (Bonab), Jameh Mosque of Tasuj. Navadad emphasized that one of the most significant in this list is the Blue Mosque of Tabriz, built during the Aq Qoyunlu era and renowned as the "Turquoise of the Islamic World."

This mosque possesses exceptional features, and in 2010 it was registered as part of the Tabriz Bazaar complex on the UNESCO World Heritage List as one of the constituent elements.

He also noted that the Molla Rostam Mosque in Maragheh and the Mehrabad Mosque in Bonab are among the few remaining wooden mosques in Iran. Their construction dates back to the Safavid period, and they incorporate wooden beams in their roofs, columns, and other structural components.

Discussing Ilkhanid-era mosques in East Azarbaijan, Navadad said that many such structures survive in various parts of the province, including the Jameh Mosque of Tasuj, the Jameh Mosque of Marand, and the Jameh Mosque of Sarab.



Vahid Navadad

citBlue Mosque of Tabriz  
● IRNA

He also pointed out that the Sheikh Shahab al-Din Mosque in Ahar dates back to the Ilkhanid period but was later renovated during the Safavid and subsequent eras.

On the province's stone mosques, he explained that the stone mosque in Asnagh and the stone mosque in Tark are two prominent examples, both with origins in the Ilkhanid era. Because of their unique stone materials and decorative work, they are considered among the most valuable mosques in the province and in the country. The Asnagh mosque, dating to

the early 8th century AH, lies in the center of the village of Asnagh; its structure includes four monolithic cylindrical stone columns, giving it special aesthetic appeal. The Tark stone mosque is located in the city of Tark (under Miyaneh County) and is one of the few stone mosques in Iran.

He asserted that each of these eight mosques has distinctive qualities that align with the criteria of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts for global inscription, making them eligible candidates for world recognition. All are al-

ready registered at the national level, and with the approval of the ministry's evaluators, they will be included in the final dossier for UNESCO submission.

Navadad went on to explain that the Iranian Mosques World Heritage dossier is modeled after previous dossier efforts by the ministry—such as those for Iranian gardens and caravanserais—where the inscription was not limited to a single monument. Instead, a chain of Iranian monuments was submitted together as a serial nomination and registered collectively on the World Heritage list.

## Iran calls for 20-year tourism blueprint to guide future growth



Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi Amiri (c) addresses a managerial meeting in Tehran on October 13, 2025.  
● IRNA

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi Amiri urged the creation of a 20-year roadmap for the country's tourism sector, saying the industry needs a long-term vision to ensure sustainable development and global competitiveness. Salehi Amiri said Iran must

design "a model of ideal governance" to steer tourism policy for at least two decades ahead, IRNA reported. "The future of tourism depends on long-term planning," he told ministry officials, calling for expert-led policymaking that treats the industry as a pillar of Iran's cultural economy. Deputy Minister Anoushirvan Mohseni Band-

pey described the minister's visit as "a signal of special attention" to tourism, saying it had brought fresh "motivation and optimism" to the ministry's staff. He said the government plans to allocate \$54 million at the central level and \$72 million to the provinces to revitalize tourism activities, create jobs and attract private investment.

states and populous Muslim nations, with China singled out as a key growth market following Tehran's visa-waiver for Chinese nationals. Mohseni Bandpey said a crisis-management task force had been established within the Tourism Deputy's Office to keep the industry resilient amid regional or global disruptions. Under Iran's Seventh National Development Plan, the ministry aims to sustain recent gains that placed the country among the world's top 20 tourism destinations, with foreign arrivals up 48.5 percent year-on-year in April 2025. Salehi Amiri highlighted three priorities for the ministry's workforce as enhancing status, improving livelihoods and ensuring job security, calling them "non-negotiable" goals for his administration.

He said the proposed long-term blueprint should draw on academic and professional expertise to turn tourism into "a lasting engine of cultural and economic vitality" for the nation.

## Fifty years later 'Journey' comes alive in restored short at BFI London



### Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian filmmaker Bahram Beyzai's 1972 short film 'Safar' (Journey) will have its international premiere in a newly restored 4K version at the 69th BFI London Film Festival. The screenings are scheduled for October 9 and 13, inn.ir reported.

Produced by the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon), 'Journey' follows a 12-year-old orphan's quest to find a family, accompanied by a friend through the desolate outskirts of Tehran. The film features per-

formances by Sirus Hassanpour and Abbas Dastranj. It has garnered acclaim, winning the Golden Statue at the International Children's Film Festival in 1972, and Best Short Film awards at both the Moscow and Chicago film festivals in 1973.

The restoration was completed at Roshana Studio under the direction of Kamran Saharkhiz, with support from Kanoon.

The BFI London Film Festival, a premier event in the global film calendar, features over 240 films from 79 countries this year, with an emphasis on female directors.