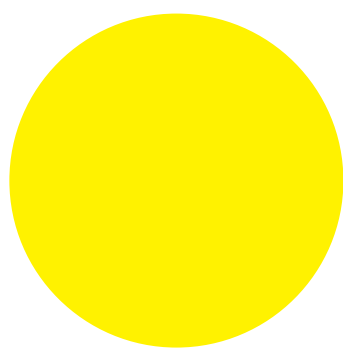


Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art to establish permanent exhibition hall

TMoCA ranks among world's top 10 modern art collections

EXCLUSIVE

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Iran Daily

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Iranian Minister of Economy Ali Madanizadeh (L) shakes hands with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon during a visit to the Central Asian nation in the capital Dushanbe on October 14, 2025.
● president.tj

Iran should not fall for Trump's words without seeing real action

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE



US President Donald Trump has signaled Washington's readiness to achieve peace with Tehran. This comes four months after the US pounded

Iran's nuclear sites.

In response to such contradictions, Iranian officials have stressed that peace with an aggressor, and with a nation backing other aggressors in the region, is simply out of the question. Still, Tehran has reaffirmed its openness to respectful and mutually beneficial diplomatic engagement. Given Trump's record of playing the media and waging psychological warfare, his recent statements have sparked skepticism, with some interpreting them as part of a deceptive agenda.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Jalaeddin Salimi, professor of international relations, described Trump's remarks as part of a calculated ploy, warning that the Iran stay vigilant against possible consequences.

IRAN DAILY: Could Trump's latest remarks about peace with Iran conceal a hidden strategy or an undisclosed agenda? If so, what dimensions and implications could this strategy have?

SALIMI: The US president is, in fact, a wolf in sheep's clothing. Trump's behavior reflects tactics drawn from cognitive and psychological methods, making his mindset and decision-making process hard to pin down. His primary strategy is to lure the Islamic Republic into taking the bait—into believing in empty promises and talks of a "comprehensive deal." It's a trap laid by a man whose deceitful nature mirrors that of a fool who can ask more questions than ten wise men can answer. Secondly, Trump has set conditions that no reasonable policymaker anywhere in the world could accept, targeting years of effort by Iran's distinguished nuclear scientists and work devoted to peaceful and medical purposes.

Trump cannot be both a man of peace and a man of war. Behind the mask lies his true face, one already clear to the Iranian people, who have never witnessed any rational or measured approach from him. Together with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Trump pushed Iran into the 12-day war, and if their goals are not achieved, there will likely be renewed threats and even heavier assaults. Therefore, Iran must not be taken in by Trump's rhetoric unless it sees tangible, meaningful action.

Given the current regional and international climate, how can the Islamic Republic best protect its national interests? Can engagement with the US offer a way forward, or would pursuing an independent path ignoring the US prove more realistic? Iran can act in line with the three guiding principles of dignity, wisdom, and expediency to advance its national interests. Under the principle of dignity, Iran should keep diplomacy on track in political, security, economic, and cultural domains, managing its relations transparently with the world as a nation pursuing its legitimate interests.

Under the principle of wisdom, it should act with prudence and intelligence as an active regional and international player—one seeking peace, stability, and cooperation rather than hostility and confrontation.

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Iran: US has 'no moral authority' to cast aspersions on others

Araghchi: Trump cannot be man of peace while 'provoking endless wars'



International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry categorically censured US president's anti-Tehran allegations during his Monday's speech in the Israeli parliament (Knesset) as "unfounded and shameful," saying Washington has

in a statement on Tuesday. In an address to the Israeli Knesset on Monday, Donald Trump claimed that "nothing would do more good" for the region than for Iran's leaders to what he called "renounce terrorists and stop threatening their neighbors." He also alleged that the US wants "to ensure that Iran never, and I mean never, acquires a nuclear weapon." The US president, however, offered a "hand of friendship" to Iran. "We are ready when you are, and it will be the best decision that Iran has ever made, and it's going to happen," Trump claimed. "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.

Call for 'peace deal'

Trump's plea for a peace deal came just months after his country joined Israel in striking Iran's nuclear sites and civilian infrastructure in June, which triggered a 12-day war that killed at least 1,064 Iranians.

The ministry said Trump's expressed desire for peace and dialogue is "in conflict with the hostile and criminal actions of the United States against the Iranian people."

"How can one, in the midst of political negotiations, attack a country's residential areas and peaceful nuclear facilities, martyr over one thousand innocent people, including women and children, and then claim to seek peace and friendship?" the statement asked.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also reacted to Trump's remarks, saying that Iranians cannot trust the country that attacked their homes.

"There is also the question of how the Iranian nation can be expected to give any credence to an olive branch extended by the very same hand that was involved in the bombardment of homes and offices across Iran only 4 months ago," Araghchi said.

"One can hardly be branded as president of peace while provoking endless wars and aligning with war criminals. Mr. Trump can either be a President of Peace or a President of War, but he

cannot be both at the same time," he added.

Iran's peaceful nuclear program

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry in its statement warned that repeating false claims about Iran's peaceful nuclear program cannot in any way justify "the joint crimes" of the US and Israel, including attacks on Iran's soil and the assassination of Iran's scientists and military commanders.

The statement added that boasting of and admitting to such crimes "only increases the burden of responsibility on the US for committing these crimes and reveals the depth of hostility American policymakers hold toward the great people of Iran."

The statement underscored that Iranians are people of reason, dialogue and engagement, but will "act with courage and decisiveness to defend Iran's independence, national dignity and vital interests."

The US president arrived in the occupied territories on Monday before his visit to Egypt, where he attended a ceremony to sign a cease-fire deal on the Gaza Strip.

Israel kills nine more Palestinians in breach of Gaza truce

International Desk

Israeli soldiers killed on Tuesday at least nine Palestinians trying to return to their homes in Gaza, in the first major violation of a US-brokered cease-fire agreement between the regime and Hamas.

Hamas accused Israel of violating the cease-fire while the Israeli military claimed that it had fired on people who crossed truce lines and approached its forces after ignoring calls to turn back. Six bodies were taken on Tuesday to Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza City, while three others were transferred to Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, according to Palestine's official Wafa news agency.

Among the dead, seven were killed in Israeli attacks on Tuesday, while two others succumbed to earlier injuries, the sources added.

Tuesday's killings came days after Hamas and Israel agreed to cease hostilities. Under the 20-point peace plan proposed by the US president, Hamas also released all remaining Israeli captives held in Gaza in exchange for about 2,000 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons. The deadly attacks underscore the challenges ahead to keeping the cease-fire on track as hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who have been displaced multiple times throughout the war try to return to their homes.



A view of the Israeli destruction of civilian infrastructure as Palestinians return to the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis.

● GETTY IMAGES

The ceasefire is also expected to allow for a surge of humanitarian aid into Gaza, where famine has broken out amid Israel's bombardment and blockade of the territory. Many of Gaza's more than two million people are reported to be on the brink of starvation. Israel delayed aid into Gaza and kept the territory's border shut on Tuesday. Three Israeli officials said Israel had decided to restrict aid into the shattered Gaza Strip and delay plans to open the border crossing to Egypt at least through Wednesday, because Hamas had been too slow to turn over bodies of dead captives. Hamas has said locating the bodies is difficult. So far, Hamas has handed over four cof-

ins of dead captives, leaving at least 23 presumed dead and one unaccounted for, still in Gaza.

The cease-fire has stopped two years of devastating Israel's onslaught on Gaza. Israel's military campaign in Gaza has killed nearly 68,000 people according to local health authorities, with thousands more feared dead under the rubble. Gaza's Civil Defense Service said 250 bodies had been recovered since the truce began.

Swathes of Gaza are in ruins and the global hunger monitor said in August there was famine in the territory. Thousands of Gazans have been returning to homes since the cease-fire, many finding whole streets bombed into dust.

US buildup aims to install 'puppets' in Caracas: Venezuela

International Desk

Venezuela's ambassador to Iran said that the United States is threatening his country with military action based on false allegations, aimed at bringing its "puppets" to power in Caracas. José Rafael Silva Aponte made the remarks during a press briefing at the Venezuelan Embassy in Tehran on Tuesday, shedding light on Washington's imperialistic policies toward Latin America, particularly its recent military buildup off Venezuelan coasts.

Aponte said the United States has been threatening Venezuela since 1999, when the late Hugo Chávez first became president.

The threats, he added, have persisted and even intensified under President Donald Trump, whose administration has been cracking down on Venezuelan migrants in the US, deporting many and subjecting others to torture in detention centers. He added that Washington is also spreading false narratives accusing Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro of involvement in drug trafficking, with the aim of bringing its own "puppets" in power.

Those accusations, Aponte said, are unfounded, especially considering that other countries, namely Colombia and Ecuador, are far more deeply involved in drug trafficking, while only about five percent of narcotics pass through Venezuela. He emphasized that Venezuela has intensified its anti-drug efforts since 2005. In line with those allegations, the United States has also increased its military threats, deploying warships, forces, missiles, and even a nuclear submarine in the southern Caribbean,



The USS Gravelly guided-missile destroyer docks in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

● REUTERS

the envoy said. He added that the deployment of a nuclear submarine violates the 1967 Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Venezuela has called on the United Nations for support over several deadly US military strikes on vessels off its Caribbean coast, which Washington alleges were carrying drugs.

Venezuela has said it is in a situation where it is rational to expect an armed attack against the country in the short-term, and Maduro has alleged the US is seeking a change in government.

Commenting on Western media reports about talks between Washington and Caracas, Aponte said that Venezuela is always open to negotiations but expects mutual respect. He added that while Venezuela remains ready for dialogue with the United States, Washington has shown no genuine interest in engaging.

Iran should not ...

Iran should pursue justice and assert its rights in global organizations, avoiding conflict and escalation. As for dialogue with the United States, it's far from straightforward. Beyond negotiations, Iran should also build the capacity to stand on its own feet—to strengthen its industrial and technological foundations so that Washington and its European allies are compelled to think twice before adopting aggressive policies.

If things continue the current course, a breakthrough with the US seems unlikely. Yet, completely ignoring Washington is not a realistic option either. The United States wields vast power and influence and Iran cannot simply act as it pleases while expecting Washington to remain a bystander.

American policymakers closely keep tabs on every internal and external move Tehran makes to ensure their interests in the Middle East remain intact. Thus, Iran must simultaneously

strengthen both domestic and foreign efforts to secure its rightful place on the global stage—without slipping into isolation from the international community.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said Tehran cannot give any credence to an olive branch extended by a country that bombed it just four months ago. Yet, he has also voiced readiness for diplomatic engagement. What conditions could make such a diplomatic process feasible?

Foreign Minister Araghchi raised valid points that Washington has persistently ignored. The US and Israel's hostile behavior has made any reconciliation almost impossible. The only way forward is for the Americans to build trust through concrete steps and to honor Iran's conditions before talks can get off the ground. Otherwise, no diplomatic window will open, and in fact, tensions may rise to the point where a new war

could erupt against Iran.

Given Trump's declared willingness for peace with Iran and Netanyahu's recent message to Russian President Vladimir Putin expressing no desire for confrontation with Tehran, can these gestures be interpreted as genuine or part of a joint psychological or deceptive operation against Iran?

These messages from Trump and Netanyahu are part of a broader psychological campaign aimed at catching Iran off guard and softening its stance. Trump is trying to paint himself as a peace-seeking leader capable of sparing the world from conflict. But behind that deceptive face lies no genuine intention to repair US-Iran relations.

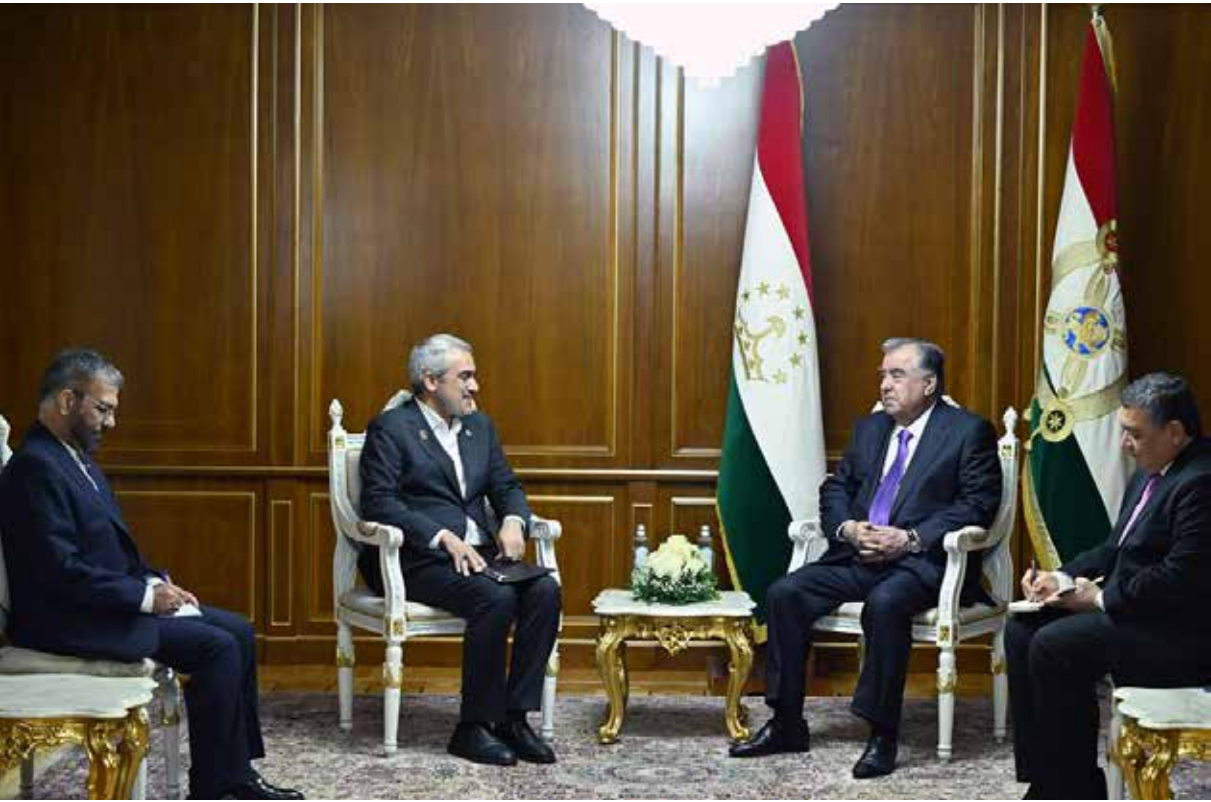
Moreover, Trump is seeking justification—should he decide to strike Iran again—to rally global support, portraying himself as someone who "tried diplomacy" but was "forced into war" by Iran's refusal to cooperate.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran offers expanded infrastructure, energy cooperation with Tajikistan

Tehran, Dushanbe nearing \$500m trade: Minister



Iran's Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh (2nd L) meets Tajik President Emomali Rahmon in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on October 14, 2025. [president.tj](#)

Economy Desk

Iran's Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh expressed in his meeting with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon on Tuesday the Iranian companies' readiness to take an active role in Tajikistan's infrastructure, housing, and urban development projects. The meeting, held on the sidelines of the Dushanbe International Investment Forum 2025, highlighted Iran's efforts to deepen economic ties with Tajikistan despite the impact of Western sanctions. Madanizadeh proposed establishing special financial and banking mechanisms — including the use of national currencies, barter arrangements, and joint ventures — to expand cooperation between Tehran and Dushanbe while reducing the effects of sanctions. Iran has been under Western sanctions for decades over its nuclear program, which have mostly affected its oil and energy sectors.

Madanizadeh said Iran's technical and engineering firms have strong capabilities in implementing major infrastructure projects. "Iranian companies are prepared to actively participate in Tajikistan's civil, power plant, road construction, housing, and urban development projects," he said. The minister emphasized that strengthening the presence of these companies in Tajikistan would not only boost the country's infrastructure but also transfer Iran's engineering and technical know-how.

Key areas of collaboration
He also outlined several key areas of collaboration, saying, "In the energy sector, cooperation in constructing hydropower plants, developing the Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran power transmission line, and expanding renewable energy projects are among the practical areas of partnership." "In trade and banking, establishing direct payment channels, using national currencies, and creating re-

ciprocal credit lines will play a major role in facilitating economic relations," he added. "Iran is also ready to cooperate with Tajikistan in creating a joint science and technology park, developing knowledge-based companies, and advancing the digital economy." Madanizadeh said Iran and Tajikistan could play a significant role in the regional supply chain across energy, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and engineering services, enhancing their joint economic position through shared capabilities. The Dushanbe forum opened on Tuesday with more than 1,000 participants from dozens of countries attending the event aimed at promoting investment opportunities across the region.

\$500m trade path focused on energy
Addressing the forum, the Iranian minister said Iran and Tajikistan are moving toward a \$500 million trade partnership centered on energy and

technology. "This conference, focused on green investment, serves as a bridge for exchanging ideas and a gateway to a sustainable and prosperous regional future," he said. Madanizadeh described the recent meeting between the presidents of Iran and Tajikistan as "a turning point" in bilateral relations, marked by the signing of 23 cooperation agreements worth half a billion dollars, demonstrating a strong determination to deepen economic engagement. "A shared vision for expanding trade beyond \$500 million — supported by agreements in transportation, customs, fisheries, mining, and agriculture — has solidified the foundations of this partnership," Madanizadeh noted. He added that Tajikistan, with its vast potential in green energy, mining, and water resources, provides a reliable base for investment. "Despite sanctions, Iran is ready to engage in regional cooperation, particularly with Tajikistan, in clean energy, digital economy, transportation, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and mining industries," he said. "The world is on the verge of a digital transformation, and Iran — with its expertise in artificial intelligence and blockchain — is ready to share its experience with Tajikistan to develop technology and train specialists," he added. Highlighting the historical roots of regional cooperation, Madanizadeh said, "Regional collaboration is rooted in the legacy of the Silk Road, and balanced development can only be achieved through stronger bilateral and multilateral ties." He reiterated Iran's commitment to strengthening brotherly, economic, and infrastructural relations with Tajikistan, offering new opportunities to deepen ties under current global and regional conditions.

VP: Gov't backs domestic space research, lauds 'Zohreh' satellite project



Economy Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref expressed on Tuesday the government's full support for the activities of the Iranian Space Research Center (ISRC), particularly the design and construction of the national communications satellite Zohreh. Equipped with 12 transponders, Zohreh is a national communications satellite being designed and built by Iranian researchers — a major step forward in Iran's space program. Speaking during his visit to the ISRC in Tehran, Aref said, "Advances in space science are one of the key areas for achieving the goals of the 20-Year Vision Document," vp-president.ir reported. He urged the center and researchers to focus on the design and construction of the Zohreh satellite. Aref said a three-year plan in the current government had been drawn up to compensate for past gaps in science and technology. "Given the country's needs, there is no way but to engage in space and access space sciences. In previous years, we approached this sector logically and fundamentally, but we have been far from the country's true position," he said. "Once, the country sought to reach a 36,000-kilometer orbit and could not even access lower orbits without foreign assistance," he added. "Today, relying on the capabilities of domestic scientists, we have reached the goal of accessing higher orbits."

Foreign investors bring \$4m in gold to Iran after zero-tariff policy

Economy Desk

Two foreign investors have recently imported standard gold bullion worth around \$4 million into Iran, marking the first such transaction conducted through the country's Foreign Exchange and Gold Center, ISNA reported. According to the report, the first batch of imported gold bars was offered for sale on the Exchange Center's platform, a move experts describe as a sign of renewed foreign investment in Iran's precious metals sector and a shift in the country's foreign exchange policy toward using new channels for gold supply. The Exchange Center announced that an additional 700 kilograms of standard gold bullion will soon be imported by new foreign investors and sold through the same platform. Officials said the sale of imported gold follows a recent government decision allowing foreign investors to bring standard gold bullion into the country and trade it through the official exchange mechanism — part of broader efforts to attract external capital and diversify sources of gold supply. Tasnim news agency said in a Sunday report that the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) had decided to restrict gold imports "to manage the foreign currency market and control the smuggling of gold from the country." It cited a statement from head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Mohammad Ali Dehghan, which showed that Iranian exporters could no longer be able to import gold to pay their hard currency liabilities to the CBI. Iran cut its tariffs on gold imports to zero in November 2022 to boost its gold reserves and to facilitate the return of funds held in other countries because of US sanctions.

Renewables capacity up 43% to record 2,555 MW, official says

Economy Desk

Mohsen Tarzatab, head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), said on Tuesday that the country's renewable power capacity had surged to 2,555 megawatts, marking a 43% year-on-year increase — the fastest growth in the country's history. "In the first six months of the Iranian calendar year (began on March 21), the total capacity of renewables reached 2,555 MW, including over 2,000 MW from solar, 400 MW from wind, and 100 MW from other sources," Tarzatab said at the opening ceremony of the 7th Iran Solar Power Plants Conference in Tehran, as reported by IRNA. "This represents a 43% rise compared with the same period last year — an unprecedented growth in Iran's power industry." During the same period last year, total renewable capacity stood at about 1,786 MW. Despite the sharp increase, renewables still account for only 2.7% of Iran's total electric-

ity generation capacity of around 95,000 MW. Under the Seventh National Development Plan, Iran aims to add 12,000 MW of new renewable capacity over five years, with President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration having set a more ambitious goal of 30,000 MW within four years. The deputy energy minister said, "The average monthly growth in renewable capacity during the past six months was about 140 MW, and it is planned to reach 800 MW by December. We hope to achieve this target with the cooperation of industry leaders and investors." However, speaking on the sidelines of the two-day conference, he noted that, "The administrative and industrial sectors have not performed as expected in building solar power plants." **Gov't offices' renewable share doubles to 40%** "As recently approved by the Supreme Energy Council, the share



of government offices in renewable power supply has increased from 20% to 40%," he added. "I strongly recommend that both administrative and industrial sectors move toward constructing solar, wind, and battery power plants to generate their own elec-

tricity. Waiting for others to act will only harm their own interests." The government had granted all administrative departments a deadline — effective June 21 — to source 20% of their required electricity from solar energy.



Taliban security personnel patrol on Humvees as they move in a convoy at the Mazal area of the Shorabak district near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border on October 12, 2025.
● SANAULLAH SEIAM/AFP

Opportunists on Pakistan-Afghanistan border

A warning for future

By Afzal Reza Sarvari
Journalist

PERSPECTIVE

A series of suspicious explosions in Kabul and several other parts of Afghanistan last week, which the country's Taliban government claimed were the doing of Pakistan, has set off a new phase of tensions between the two uneasy neighbors. Despite no word from the Pakistani military confirming or denying any air strikes or involvement in the explosions targeting elements linked to the anti-Pakistan group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Afghan Taliban government struck back, carrying out multiple attacks on Pakistani security force positions along the shared border on Saturday night. The Pakistani military immediately hit back, launching artillery, missile, and drone strikes against positions of the Afghan Taliban and other terrorist groups along the border, in response to what it called Afghan Taliban aggression and provocative actions. Both sides are claiming the upper hand in the tit-for-tat attacks and confrontational responses against each other. The Pakistani military, while confirming the deaths of 23 of its soldiers in the Afghan attacks, announced that at least 200 Afghan Taliban and other terrorist elements were taken out by its retaliatory forces, who also wiped out dozens of military centers and border positions in various parts of their neighbor. The Afghan Taliban also claim to have killed over 50 Pakistani soldiers and destroyed army positions and infrastructure along the shared border strip.

Pakistan's shift in tone

In a recent statement, the spokesperson for Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the provocative actions of the Afghan Taliban and emphasized the need to lean on diplomacy and engagement to sort out shared challenges, especially terrorism. However, he

warned that any arbitrary action by the Afghan Taliban would be met with a swift and forceful response from the Pakistani armed forces. Shafqat Ali Khan stated that the Taliban are unwilling to address Pakistan's primary concern: cracking down on terrorist strongholds. This statement, which reflects Pakistan's anger over Afghanistan's moves following the recent explosions in Kabul — particularly the trip by the Taliban government's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi to India — also signals a shift in Islamabad's tone. It refrains from referring to the Taliban "government" of Afghanistan and instead uses the term "regime" for the Taliban. The statement goes on to say: "Pakistan expects the Taliban regime to act responsibly, uphold its commitments, and play a constructive role in achieving the shared goal of wiping out terrorism from its soil. We hope the Afghan people will one day be emancipated and governed by a truly representative government." The reference to the Afghan Taliban government's foreign minister's visit to India in the official statements of Pakistan's Foreign Ministry and military points to Islamabad's sharp reaction to the diplomatic maneuvering by Kabul and New Delhi. India and Pakistan have always accused each other of using Afghan territory to undermine each other's interests. Consequently, the recent rapprochement between New Delhi and Kabul against the backdrop of Pakistan-Afghan tensions appears to have stepped up Pakistan's resolve to tackle its challenges on the Afghan border.

Need to watch out for opportunists

The border clashes between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban are playing out as Islamabad has just wrapped up a four-day military standoff with its eastern neighbor and nuclear rival, India, in May 2025, and as Kabul has slipped out of Pakistan's influence since

the Taliban came to power in the summer of 2021. Experts believe that excessive expectations and premature calculations led to both the Taliban and Islamabad becoming disillusioned with each other, concluding that the understanding and interaction that existed between them before the US and NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan is no longer holding up. Political observers in Pakistan believe that the depth of their country's disagreements with the Afghan Taliban is limited to the free operation of the terrorist group TTP on Afghan soil. Islamabad had assumed that the Taliban government, in keeping with their pre-withdrawal understanding, would honor Pakistan's request and act against anti-Pakistan elements — something that has not materialized to date. On the contrary, Kabul has told Islamabad to look inward for solutions to its problems. Simultaneously, the Pakistani government, through regional and international diplomacy, has tried to win over its partners regarding the terrorism challenge in Afghanistan and to press Kabul to act against anti-Pakistan groups. On this path, China, the US, and some Central Asian countries have spoken with one voice with Pakistan, demanding that the Afghan Taliban

take action against terrorist groups.

Trump's dream about Bagram



Baqir Sajjad Syed

Baqir Sajjad Syed, head of the Islamabad Policy Institute and a foreign affairs correspondent for the Pakistani newspaper Dawn, said in an interview with IRNA, "The Pakistan-Afghanistan tensions could pave the way for US expansionism, particularly Trump's efforts to get his hands on the crucial Bagram base on Afghan soil." He warned that any mismanagement of the border situation, the escalation of war, and subsequently giving in to Trump's proposal for a role would work to the detriment of the region and would never provide a lasting or beneficial solution for the involved parties. This Pakistani researcher stressed, "The US wants Bagram to keep an eye on China, Iran, and even Pakistan. Therefore, any flexibility towards Donald Trump's notions will bring about dangerous consequences."



Experts believe that excessive expectations and premature calculations led to both the Taliban and Islamabad becoming disillusioned with each other, concluding that the understanding and interaction that existed between them before the US and NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan is no longer holding up.



US troops are loading at Bagram airbase in 2006 during the Afghanistan war.
● LANCE CHEUNG/
US AIR FORCE



Aimen Jamil

Aimen Jamil, a strategic affairs researcher from Pakistan's National Defence University, also told IRNA, "If reports about Donald Trump's efforts to take back the Bagram airbase come true, the Taliban must tread carefully and not allow this situation to be exploited or permit the harboring of anti-Pakistan groups like the TTP since such actions could lead to regional instability flaring up again." "Pakistan's recent air strikes inside Afghanistan show its growing frustration with Kabul's approach towards the militants, and any misstep by the Taliban could call for even stronger retaliation," she added. Jamil further noted, "While a potential US return to Afghanistan under the pretext of fighting terrorism might seem to strengthen Pakistan's hand, it could also reawaken old distrust and further complicate regional security. Ultimately, if Afghanistan again becomes an arena for external rivalry, both Pakistan and the Taliban risk losing their strategic balance,

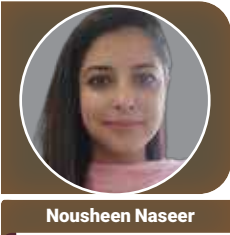
and this underscores the necessity for restraint and regional cooperation."



Muhammad Tahir Khan

Muhammad Tahir Khan, a Pakistani expert on Afghan affairs, expressed concern to IRNA over the ambiguity of Islamabad's approach and policy towards the Afghan Taliban, saying: "Unfortunately, no clear position from Islamabad has been observed regarding the US demand to retake the Bagram base in Afghanistan, while at the recent Moscow Format meeting, all participating countries declared their opposition to any foreign interference or presence of external forces in Afghanistan." He warned that Trump's notions about Afghanistan are worrying. "The current situation between Pakistan and Afghanistan could add up to a forward-moving process for Trump," Tahir Khan said, adding that consequently, Pakistan must proceed with caution. Nousheen Naseer, a professor at the National Defence University in Islamabad, told IRNA, "If Islamabad





Nousheen Naseer

and Kabul cannot effectively manage their relations, Afghan territory could once again become a stage for regional and global competition of interests.” “The free movement of terrorist elements along the border, the issue of repatriating Afghan nationals from Pakistan, and differing security priorities have severely impact-

ed the tense relations between the two countries, and have, overall, created an atmosphere of mistrust between them.” This Pakistani professor warned that the current situation provides an opportunity for external powers to justify increasing their interference. “The continuation of these tensions increases the likelihood that external actors will present themselves as essential for regional security while subtly advancing their own strategic objectives,” she added. Syed Faisal Ali Shah, a retired Rear Admiral of the Pakistani Navy, told an IRNA reporter that Is-

lamabad has always been suspicious of New Delhi’s role in tensions with Kabul, and the recent trip by Amir Khan Muttaqi points to Pakistan’s serious considerations that Kabul’s maneuvers are obvious. The rear admiral called for enhanced Pakistan-Afghanistan engagement and maintained, “Terrorism should have no place in the relations between the two countries. Instead of fostering a competitive environment outside the shared borders with Pakistan, Afghanistan must take a significant step, which is to address the legitimate concerns of neighboring

countries regarding cracking down on terrorist elements.” Given the lack of formal recognition of the Afghan Taliban government by the international community, especially some of Afghanistan’s neighbors, issues such as the fight against terrorism, refugee management, drug trafficking, and other technical border-related matters still need to be addressed between Afghanistan and other countries. However, the use of force, military movements, or disrespect for mutual sovereignty has never been the solution to challenges, only serving to worsen the situation and

eroding the situation in the region. Islamabad and Kabul must, by avoiding the escalation of tensions — especially preventing any scenario against regional peace and security — take the path of diplomacy and, notwithstanding their respective relations with any particular country or faction, identify the root of the problems and, with wisdom, take steps to repel challenges and create new opportunities for cooperation. On this path, an announcement by Afghanistan’s neighboring and surrounding countries of their readiness to help remove hostil-

ities between Pakistan and Afghanistan and to call on them to exercise restraint is considered highly significant. The spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, reacting to the recent developments between Pakistan and Afghanistan, announced, “Iran stands ready to extend any assistance conducive to reducing tensions between the two neighboring and Muslim countries.” Esmail Baqaei, expressing concern over the developments of the past few days related to Pakistan and Afghanistan, highlighted the necessity of mutual



Syed Faisal Ali Shah

respect for the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of both countries and called for restraint and the immediate start of dialogue between the parties with the aim of reducing tensions and resolving differences through diplomacy.

The article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

A new Afghan war?



By Sushant Sareen
Senior fellow at
Observer Research
Foundation

ANALYSIS

Reports coming in from Afghanistan claim an aerial attack Saturday night on a few places in Kabul and some other parts of Eastern Afghanistan along the border with Pakistan. There is speculation about possible United States (US) involvement in the attacks. If indeed the Americans were involved, was it at the technical level, or was it to the extent of intelligence sharing, or did it involve kinetic action remains in the realm of speculation. The target of the attacks is believed to be the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) emir, Noor Wali Mehsud. However, an audio clip purportedly of Mehsud surfaced soon after the attack, claiming that he is in the tribal districts of Pakistan, not Afghanistan. This is not the first time that Pakistanis have used air power against alleged terrorist targets in Afghanistan. However, past attacks were generally limited to border areas, which were remote and inaccessible. This is the first time that Pakistan has decided to

strike at the heart of Afghanistan. The repercussions of such an audacious attack will be far-reaching. Earlier attacks were downplayed by the Taliban and not made much of an issue, at least not to a point where it would have led to a major break with Pakistan. A strike on Kabul will, however, be difficult, if not impossible, to brush under the carpet. Although the initial reaction from the official spokesman of the Taliban, Zabiullah Mujahid, and the Kabul police chief has been measured, the Taliban will have to take a strong stand on the Pakistani attack on the capital city. To not do so will seriously dent the legitimacy of the Taliban regime and raise questions or even challenge their authority. While the Taliban are not in a position to respond to Pakistan in kind as they lack an air force and an effective air defence system, they do have other ways to hit back. Broadly, there are four options available to the Taliban. The first is to do nothing. Make a bit of noise and then move on. But such restraint will raise serious questions about their legitimacy as the Taliban would appear fearful of

Pakistan or being compromised by their long association with Pakistan. Even if the senior leadership prefers not to escalate, the foot soldiers will want to take revenge. The second option is to speak softly but ramp up the attacks. This will mean lifting the restraints imposed on Taliban cadres to not joining the ranks of TTP and desisting from participating in attacks inside Pakistan. The third option is to declare war on Pakistan and unleash guerrilla forces to exact retribution. Finally, there is a remote possibility that the Pakistani attacks will have a salutary impact on the Taliban and force them to either expel or curb the activities of TTP inside Afghanistan. Regardless of the option that is picked, as long as the TTP continues to bleed Pakistan, there is no solution to the problem. The fact that the TTP attacks have increased in intensity, ferocity, and even geography — with recent claims by the anti-Pakistan jihadist alliance Ittehadul Mujahideen Pakistan of carrying out attacks even in Jammu and Kashmir — means that it will not be easy to eliminate them.

Taliban fighters celebrate the third anniversary of the withdrawal of US-led troops from Afghanistan on August 14, 2024.
● ABDUL KHALIQ/AP

The TTP and other groups claim that they are now operating from inside Pakistan. The Taliban authorities in Afghanistan also insist that this is Pakistan’s problem and that Afghanistan is being made a scapegoat. But Pakistan insists that not just the Islamist



The issue for Pakistan is that bombing targets in Afghanistan won’t solve the problem. All it will do is satisfy public opinion, especially in Punjab, where an anti-Pashtun sentiment is simmering. If anything, attacks on Afghanistan will only lead to Afghans, even those who are against the Taliban, closing ranks against Pakistan. Interestingly, the Pakistani attacks have been criticised by some senior military officials of the erstwhile Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

jihadists but also Baloch freedom fighters are operating from bases inside Afghanistan. The issue for Pakistan is that bombing targets in Afghanistan won’t solve the problem. All it will do is satisfy public opinion, especially in Punjab, where an anti-Pashtun sentiment is simmering. But kinetic military action has its limitations. If anything, attacks on Afghanistan will only lead to Afghans, even those who are against the Taliban, closing ranks against Pakistan. Recent reports suggest that the Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani was being sidelined by the Kandahar clique that calls the shots. But the Haqqanis won’t be caught dead siding with Pakistan against the Taliban Emir. Interestingly, the Pakistani attacks have been criticised by some senior military officials of the erstwhile Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The other option for Pakistan is to unleash another round of destabilisation in Afghanistan. The instruments for this will be sections of the erstwhile republic who are carrying out a low-level insurgency



Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi (L) is welcomed by an Indian official on his arrival at New Delhi, India, on October 9, 2025.
● RANDHIR JAISWAL/X



The full article first appeared on Observer Research Foundation.

UWW U23 World Championships: Men's titles on the line as Iran aims to continue wrestling dominance

Sports Desk

Iran's freestyle and Greco-Roman squads are set to pursue another dominant run at the upcoming U23 Wrestling World Championships – starting Monday in Novi Sad, Serbia.

Iran will look to draw inspiration from its double-title triumph at September's Senior World Championships as it aims to complete a clean sweep of team titles at the under-23 level for the second year in a row.

Gholamreza Farrokhi (87kg) and Fardin Hedayati (130kg) will headline the Iranian Greco-Roman roster in Novi Sad, where both are the clear favorites to capture golds in their respective weight classes.

Farrokhi will head to the competition as the reigning senior world champion, while Hedayati – an Asian senior champion in March – will vie for a second successive gold at the under-23 superheavyweight event.

Joining the duo in the 10-man squad are Armin



Shamsipour, who will be looking to build on last year's gold-winning run at the U17 Worlds when taking part in the 55kg event. Sajjad Abbaspour will represent

the country in the 60kg class, while Mohammad-Javad Aboutalebi – an U20 world bronze winner in August – will be part of the 63kg draw.

Ahmadreza Mohsennejad had an under-23 campaign to forget last year in Tirana, but will still be among the favorites in the 67kg division, having won

Iranian freestyle wrestler Mahdi Yousefi (blue) is seen in a training session in Tehran, Iran, on October 11, 2025.

● FARSHAD BANDANI/IAWFIR

back-to-back U20 world titles in 2023 and 2024.

Former senior Asian champion Iman Mohammadi (72kg) will be back in the U23 Worlds for the first time since 2022, when he grabbed the gold in Pontevedra, Spain.

Alireza Abdevali, who had a decent campaign at the world event last month despite missing out on the podium, will also compete in the 77kg category as the two-time under-20 world gold medalist.

Abolfazl Mohmedi and reigning U20 world silver medalist Mohammad-Hadi Seydi will be among the hopefuls in the 82kg and 97kg classes respectively. In the freestyle competitions, Milad Valizadeh will step into the 57kg contests on the back of the senior Asian silver earlier in the year, with Reza Momeni and Yasin Rezaei chasing glory in the 61kg and 65kg divisions respectively.

Former cadet world champion Sina Khalili, who missed out on a place in September's World Championships, will among the

wrestlers to watch in the 70kg category, having won a bronze medal at the Senior Asian Championships. Mohammadreza Shakeri (74kg) will aim to add another world age-group title to his U20 gold in 2023, with reigning U20 world and Asian champion Mahdi Yousefi the wrestler to beat in the 79kg event.

Abolfazl Rahmani – also a senior Asian gold medalist – will be desperate to improve on his U20 world bronze in the 86kg category, as he looks to follow in the footsteps of Iranian wrestling greats Hassan Yazdani and Kamran Qasempour.

Mohammad-Mobin Azimi (92kg) and Abolfazl Babalou (97kg) boast five gold medals between them from various international U20 events and will look to add to their tally in Novi Sad. Meanwhile, teenage superheavyweight Abolfazl Mohammadnejad – the U20 world silver medalist – will step in for Iranian prodigy Amirreza Masoumi in the 125kg category.

Asian Table Tennis Team Championships: Teenage sensation Faraji already showing signs of world-beater

SPORTSTAR – Seconds after forcing Lin Shidong – the world No. 2 from China – into an error that resulted in a win for Benjamin Faraji, the 15-year-old from Tehran appeared perplexed, before jumping over the arena and hugging Iran coach Jamil Lotfollah Nasabi.

Faraji, the teenage sensation who has become Iran's brightest table tennis prospect, stunned Shidong in Iran's Asian Table Tennis Team Championship quarterfinal against China. Even though the result went China's way, Faraji's 3-2 triumph over the Chinese star marked another defining step in his rapid rise.

It wasn't the first time Faraji had taken down a giant. At the last year's Asian

Championship, he had beaten world No. 1 Wang Chuqin in the team event and later stretched Shidong to five sets in singles. This time, he didn't just stretch him – he conquered him.

With his explosive forehand top spins, precise placement, and ability to read spin early, Faraji forced Shidong into rare errors. The youngster's balance of aggression and composure belied his age. "Benjamin played very well. It is incredible," Lotfollah Nasabi told Sportstar after the match.

So what is it that makes Faraji special? "He is very brave. He plays against the world number one and still wants to win the match," said Lotfollah. "This is a very good spirit from him. He is a hard

worker who practices morning, afternoon, and night. Table tennis is his love and his passion."

At 15, Faraji has already beaten top-two world-ranked paddlers. The scoreline may be temporary; the signal he has sent to world table tennis isn't. The Iranian prodigy inflicted further upset on another high-profile player on Tuesday, coming from behind to defeat South Korean world No. 13 An Jaehyun during a 5-8 position contest at the Asian showpiece.

Iran went on to suffer a 3-2 loss to South Korea, though a last-eight finish has already seen the country secure a place at next April's ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships in London.



Iran's Benjamin Faraji celebrates his victory over Chinese world number two Lin Shidong at the Asian Table Tennis Team Championship
● BISWARANJAN ROUT/AP

Sports Desk

Afsaneh Hesamifard made history by becoming the first Iranian female mountaineer to enter the sport's eight-thousanders club.

The historic feat came after Hesamifard complete the ascent of Cho Oyu, the 8,201-meter peak located 20 kilometers west of Mount Everest, Iran Mountaineering & Sport Climbing Federation announced on Tuesday. The eight-thousanders features 14 mountains recognized by the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA) with summits that exceed 8,000 meters in elevation above sea level and are sufficiently independent of neighboring peaks as measured by topographic prominence.

Hesamifard is only the second Iranian to achieve this milestone, following male mountaineer Azim Qeychisaz.

Iran's Hesamifard conquers Cho Oyu, enters eight-thousanders club



● IRNA

WKF Karate World Championships: Four Iranians to chase qualification in Paris

Sports Desk

Four Iranian karatekas will pursue a spot at the upcoming WKF World Championships – starting November 27 in Cairo – when the maiden qualification tournament for the sport's flagship international event gets underway in Paris on Friday.

Four-time Asian bronze medalist Fatemeh Sadeqi will take part in the women's individual kata competition, looking to build on her gold-winning campaign at January's Karate 1 Series A event in Tbilisi, Georgia. In the kumite contests, Amirreza Borzouei will compete in the men's -67kg class, with two-time Asian silver winner Mobina Heidari and Hannaneh

Salehi – gold medalist in February's Karate 1 Youth League in Fujairah – chasing a world quota in the women's -68kg and +68kg categories, respectively.

The Paris qualification tournament has attracted over 500 athletes from 105 countries. The tournament will follow a round-robin format, a system designed to promote fairness and excitement. Competitors will be divided into groups, where each athlete faces every opponent in their pool. The winner of each group advances to the qualification phase, where head-to-head matches decide the final qualifiers. Victors at this stage will claim their spot at final phase in the Egyptian capital.



Iran's Fatemeh Sadeqi will compete in the women's individual kata event at the WKF World Championships Qualification Tournament in Paris.

● MAHDIEH SADEQI/IWSports.IR

Communities struggle as wetlands dry in Iran

Iranica Desk

Wetlands — the lungs of the Earth and the backbone of the country’s nature-based tourism — are disappearing one by one under the shadow of neglect and mismanagement. From Sarab Niloufar (Niloufar Wetlad) in Kermanshah to Gavkhouni Wetland in Isfahan Province, from Hamun Lake to Bakhtegan Lake, the scars of drought and poor planning are evident everywhere. With each wetland that vanishes, a piece of tourism, local livelihood, and people’s hope is lost. Journalist Hamid Almasinia wrote, “Not so long ago, Iran’s wetlands and springs were popular destinations for both domestic and foreign tourists — places for boating, birdwatching, photography, and experiencing the serenity of nature,” as cited by chtn.ir. Niloufar Wetland in Kermanshah, once celebrated for its blue water lilies, symbolized beauty and life. Today, however, it serves as a stark reminder of dryness and neglect — the same fate that befell Gavkhouni, Lake Urmia, Bakhtegan Lake, and Hur al-Azim Wetland, and now looms over other wetlands across the country. Iran — a land whose wetlands once shimmered like mirrors reflecting the sky — now faces a severe desiccation crisis. Wetland tourism has yet to secure its rightful place within the country’s major tourism policies. This oversight has not only resulted in the loss of natural attractions but also left Iran trailing behind regional competitors in nature-based tourism. Community-based and cultural tourism once flourished alongside nature, providing employment opportunities for local residents. Today, many of these



Niloufar Wetlad
● pinorest.com



Gavkhouni Wetland
● IRNA



Hamun Lake
● kojara.com



Bakhtegan Lake
● IRNA

wetlands exist only as names on a map, their once-blue waters replaced by cracks in the parched earth. The drying of wetlands is not merely an environmental catastrophe; it is also a devastating blow to Iran’s nature-driven tourism sector. Wetland tourism, a vital branch of ecotourism, nurtures a direct balance between humans and their environment. With the loss of wetlands, this bal-

ance collapses: eco-lodges close, tourists stop visiting rural areas, and local communities that once thrived on tourism now face stagnation and despair. Environmental experts warn that the primary cause of this crisis is not climate change alone, but misguided water management policies — excessive dam construction, unsustainable groundwater extraction, and the neglect of wetlands’ water rights.

The result has been the gradual destruction of aquatic ecosystems, the loss of habitats for migratory birds, and the collapse of livelihood chains for local communities. In many regions, indigenous communities that once depended on water-based tourism, boating, fishing, and handicrafts now struggle with unemployment, migration, and poverty. The drying of a wetland is, in es-

sence, the drying of life itself — a bitter reality that now threatens the very face of Iran’s natural tourism. For example, countries such as the Netherlands, Japan, and India have successfully implemented wetland-based tourism projects that generate significant income through educational tours, recreational visits, and eco-friendly accommodations. In these nations, wetlands are val-

ued as opportunities rather than threats. Yet in Iran, this potential remains overlooked, and each year, a portion of the nation’s natural heritage disappears under the shadow of neglect. Beyond economic consequences, the loss of wetlands carries profound social impacts. Villages that once thrived near wetlands are now facing waves of migration due to declining tourism. Local handicrafts, previously sold to visitors, no longer have buyers, and traditional festivals and water-related rituals — once integral to community identity — are gradually fading into oblivion. While other countries reap billions of dollars from wetland restoration and sustainable tourism, Iran still lacks a coherent and serious plan to protect its water-based resources. Experts warn that unless there is a national commitment to wetland restoration, the country may soon witness the total collapse of aquatic tourism — and by then, a return to the past will no longer be possible. “If we fail to act today, in the near future not only will nature tourism but even the very concept of ‘eco-based tourism’ in Iran lose its meaning. The drying of wetlands is not just the death of ecosystems — it marks the end of a way of life, the end of community-driven tourism, and the severing of the Iranian people’s bond with water.” Now is the moment for decisive action. Wetlands must be recognized not merely as sources of water, but as living cultural, touristic, and environmental heritage. Protecting them means safeguarding tourism, sustaining local livelihoods, and preserving a vital part of Iran’s natural identity — an identity that, once lost, no rainfall will ever restore.

Shiraz’s Haft Tanan Garden blends architecture, art, legend

Iranica Desk

Haft Tanan Garden (Bagh-e Haft Tanan) is one of the oldest and most significant historical sites in Shiraz, Fars Province, located at the foothills of Chehel Maqam Mountain, just north of the Hafez Mausoleum. This serene and ancient garden, whose origins trace back to centuries before the Zand era, gained much of its current structure and charm during the reign of Karim Khan Zand, the founder of the Zand dynasty in the 18th century. In ancient times, the people of Shiraz would visit this sacred site to pray for rain, offer worship, and seek blessings. The name

“Haft Tanan” literally means seven bodies or seven persons, referring to the seven wise and pious men whose graves rest within the garden. Out of respect for their spiritual status, Karim Khan Zand placed large, uninscribed stone slabs over their tombs, signifying reverence without revealing their identities. The architectural design of the main building in Haft Tanan Garden is both simple and elegant. The roof is supported by two massive monolithic stone pillars, giving the structure a sense of grandeur and strength. Inside, the stucco-decorated walls are adorned with five vivid paintings depicting various ceremonial and spiritual scenes, each rep-

resenting a different aspect of life, faith, and mysticism during the Zand period. These paintings are considered masterpieces

of 18th-century Persian art, reflecting the aesthetic values and cultural depth of that era. During the mid-20th century,

specifically in 1957–1958 CE, the complex underwent extensive restoration under the supervision of Mohammad Baqer Jahan Miri, a distinguished artist and painter from Shiraz. Thanks to his efforts, many of the original artistic and architectural features were preserved and revived. Today, the site functions not only as a historical monument but also as a museum of ancient stonework. The stones displayed here, dating from the 9th to the 17th centuries CE, are beautifully engraved with various scripts and calligraphic styles, offering valuable insight into the evolution of Persian art and epigraphy. At the heart of the garden lies

a large rectangular pool, which was once filled with the pure waters of Roknabad Stream — a source long celebrated in Persian poetry and known for its clarity and coolness. The reflection of the surrounding cypress trees and the historical mansion in the still water adds to the mystical ambiance of the garden. Today, Haft Tanan Garden stands as a tranquil and spiritually charged destination, drawing both history enthusiasts and art lovers alike. It beautifully encapsulates the harmony of nature, spirituality, and Persian architectural artistry, serving as a timeless reminder of Shiraz’s rich cultural heritage.



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Quiet master of Iran's silver screen Nasser Taghvai dies at 84

Arts & Culture Desk

Nasser Taghvai, the celebrated Iranian filmmaker, writer and photographer whose works chronicled the poetry and solitude of ordinary lives, died in Tehran on October 14. He was 84.

His death, confirmed by his wife, the actress Marzieh Vafamehr, followed years of declining health that had kept him away from film sets. "He loved plants—let us plant a tree in his memory," she wrote in a poignant note on Facebook. "He loved light—let us add our candle to his."

Born in 1941 in the oil city of Abadan, Taghvai belonged to the generation that defined Iranian cinema before and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. A graduate of literature who turned to film almost by accident, he began as a short-story writer before discovering, as he later put it, "how the camera could think."

His early works 'Tranquility in the Presence of Others' (1969) and 'Sadegh the Kurd' (1972) challenged the complacent realism of Iranian cinema, bringing psychological nuance and narrative density rarely seen at the time. But it was his 1976 television serial 'My Uncle

Napoleon'—an adaptation of Iraj Pezeshkzad's satirical novel—that secured his place in Iran's cultural memory. Its tender absurdism and social irony remain embedded in the collective consciousness of several generations.

Filmmaker Rasul Sadr Ameli described Taghvai as a filmmaker whose anthropological insight set him apart, "The difference between Taghvai and others was the deep human understanding he had of his society."

His 'Captain Khorshid' (1987), a transposition of Hemingway's 'To Have and Have Not' to the Persian Gulf, became a classic—winning the Bronze Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival. Its disciplined realism and layered ethics made the film a portrait of resilience and honor.

Taghvai followed with 'O Iran' (1990), a political allegory of loyalty and resistance, and 'Unruled Paper' (2002), an intimate study of middle-class isolation that critics now see as ahead of its time. "He made three noble and honest films after the Revolution," Sadr Ameli said.

In his later years, Taghvai withdrew from public life, writing essays and taking photographs of southern Iran's landscapes—his lifelong

muse. "He began with authority and ended with grace," Sadr Ameli recalled. "But when he needed companionship most, he was left alone." Despite his silence, his influence deepened. To younger generations of directors, he represented integrity itself—a man who refused to rush films, or compromise his craft for fashion or favor.

Tributes poured in from across Iran's cultural spectrum.

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Abbas Salehi, called him "a lasting figure in the history of Iranian cinema," saying Taghvai "saw cinema not as entertainment but as the language of thought itself."

From the Head of the Cinema Organization, Raed Faridzadeh, "He was an architect of narrative and meaning, a man who built his worlds between light and silence."

The Managing Director of the Farsi Cinema Foundation, Hamed Jafari, praised him as "a visionary auteur who redefined the soul of Iranian storytelling."

The House of Cinema called him "the compass of decency in an era of noise," while the Museum of Cinema described him as "a genius whose lens turned poetry into permanence."

The Iranian Youth Cinema Society and the Documentary, Experimental & Animation Film Center (DEFC) both mourned "a teacher who turned detail into destiny."

A flood of emotion also surged through Iran's artistic community. Actors Parviz Parastui, Reza Kianian, Shahram Mokri, Shabnam Moghaddami, and Hamed Behdad were among dozens who took to social media to share their shock and grief.

Behdad, in a haunting reflection posted the morning after Taghvai's death, wrote, "Last night I thought about the death of Nasser Taghvai. I don't know why. I wondered what it would be like when his spirit left his body."

"...Today, I woke to the news that he is gone—on the same date that Dariussh Mehrjui was killed last year. Are we all connected? He was our captain. The sea remembers him." Taghvai's passing, one year after the murder of Mehrjui, has been widely seen as the end of an era—the last of Iran's early modernist filmmakers.

He is survived by his wife, Marzieh Vafamehr, and a generation of artists who learned from his restraint. As one critic wrote, "He filmed the invisible, and taught us to see."



Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art to establish permanent exhibition hall

TMoCA ranks among world's top 10 modern art collections



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA) is set to establish a permanent exhibition hall dedicated to displaying some of its most celebrated and valuable works, the museum's director announced, calling the initiative a milestone in the institution's decades-long mission to make its treasures more accessible to the public. Speaking to Iran Daily, Reza Dabiri-Nejad, director of TMoCA, said the permanent display would allow visitors to engage more consistently with highlights from the museum's vast and acclaimed collection. He described the project as "a long-awaited step toward greater visibility for one of the richest and most prestigious modern art collections in the

Middle East."

"The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, thanks to the depth and diversity of its holdings, is ranked among the ten most important modern art collections in the world," Dabiri-Nejad said. "It was one of the pioneers of modernist art in West Asia — long before the concept of a modern art museum had gained traction in much of the region."

Founded in 1977, TMoCA is widely regarded as the crown jewel of Iran's cultural institutions and a cornerstone of its artistic heritage. The museum houses thousands of works by both Iranian and international masters, and its striking architecture — blending modernist design with traditional Persian elements — has made it a landmark in central Tehran. Over the decades, it has served as both a showcase of

Iran's artistic modernity and a bridge to global art movements.

The museum chief said approximately 4,000 works — including paintings, sculptures, photographs, and prints — are currently preserved in the museum's storage facilities.

"Roughly one-third of the collection consists of international works, with the remainder created by Iranian artists," he said. "Since the museum is fundamentally collection-based, most of these works are safeguarded in the vaults and are brought out periodically for curated, thematic exhibitions."

He explained that temporary and seasonal exhibitions are typically mounted every two to three months under different curatorial titles and artistic concepts. However, he added, the forthcoming permanent exhibition space will ensure that a core selection of the museum's most iconic and acclaimed works will always be available to the public. "Visitors will no longer have to wait for a special occasion to see the treasures that define this museum," he noted.

The museum's new plan also aligns with efforts to expand and enrich its collection, a process that

has continued steadily over the past several decades.

"We are determined to strengthen our collection both in volume and in depth," Dabiri-Nejad said. "We aim to assemble a more comprehensive body of work that reflects the evolution of modern and contemporary art — not only in Iran but across the world. The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art should be able to tell a fuller story about global modernism and its intersections with Iranian creativity."

He further highlighted the museum's dual role as both a national institution and an internationally recognized cultural hub. "The museum's significance lies not only in its place within Iran's artistic landscape but also in its international standing."

He said "As a mother institution for modern art in Iran, TMoCA serves as a vital platform for cultural exchange, dialogue, and diplomacy. By engaging with its counterparts abroad, it can foster closer artistic cooperation and strengthen Iran's role in global cultural conversations."

According to Iran Daily, the gallery possesses one of the most extensive and valuable collections of

modern art outside Europe and North America. The museum's holdings encompass major movements such as Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Minimalism, Conceptual Art, and Photorealism, reflecting the breadth of artistic experimentation that shaped the twentieth century.

Many of the works in the collection are regarded as masterpieces of exceptional artistic and historical worth. Among them are significant pieces by Paul Gauguin, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Pablo Picasso, René Magritte, Max Ernst, Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, Sol LeWitt, and Alberto Giacometti. These works, long preserved within the museum's storerooms, are expected to feature prominently in the permanent exhibition once it is established.

For art historians, curators, and visitors alike, the move marks a turning point in TMoCA's engagement with the public. By offering a consistent display of its core collection, the museum not only reaffirms its role as a custodian of global modernism but also enhances its capacity to act as an active player in Iran's evolving landscape of cultural diplomacy.

Minister calls cultural diplomacy 'bridge between hearts' as Tehran, Beijing revive Silk Road legacy

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri said on October 14 that cultural diplomacy must serve as "a bridge between hearts" in deepening ties between Iran and China.

His message was read by Ebrahim Zarei, head of Iran's Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, at the opening ceremony of the Silk Gift exhibition in Tehran, IRNA reported.

The minister's remarks come as Tehran and Beijing increasingly lean on cultural engagement to complement their growing economic and political cooperation under a long-term strategic partnership. Analysts say Iran's emphasis on shared civilizational roots with China reflects an effort to project soft power and revive its historic role as a crossroads of the ancient Silk Road. Salehi-Amiri called cultural diplomacy "a strategic pillar" for national progress, describing Iran and China as "two great Asian civilizations" bound by centuries of trade and religious exchange. He pointed to ancient Zoroastrian and Manichaean traditions as formative links between the two, saying those cultural and spiritual interactions once "shaped and stabilized" political and commercial relations across Asia.

"Such a legacy should not be confined to history books," the minister wrote. "It must evolve into a living connection that binds the identities and aspirations of our peoples today."

He urged that current relations move beyond a transactional economic framework and embrace the shared cultural and civilizational heritage that "illuminates today's interactions." Salehi-Amiri underscored the need for rigorous academic research to better map the intertwined cultural roots of Iran and China. A clearer scientific understanding of this common heritage, he argued, could "offer a brighter image of our shared ancient identity in art and culture" and inspire a "renewed sense of civilizational belonging."

He also noted that historical exchanges of faith and craftsmanship—from religious missions to ceramic and metalwork trades along the Silk Road—remain visible in archaeological sites across the two nations. These remnants, he said, provide fertile ground for joint research between Iranian and Chinese universities and cultural institutes. The minister described heritage as "a civilizational gateway" for building broader relations and hailed the "Gifts of the Silk Road" exhibition, organized by the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, as a practical example of purposeful cultural diplomacy.

He revealed that the ministry's next initiative will focus on the maritime heritage of Iran and China, exploring ancient seafaring technologies and artistic traditions. Salehi-Amiri expressed hope that sustained cultural collaboration would "pave the way for more Chinese visitors to the ancient land of Iran."