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Iran should step in
as mediator
between Pakistan,
Afghan Taliban

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE



This month, the Afghan Taliban faced its most intense and prolonged cross-border confrontation since assuming power in 2021. The escalation began with Pakistani airstrikes on Kabul and other Afghan cities, targeting senior figures of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). In response, Taliban forces launched retaliatory attacks, resulting in dozens of casualties on both sides. Each government accuses the other of provocation, further straining already fragile relations. To deescalate the crisis, a 48-hour ceasefire was brokered on October 15 at the Taliban's request and accepted by Pakistan, offering a brief window for diplomacy.

In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, renowned historian Ayesha Jalal analyses the unfolding situation, suggesting that Iran take on a mediating role. A Pakistani-American scholar and the Mary Richardson Professor of History at Tufts University, Jalal is widely recognized for her work on South Asian history, particularly the formation of Muslim identities in the modern era. Her distinguished career is marked by fellowships from Trinity College, Cambridge, and the MacArthur Foundation.

IRAN DAILY: How do you assess the future trajectory of regional developments in South Asia following the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan?

JALAL: The aftermath of the American departure from Afghanistan posed a Catch-22 situation for Pakistan. Would the end of the American led military presence in Afghanistan be a catalyst for peace or greater regional insecurity? The actions of the Pakistan military establishment, which launched its much-delayed Operation Zarb-e-Arz in 2014 anticipating an eventual American withdrawal, suggests that they expected the security situation to deteriorate after the Taliban took over. There were elements within the Pakistan military establishment that thought a working relationship could be forged with the Taliban. But their optimism proved to be misplaced once it became clear that the Afghan Taliban would not, even if they could, take concerted action against the anti-Pakistan Tehreek-e-Talban Pakistan (TTP). Kabul's continued support for TTP elements wanted by Pakistan who have taken refuge in Afghanistan is at the heart of the current standoff between the two countries.

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Iran, Turkey and Azerbaijan map out new environmental agenda

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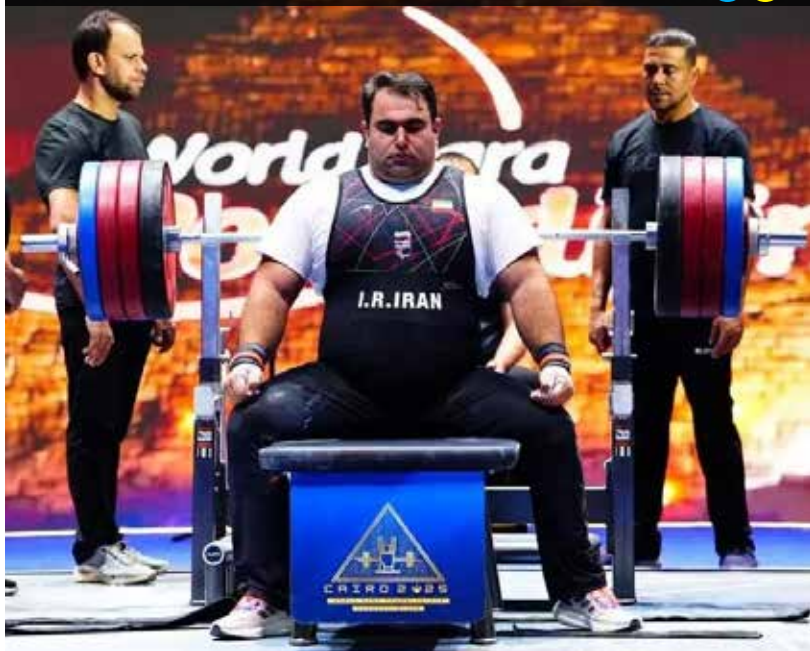


Head of Iran's Department of Environment Shina Ansari (7th R) poses for a group photo with ministers and delegates during the ministerial-level roundtable meeting on the sidelines of the Zero Waste Forum in Istanbul, Turkey on October 18, 2025.

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Tehran rejects UK
security allegations
as 'baseless and
irresponsible'

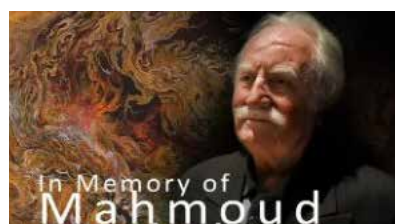
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Egypt's quiet rise
Region's next wild card
patiently weaving web
of influence

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

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Vienna pays tribute to
Farshchian, architect
of modern Persian
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Iran announces JCPOA termination; blasts UN resolutions revival

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Saturday that all provisions of the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 regarding the 2015 Iran nuclear deal are to be considered terminated from now on as a ten-year period set out in the resolution came to an end on October 18, 2025. In a statement on the "termination date" of the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the ministry said that Iran is no longer bound by restrictions on its nuclear program as the landmark 10-year deal expired, though Tehran reiterated its "commitment to diplomacy."

The 2015 deal — signed in Vienna by Iran, China, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States — saw the lifting of international sanctions against the Islamic Republic in exchange for restrictions on its nuclear program. But the pact had already been in tatters after Washington unilaterally withdrew during President Donald Trump's first term, with Iran later pulling back from its commitments in response. The European parties to the deal also failed to fulfill their commitment to the agreement. Several rounds of talks to revive the agreement failed, and in August, the UK, Germany and France triggered the so-called "snapback" process on the pretext of Iran's non-compliance with its obligations, leading to the re-imposition

of the UN sanctions. The move rendered the accord effectively moot.

No more restrictions

From now on, "all of the provisions (of the deal), including the restrictions on the Iranian nuclear program and the related mechanisms are considered terminated," Iran's Foreign Ministry said in its statement. "Iran firmly expresses its commitment to diplomacy," it added. The deal's "termination day" was set for October 18, 2025, exactly 10 years after it was enshrined in the UN's Security Council resolution 2231. The accord capped Iran's uranium enrichment at 3.67 percent in exchange for sanctions relief and provided for strict supervision of its nuclear activities by the UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). But Washington unilaterally left the deal in 2018 and reinstated sanctions, after which Tehran began scaling down its commitments under the agreement.

'Irresponsible actions'

In July, Iran also suspended cooperation with the IAEA following an aggression by Israel and the US, with Tehran pointing to the agency's failure to condemn Israeli and US strikes on its nuclear facilities. The unprecedented bombing campaign by Israel and the retaliation by Iran during the 12-day war derailed the latest

negotiations between Tehran and Washington to reach a new nuclear agreement. However, Iran reached a new cooperation agreement with the IAEA in Cairo as a goodwill gesture.

"Iran's efforts to revive the exchanges (with the IAEA) that led to the agreement in Cairo were also sabotaged by the irresponsible actions of the three European countries," the Iranian Foreign Ministry said. The ministry was referring to the Europeans' activation of the snapback mechanism.

'Null and void' sanctions

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also in a letter on Saturday to Antonio Guterres, the United Nations secretary general, and Vassily Nebenzia, the rotating president of the Security Council, said that the expiration of the 2015 deal renders the sanctions "null and void." He reaffirmed Tehran's position that Resolution 2231 has "definitively expired and terminated" in accordance with its own provisions. Araghchi also decried as "devoid of legal basis" attempts by the three European countries to revive the previously terminated UN sanctions resolutions. "As detailed in the joint letter of the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the People's Republic of China, and the Russian Federation dated 28 August 2025 (A/79/1004-S/2025/546), the European



● SETH WENIG/AP

parties' attempt to invoke the so-called 'notification' is procedurally defective and substantively void," he wrote. "No measure taken in disregard of resolution 2231 can generate legal obligations for Member States. The Security Council's voting record and the clear positions expressed by its members confirm that the so-called 'notification' has no legal validity. Accordingly, any claim of 'reviving' or 'reinstating' terminated resolutions is void ab initio, lacking legal foundation and incapable of producing a binding effect." Araghchi emphasized that the procedure pursued by the three European states constitutes a clear abuse of process, contrary to both the letter and spirit of resolution 2231 and the nuclear agreement. In a Friday post on X, Araghchi also asserted that Iran is answerable only to "the rule of law, not coercion."

Upon expiration, the official said, Iran would legally be removed from the Security Council's agenda. The development will allow the Islamic Republic to increase its peaceful nuclear energy activities within the provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). "As an NPT signatory, Iran will remain bound solely to its rights and obligations under the Treaty," Araghchi likewise said. "This includes no limits whatsoever on the scale of its nuclear program."

Tehran rejects UK security allegations as 'baseless and irresponsible'



● IRNA

International Desk

Iran strongly rejected security allegations leveled by Britain's domestic security agency, MI5, calling them "baseless and irresponsible." Iran's Embassy in London in a statement on Friday repudiated the assertions made by head of the MI5 Sir Ken McCallum on October 16, which accused Iran of involvement in so-called "deadly plots" and

"cross-border hostile actions." "The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its strong protest to and outright rejection of these unfounded and irresponsible statements," the statement read. "These baseless and irresponsible claims are part of a continuous campaign of distortion aimed at misrepresenting the policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran and undermining bilateral diplomatic

relations." It further stated that the claims were made "without credible evidence," and contradict Iran's ongoing commitment to international law, the principle of sovereign equality, as well as promotion of peaceful coexistence and international cooperation. The statement came after the MI5 chief alleged that UK security forces had thwarted 20 operations linked to Iran on British soil over the past year — a claim Tehran has dismissed as part of an ongoing campaign of misinformation. The Iranian embassy urged the British government to "refrain from making or escalating baseless accusations" and instead pursue a "responsible and constructive approach based on dialogue and mutual respect" to address shared security concerns through legal and diplomatic channels. The mission finally reaffirmed Iran's preparedness for dialogue, and its commitment to international norms and peaceful international relations.

Egypt highlights necessity of Iran-US nuclear talks resumption



Steve Witkoff



Rafael Grossi



Abbas Araghchi



Badr Abdelatty

International Desk

Egypt's foreign minister on Saturday stressed the necessity of creating conditions to resume negotiations between Tehran and Washington with the goal of reaching a comprehensive agreement regarding Iran's nuclear program. According to Egypt's Foreign Ministry, Badr Abdelatty made the remarks in separate phone calls with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency Rafael Grossi as well as the US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff. The contacts came as a 10-year nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers, known as the Joint Comprehensive

Plan of Action (JCPOA), expired on Saturday. Earlier, the Egyptian foreign minister had also, in a phone conversation with Witkoff, reiterated Cairo's positions in support of reducing tensions in the Middle East and the failure of a military solution to Iran's nuclear program and other regional crises, the ministry said in its statement. The UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorses the JCPOA, expired on October 18, 2025. Several rounds of talks between Tehran and Washington, which began in April, to reach a new agreement on Iran's nuclear program failed to yield any result following an aggression by Israel and the US against Iran in June.

Iran should step ...

How do you view the recent border clashes between the Taliban and Pakistan, and what do they reveal about the shifting nature of their relationship? There is reason for concern as these border clashes can easily escalate into full-fledged war that may draw regional powers like India into the conflict. What the altered nature of relations between the Taliban and Pakistan demonstrate is that nothing in international relations remains the same. This is why tactical alliances should be accompanied with deeper and more strategic ones. The ease with which the Taliban government has switched from reliance on Islamabad to New Delhi suggests that similar somersaults are likely in the future as well, especially once we factor in the Chinese role in Afghanistan.

In your opinion, what are the implications of the Taliban's increasing engagement with India for Pakistan's foreign policy and regional strategy? Taliban entanglements with India will only serve to heighten the deep distrust and suspicion that informs relations between the Afghan Taliban and the Pakistani establishment. Even if a full-scale war is avoided, the Taliban refusal to concede Pakistan's demands on the TTP will keep relations between the two countries on edge with the possibility of a major conflagration always around the corner.

How might these evolving dynamics affect the overall balance of power in South Asia? Tensions between Kabul and Islamabad

will be immensely detrimental for regional peace in addition to adversely impacting Afghanistan's transborder trade with both Pakistan and India. The possibility of heightened activities by a Kabul backed TTP will result in air strikes by Pakistan and sour relations even further.

From your perspective, what potential strategic interests or opportunities could Iran pursue amid these regional transformations? Iran can and should consider playing a mediational role between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban. But this will require Tehran to make a clear decision whether its interests are better served by backing a Taliban-India alliance or a reconfigured Pakistan-Afghanistan alliance.



Agricultural irradiation center opens in Ardebil to boost crop yields



Economy Desk

Iran on Saturday inaugurated an agricultural irradiation center in Ardabil, a project officials described as “a link between

nuclear science and modern agriculture”. The Farayand (Process) facility aims to increase crop shelf life, reduce post-harvest losses, and boost farm productivity in the country’s northwest. It was opened in the

Iran’s nuclear chief Mohammad Eslami (2nd L) is briefed as he visits an exhibition staged on the sidelines of a ceremony to launch an agricultural irradiation center in Ardebil, Iran on October 18, 2025.

● IRNA

presence of the agriculture minister, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), and local authorities, IRNA reported.

At the inauguration, AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami highlighted the potential impact of irradiation on food security and national economy.

“If irradiation can reduce agricultural losses by even 30%, it would mark a significant achievement. Continued use of this technology will play a vital role in strengthening the national economy, improving public health, enhancing food security, and supporting household livelihoods,” he said.

Eslami emphasized the organization’s commitment to peaceful nuclear applications, noting, “Our goal is to turn ideas into practical products for public benefit. This technology was designed and implemented by our knowledge-based teams, and I invite both the public and private sectors to step up their participation to enhance agricultural efficiency through irradiation,” he said.

The AEOI chief added that irradiation eliminates residual pests and chemicals, benefiting public health and easing export barriers.

“In water-scarce conditions, efficiency in agriculture is very important,” he said,

noting that irradiated rice varieties have shown higher yields, with production increasing up to three times per hectare.

Ardebil Governor General Masoud Emami Yeganeh said the center symbolizes “the link between nuclear science and modern agriculture,” calling it a milestone in using advanced technology to improve efficiency and reduce agricultural waste. He added that it could serve as a model for sustainable development in north-west Iran.

Ardebil province, which covers less than one percent of Iran’s land, produces 4.5 million tons of various agricultural products annually — around four percent of the country’s total. Its output includes more than 400,000 tons of wheat, 750,000 tons of potatoes, and 450,000 tons of horticultural products, according to IRNA.

Currently, 750,000 hectares of Ardabil’s land are under cultivation, including 270,000 hectares of irrigated land and 480,000 hectares of rainfed fields. Wheat is the province’s most widely planted crop, covering 275,000 hectares this year. In previous years, wheat production in Ardebil reached up to 600,000 tons, but drought and uneven rainfall over the past two years have led to more than a 50% decline in output.

Officials said the inauguration of the Farayand Center represents a step toward turning nuclear knowledge into practical agricultural solutions, increasing productivity, reducing losses, and strengthening food security in northwest Iran.

Iran edges toward FATF compliance as Parliament advances CFT accession



Economy Desk

Iran’s Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf formally promulgated the law approving Iran’s accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) on Saturday, marking a key step in implementing the measure, IRNA reported on Saturday.

In a letter to President Masoud Pezeshkian, issued under Article 123 of the Iranian Constitution, Qalibaf communicated the law titled “Accession of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.”

The move follows the Expediency Council’s decision on October 2 to endorse Iran’s membership in the CFT after years of debate.

Council spokesman Mohsen Dehnavi said the approval came with two key conditions: Iran will implement the provisions of the convention strictly within the framework of its Constitution, and where any clauses contradict domestic laws, national regulations will take precedence.

“The Parliament had already inserted a clause requiring Iran to act in line with its Constitution, and the Expediency Council added another stipulation reaffirming that domestic law will override any conflicting international provisions,” Dehnavi explained.

Despite the conditions, some members of the parliament voiced opposition to the decision. A group of parliamentarians submitted a double-urgency motion seeking to block the implementation of the Expediency Council’s ruling by preventing the government from delivering Iran’s accession documents.

However, during a parliamentary session on Tuesday, October 14, lawmakers voted against the motion, clearing the way for the convention to proceed.

Iran’s conditional accession to the CFT represents a cautious move toward improving its standing in the global financial system. While the country remains on the FATF blacklist with limited engagement in regional groups, the new step could pave the way for renewed discussions on addressing the remaining gaps and easing restrictions on its international financial transactions.

Iran, Afghanistan seek to deepen economic ties at Birjand forum

Economy Desk

Iran and Afghanistan took steps to deepen their trade and investment cooperation at a joint forum in the eastern Iranian city of Birjand, seen as a milestone in shaping the future of trade in eastern Iran.

The Iran-Afghanistan joint cooperation development forum marked South Khorasan Province’s first major experience hosting a regional trade gathering, focusing on facilitating commercial exchanges, removing trade barriers, and promoting the transfer of technical knowledge, IRNA reported.

Addressing the meeting, Mohammadreza Bahraman, first vice president of Iran’s Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, called for a “25-year strategic vision” toward regional integration, saying long-term planning to 2050 was essential for sustainable development.

He said South Khorasan, endowed with valuable natural resources and rare minerals, could become a major economic hub linking Iran and Afghanistan if properly utilized. “The geological structures of Iran and Afghanistan share many similarities,

which can pave the way for deeper cooperation, especially in mining and exploration projects,” Bahraman added.

Afghanistan ensures safety

At the conference, Noor Mohammad Mutawakkil, Afghanistan’s consul general in Mashhad, said his country was ready to strengthen joint investment and trade initiatives within a framework of friendly relations with Iran. “Afghanistan has adopted a balanced, economy-focused policy and stands ready to offer comprehensive support and facilities to traders and investors around the clock,” he said, emphasizing the country’s improved security environment.

He also noted that exhibitions offer valuable opportunities for producers and investors to present their products and foster partnerships, adding that Afghanistan seeks to expand its long-standing ties with Iran.



Meanwhile, Mehdi Doosti, Iran’s deputy interior minister for economic coordination and regional development, said the Interior Ministry is pursuing extensive plans to enhance economic cooperation with 15 neighboring countries and 10 nearby states, including Afghanistan and China. The initiative, he said, aims to boost exports, address trade imbalances, and expand agricultural and industrial capacities.

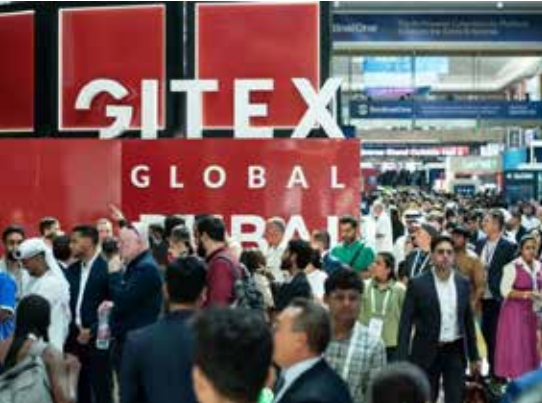
He pointed out that Iran imports more than 27 million tons of agricultural products annually, stressing the private sector must play a greater role in regional markets such as

Afghanistan.

On the sidelines of the forum, the first Iran-Afghanistan joint trade and investment opportunities exhibition also opened in Birjand on Saturday. The four-day event hosts 111 participants — 30% in the mining sector, 16% in construction, and the rest in other sectors — with 70% of exhibitors from South Khorasan and 30% from other provinces.

Organizers said the event provides a key platform to showcase Iran and Afghanistan’s economic capacities and explore new partnerships in mining, agriculture, commerce, and emerging technologies.

Iranian firms made strong mark in Dubai GITEX 2025



Economy Desk

More than 20 Iranian companies participated in the 45th edition of the Dubai International GITEX Technology Week, the world’s largest technology and artificial intelligence (AI) exhibition. The event ran from October 13 to 17 at the Dubai World Trade Center. GITEX 2025 brought together over 6,800 exhibitors and 2,000 startups from more than 180 countries, with a special focus on artificial intelligence, quantum

computing, biotechnology, and sustainable technologies.

Iranian firms showcased innovations across AI, fintech, cybersecurity, blockchain, and digital health, with the country’s largest mobile operator also among the participants.

The Iranian Information and Communications Federation also organized a networking session for tech businesses to expand markets and foster international collaboration.

Representatives from 14 coun-

tries, including Iran, the UAE, Brazil, Turkey, Jordan, Vietnam, Kenya, Pakistan, India, and Kazakhstan, attended to explore commercial and technological partnerships.

Officials said the initiative represents a strategic step for Iranian knowledge-based companies seeking entry into new international markets.

AI was a central theme of the exhibition, reflecting forecasts that the global artificial intelligence market could reach \$4.8 trillion by 2033.

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Egypt's quiet rise

Region's next wild card

patiently weaving web of influence

By Reza Raadfar
Political analyst

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The Middle East political scene has shaken up tremendously over the past two years or so. Especially after October 7, 2023, the Israeli regime, backed by two US administrations, not least bothered by international laws, has taken it upon itself to change the roster of most other regional cabinets. If we assume that no shady backroom deals were going on to decide who should go and who should stay — and you definitely would be right to assume differently — then, at least, we could say that the remaining actors saw the moment ripe to make a play of their own.

This is not to pin faults on anyone, realistically. The international order is far from the idealistic visions of the likes of Immanuel Kant. When the US is pushing the Machiavellian version of politics hard, you also have to change course if you weren't already on the said course. While we all like to get back to a world where co-operation is the name of the game, that seemingly has to wait for several key administrations to change, which can only occur if their peoples dream the same dream — but that's an issue for another day. In the meantime, every regional stateman and political expert is better off recognizing who's playing what game to what end. It's worth noting that games change, and actors do not join or make games at the same pace as others. Some who were playing in the corner by themselves suddenly realize that they're either getting left behind or can finally get what they've always wanted, and some

are dragged into specific games, with a certain capacity to play that game depending on how prepared they were and how quickly they said goodbyes to their old games temporarily.

So, while the likes of Turkey are rather overtly making new games, the likes of Armenia are getting dragged to these games. Then, there's a third group of actors: Those that fly under the radar but fly nevertheless. Egypt is a good example of that.

Egypt has been making slow but deliberate moves to elevate its standing with almost every actor in the region, even if those actors are not from the region per se. Just to prove the point, during the last two years, Cairo kicked off a détente process with Tehran, mediated talks between Tehran and the IAEA, co-chaired a summit with Washington, hosts Hamas political leaders and negotiators, keeps Israel at bay to the best of its ability through talks, and harsh-

ly criticized Tel Aviv for its attack on Doha during the Arab-Islamic Summit.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has his reasons for this sudden flurry of diplomatic engagement in the region.

First of all, there's an existential threat to his country's north. The destabilizing, currently unchecked acts of aggression of Israel may at any day find another target in its historical enemy. For years, there have been rumors of forcibly expelling the people of Gaza to Egypt's Sinai Desert. In a matter of months after the recent Gaza War broke out, satellite images showed Egypt constructing buildings suspiciously resembling enclosed camps for displaced people and getting ready for that possibility. For a country wrestling with economic hardships, the fear of hundreds or thousands of Palestinian refugees flooding the country easily summarizes Cairo's motives from October 7, 2023, up until re-

cently.

With regards to Israel, there's also the matter of their occupying the Philadelphi corridor. The 14-km-long strip of land serves as the border area between Gaza and Egypt. There's a history of Israel occupying buffer zones and trying its hardest to keep on to them for an indefinite time under thin pretenses. This kind of slow encroachment on the sovereignty of your country always takes a toll on your president and incumbent party's ability to hold on to power in subsequent elections. While el-Sisi cannot run for a fourth term under the Egyptian constitution, the document has already been amended to allow his third term, which was extended to be six years long as well, so who knows what other things can still happen?

On the military front, Cairo has already given a rein to Washington. Since 1987, Egypt has intermittently received approximately \$1.3 billion annually in Foreign Military

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi stands from his chair during an economic summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in March 2015, while other attendees applaud him.
THE NEW YORK TIMES

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Egypt has been making slow but deliberate moves to elevate its standing with almost every actor in the region, even if those actors are not from the region per se. Just to prove the point, during the last two years, Cairo kicked off a détente process with Tehran, mediated talks between Tehran and the IAEA, co-chaired a summit with Washington, hosts Hamas political leaders and negotiators, keeps Israel at bay to the best of its ability through talks, and harshly criticized Tel Aviv for its attack on Doha during the Arab-Islamic Summit.

Financing from the US. In essence, this is not cash, but a credit that can only be used to purchase American military equipment, services, and training. So, while, to a much lesser extent, Egypt has bought weapons from other purveyors, it is hard for it to turn down the \$1.3 billion — that is, if the US does not find any human rights abuses or other pretenses to partially or fully withhold the funds. To make matters more complicated, Washington has not always rubberstamped the sale of its most advanced arms to Egypt, making this deal even more bitter for Cairo.

Then, there's the strong Muslim tendencies of the people of Egypt and, to a lesser extent, the peoples of the region. This has been another sensitive hoop that el-Sisi must jump through, however reluctantly. The country that once took it upon itself to lead the Arab world, both in forums and in battle, cannot so easily shake that mentality; It has been ingrained in its psyche. El-Sisi does not have a serious issue to follow in Gamal Abdel Nasser's footsteps if it means that the leaders of the Middle East look up to him; That part is okay — who wouldn't want that? But he's neither in a position to make risky maneuvers like Nasser, nor has the same passions in his heart, namely Pan-Arabism and socialism. So, he has seemingly decided that he must forge a new path for himself while not setting foot on landmines like resistance tendencies that can drain his energy and resources. All in all, it is arguably not a bad thing to see a major regional country try to mediate talks and ceasefires among nations, even if these efforts are triggered by visions of personal grandeur or geopolitical necessities. In a region dominated by loud, overt acts of zero-sum posturing where most third-parties prefer not to get seriously involved, it is still worth noting when a country is quietly making a name for itself in almost every situation. Who knows when the game can change once enough resources and reputation are gained?



A billboard leading to the venue of the Gaza peace summit features Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (r) and his counterpart, Donald Trump, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in October 2025.
ANADOLU AGENCY

Egypt crucial to Trump's Gaza plan but fears security vacuum



By David Butter
Expert on Mideast affairs

OPINION

Egypt has handled several negotiations between Israel and Hamas in partnership with Qatari, Turkish, and US officials. That is in keeping with its policy of trying to ensure that the resolution of the conflict is a collective effort. Egypt has taken a firm position on its own national security interests in talks. It has ruled out taking sole responsibility for Gaza, which it insists is ultimately for Palestinians to take on, with international support. And it has emphasized its refusal to allow mass displacement of Palestinians into its Sinai region, which borders the Gaza Strip. Its involvement in the Gaza peace process thus far has been relatively low-key, although Egyptian intelligence officials, military leaders, and diplomats have been heavily engaged behind the scenes. However, now that the Trump plan has gotten over its first hurdles, the next steps will require significant input from Egypt. President Abdel-Fattah Sisi's government is keen to contribute to a reconstruction effort. But the Trump plan also raises significant security concerns — not least that Egypt could be sucked into a prolonged commitment without sufficient support from other countries.

Strained Egypt-US relations

Egyptian relations with the Trump administration have been strained over Gaza. Sisi aborted plans to visit Washington at the start of this year after President Trump unveiled his "Gaza Riviera" scheme, maintaining minimal contact since. Indeed, the Riviera scheme spurred Egypt to develop its own plan for Gaza's reconstruction.



(Front L-R) Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, US President Donald Trump, the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and other leaders pose for a family picture at the Gaza summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on October 13, 2025. ● EVAN VUCCI/APP

Relations with Israel, meanwhile, have sunk to a new low. On September 15, Sisi gave a strongly worded speech in Doha, condemning Israel's botched attempt to assassinate Hamas leaders in the Qatari capital. Egypt's recently beefed-up military presence in Sinai has also drawn complaints from Israel, although its purpose appears to be deterrence against any Israeli move to expel Palestinians, rather than an offensive threat. This is a challenging context for the Trump plan: In the coming phases, Egypt will become a crucial player. Its cooperation will be vital to facilitate the flow of aid into the territory. And Egypt could potentially contribute to the International Security Force (ISF) the plan calls for. Egyptian wariness of being drawn too deeply into Gaza is not only due to the US and Israel. Historical factors are important: Egypt's occupation of Gaza after the creation of Israel in 1948 was an unhappy experience for

all concerned, and provided no defence against Israel's occupation of Sinai in 1967. The Egyptian government also has concerns relating to the domestic economy, which is showing signs of improvement after a testing period. If Egypt were to get sucked into an active security role in Gaza, potentially bringing increased friction with Israel, it could have a negative impact on the recent recovery in foreign investment inflows and on the burgeoning tourism sector. Another issue is Egypt's reliance on natural gas imports by pipeline from Israel. These are continuing, and there is an agreement to increase them. Egypt also imports liquefied natural gas (LNG) and is boosting the capacity of receiving terminals, but these are more expensive than the pipeline supplies from Israel.

Problems with Trump plan for Gaza

The Trump plan calls for aid

deliveries to be stepped up, including through the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza, which is to be opened in both directions. But the plan does not spell out what will happen to the Israeli military presence on the Gaza side of this crossing, and in the Philadelphi Corridor. It only states that the ISF will work with Egypt and Israel to help secure border areas and train new Palestinian police forces. The make-up of the ISF and its financing have yet to be decided. The plan sketches out a process for disarming Hamas, but without any clear enforcement mechanism. It states that as a first step, once all the captives are released, Hamas members who forego violence and give up their weapons will receive an amnesty, while others will get safe passage out of Gaza. Later on, independent monitors are supposed to oversee a comprehensive process of demilitarization. This element has

echoes of the decommissioning process in Northern Ireland, although the situation in Gaza is very different. This lack of detail will be of concern to Egypt. It poses the risk of a security vacuum in Gaza, leading to pressure on Egypt to fill it on a supposedly temporary basis — one that could easily turn into a long and costly embroilment. Tony Blair, the former UK prime minister, is set to play a role in the "Board of Peace," a body headed by Mr. Trump that will oversee the political process and reconstruction, including financing, until the Palestinian Authority is deemed to be ready to take charge. Day-to-day operations will be conducted by a committee of Palestinian technocrats. Egypt will look to be involved in both the oversight body and in the selection of the administrative committee. But it faces the risk that it is forced to assume more and more responsibility as the attention of the international players wanes.

There is also the ever-present risk of Israel making unhelpful interventions, while there is likely to be score-settling and turf wars among a multitude of Palestinian factions. Being drawn into such conflicts could make Egyptian involvement unpopular at home as well as in Gaza.

Regardless, if the new plan gains momentum, Egypt's involvement in Gaza is likely to increase. This will bring some benefits through the management of aid logistics and reconstruction, provided that there is sufficient international finance deployed.

But Egypt will be determined to use talks to lock in collective international responsibility for Gaza's security — and for driving forward a political process that, as the plan states, could create "a credible pathway to Palestinian statehood and self-determination".

The full article first appeared on Chatham House.

Regardless, if the new plan gains momentum, Egypt's involvement in Gaza is likely to increase. This will bring some benefits through the management of aid logistics and reconstruction, provided that there is sufficient international finance deployed. However, Egypt wants to lock in a long-term commitment from other countries to ensure it is not left to secure Gaza alone.



Israeli military vehicles drive through the occupied Philadelphi Corridor, a buffer zone between Gaza and the Egyptian border that extends for 14 kilometers, on September 13, 2024. ● AMIR COHEN/REUTERS

World Para Powerlifting Championships:

Aminzadeh extends superheavyweight dominance with third world title

Sports Desk

It was another golden day for Iran at the World Para Powerlifting Championships as Ahmad Aminzadeh extended his dominance in the superheavyweight category on the final day of individual competitions in Cairo on Friday.

Reigning Paralympic champion Aminzadeh clinched his third world title with a 260kg lift in his second round and finished nine kilograms ahead of Gustavo Am Melo De Souza from Brazil in the men's over 107kg weight class.

The 34-year-old's victory also ensured that the legacy of the late Iranian legend Siamand Rahman lives on in the superheavyweight category.

"After Paris 2024 Paralympics, I didn't train much as I had some pain in my chest. But I'm happy that I won the gold here. I will go back to Iran, work on my recovery and train harder," said Aminzadeh who suffered an injury in Paris 2024.

"This is the first time I attempted to lift 270kg, but it wasn't meant to be here. I hope I can get it in the next competition."

However, the fight was between

Melo De Souza and Georgia's Paris 2024 bronze medalist Akaki Jintcharadze for the second place as they stayed neck and neck in the second round, both lifting 247 kg.

The final round saw Melo De Souza finishing one kilogram ahead of Jintcharadze (250 kg). In the process, Melo De Souza improved his own Americas record from 236kg to 251kg while Jintcharadze broke the European record of 248kg set at Tbilisi 2024.

Aminzadeh's triumph took Iran's medal haul to five medals in the Elite competition.

Aliakbar Gharibshahi once again proved to be in a league of his own in the men's -107kg event, delivering another world record-breaking performance to claim his third World Championships title on Thursday.

Gharibshahi, also a gold medalist in Paris 2024, displayed an incredible show of strength and determination to break his own world record of 254kg (set in Dubai 2022) by one kilogram with his second lift. He attempted to go further with 260kg only to falter this time and save it



Iran's Ahmad Aminzadeh is pictured during his gold-winning campaign at the World Para Powerlifting Championships in Cairo, Egypt, on October 17, 2025.
● HIROKI NISHIOKA/WPPO

for later. Two-time Paralympic champion Rouhollah Rostami had to settle for a runner-up finish in the men's -88kg weight

class with a lift of 243kg – one kilogram short of China's Yan Panpan – taking his personal tally at the World Championships to one

gold and four silvers.

Iran's second silver medal came in the men's -72kg class, where Amir Jafari posted 186-193-202

to finish behind Malaysian Bonnie Bunyau Gustin in the total standings.

Aliasghar Abareqi took the bronze in the men's -97kg contest thanks to a best effort of 227kg.

Earlier in the Egyptian capital, Iranians had impressed with nine medals, including a remarkable eight golds, in the Rookie and Next Gen age class at the World Championships.

Atiyeh Sadat Hosseini, 17, made history by winning Iran's maiden women's gold at the world showpiece, triumphing in the -61kg category.

Mani Saeidi (men's -88kg - Next Gen) set a new world record of 172kg to capture the ultimate prize, while Reza Enayatollahi secured double golds in the men's -97kg category – thanks a new Next Gen world record of 195kg, and an overall tally of 383kg.

Hassan Mohammad Hosseinpour claimed the top spot in the Next Gen -80kg class with a 156kg effort, but settled for the total silver with 303kg.

Amirali Es'hagania also enjoyed a double-gold winning campaign in the +107kg event with a 171-336 tally.

Asian Rowing Championships:

Iranian duo wins double sculls gold

Sports Desk

Zeinab Norouzi and Kimia Zarei teamed up to grab the women's lightweight double sculls gold as Iran collected three medals on the first day of the finals at the Asian Rowing Championships in Haiphong, Vietnam, on Saturday. The Iranian pair clocked 7:30.22 minutes to outpace opponents from India, Thailand, Hong Kong, and the host country – a second Asian gold for the female duo following last year's triumph in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Iran's second medal in the wom-

en's competitions on Saturday came in the double sculls final, where Mahsa Javer and Fatemeh Mojallali – silver medalists at the Hangzhou Asian Games – settled for a bronze medal, crossing the finish line in 7:22.30 minutes, with teams from Uzbekistan and Vietnam winning the gold and silver respectively.

In the men's lightweight double sculls showdown, Amirhossein Mohammadpour and Amirreza Abdali secured a second bronze medal for the country – courtesy of a time of 6:43.24 minutes – finishing behind gold-winning



Iran's Kimia Zarei (L) and Zeinab Norouzi won the women's lightweight double sculls gold at the Asian Rowing Championships in Haiphong, Vietnam.
● IRNA

Indian pair and Uzbekistan. Mohammadpour was also a part of the lightweight single sculls final, but finished empty-handed, clocking 7:26.20 minutes to stand sixth.

World Karate Championships qualifiers:

Iran's Sadeqi punches Cairo ticket in women's individual kata

Sports Desk

Iran's Fatemeh Sadeqi secured a spot at the upcoming WKF World Karate Championships – starting November 27 in Cairo – thanks to a top-six finish in the women's individual kata event at the Qualification Tournament in Paris on Friday.

Having beaten opponents from South Korea, Montenegro, and Austria in the pool phase, Sadeqi impressed with a sharp and fluid kata, defeating Chinese Taipei's Chien Hui-Hsuan 40.30 to 38.80 in the knockouts to join Brazil's Gabrielle Henrique, Mexican Yaneth Quiroz Castillo, Sofia Fialkova of Slovakia, Sakura Alforte of the Philippines, and Singapore's Shannon Leong Wai Yee in booking their tickets for the showpiece in the Egyptian capital. The four-time Asian bronze medalist will now be looking to build on her gold-winning campaign at January's Karate 1 Series A event in Tbilisi to chase the first world medal of her illustrious career, which also includes silver medals at the Konya 2021 Islamic Solidarity Games and



Iran's kata practitioner Fatemeh Sadeqi (3rd R) poses with the ticket for the World Karate Championships after securing her spot through the Qualification Tournament in Paris, France, on October 17, 2025.
● WKF

the 2019 World Beach Games in Doha. In the men's kata event, however, Iran's Mohammad Sadra Shidzi missed out on a place in Cairo after a knockout setback (40.50 to 38.70) against Jure Sluga of Slovenia.

World Taekwondo Championships:

Nasiri learns from Baku blues, eyes podium finish in Wuxi

Sports Desk

Iranian girl Saeideh Nasiri says she has learned from her maiden appearance at the World Taekwondo Championships as she has set her sights on a podium finish at the 27th edition of the sport's international flagship event – starting Friday in Wuxi, China.

Nasiri, 21, was part of the Iranian team in the 2023 edition in Baku, Azerbaijan, but suffered a first-round exit against ultimate silver medalist Kamonchanok Seeken of Thailand in the -46kg weight class.

"My debut at the World Championships was a great learning experience for me, and I'm determined to build on it to deliver top-notch performances in Wuxi and win a medal," Nasiri told Mehr News Agency. The young Iranian has collected numerous medals at various international events over the past couple of years – including a bronze at last year's Asian Championships and a gold at April's WT President's Cup – but the challenge in Wuxi will be on a different level, as it marks the first step on the road to securing a spot at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

The women's -46kg division will feature 56 contestants, with Chinese Taipei's Huang Ying-hsuan and Cota Rican prodigy Jaycee Bassett – ranked first and second respectively in the latest world rankings – among the favorites to walk away with the ultimate prize.



● taekwondo.ir

Nasiri has mixed memories of facing Huang in recent months, having beaten the Chinese Taipei star at February's Fujairah Open before falling to the former world bronze medalist at the World University Games in July.

Bassett, meanwhile, will be looking to improve on her silver medal at the 2024 World Junior Championships, having won a couple of gold medals at President's Cup earlier in the summer.

Turkish world No. 5 Emine Gogebakan and Russian Milana Bekulova, who will compete as a neutral athlete, will be among the -46kg contestants to watch in Wuxi.

Gogebakan won an impressive gold medal at the German Open in September, while Bekulova triumphed at May's WT President's Cup – Europe as well as the Multi European Games in August.

"I'm very familiar with my opponents, as I've competed

against most of them in various tournaments. This edition of the competition features top-tier athletes from countries like Chinese Taipei, South Korea, Japan, and other leading nations, all of whom are formidable competitors," said the world No. 25 Nasiri.

"We've had the benefit of a full year of well-organized training camps dedicated to these World Championships. Our coaching staff has overseen rigorous, high-quality sessions, ensuring the entire team is arriving at the tournament in peak condition, both physically and technically.

"I've put in a tremendous amount of effort for this event and my sole focus is on returning home with a medal. Over the past two years, I've been on a steady path of improvement, and I hope to finally reap the rewards of the hard work put in by myself and the technical staff at this competition."

Ancient fire temple inspires heritage preservation

Iranica Desk

In the heart of the Reyvand Mountains, an ancient fire temple known as Adur Burzen-Mihr (also called Azar Barzin) stands as one of the most significant ritual structures of Iran during the Sassanid era. Located near the city of Davarzan in Khorasan Razavi Province, it is recognized as one of the three sacred fires of the Zoroastrian period. The temple exemplifies the grandeur and sophistication of Sassanid architecture, holding a prominent place in Iran's history and cultural heritage. In an interview with ISNA, a researcher and historical heritage expert discussed the fire temple and its geographical significance, noting that Adur Burzen-Mihr was specifically associated with Zoroastrian farmers. Alongside the other two Sassanid fire temples, Adur Farnbagh and Adur Gushnasp, it served as a symbolic representation of the sacred fires of Zoroastrians. Ja'far Baesi highlighted that the design of Adur Burzen-Mihr reflects the exceptional artistry and skill of Sassanid architects. Its Chahartaqi form — a four-arched architectural style unique to the Sassanid period — demonstrates the central role of fire in Zoroastrian rituals and its importance in the daily lives of people at that time. He further explained that

the temple functioned not only as a place of worship but also as a site for maintaining the Zoroastrian fire, playing a crucial role in the social and religious life of the community. He emphasized that the temple's remote and hard-to-access location gives it a distinctive identity while simultaneously protecting it from human and natural threats. Baesi continued that although this geographical isolation makes the site difficult for visitors to access, the natural beauty of the region and its rich historical context continue to make it an attractive destination. The researcher stressed that Adur Burzen-Mihr Fire Temple can serve as a model for other historical sites in Iran. With its architectural beauty and cultural significance, the temple requires ongoing support and attention to be fully recognized as a landmark of Iranian history. In this context, cooperation among government bodies, private sectors, and local communities is essential for the preservation and promotion of heritage sites. He further emphasized that Adur Burzen-Mihr, with its rich history and architectural splendor, still awaits greater recognition, so that it can be preserved and passed on to future generations as one of Iran's most important cultural heritages.

"By giving such sites the attention and support they deserve, we can protect our cultural treasures as part of our national identity and use them as resources for learning and reflection on Iran's history and culture," he said. Baesi also noted that Adur Burzen-Mihr is not just a historical monument but a treasure of nation-



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al identity and heritage. Considering the cultural diversity and richness of Iran, the promotion and

preservation of such sites can contribute to sustainable tourism development and enhance the quality of life for local communities. He continued that given the importance of this temple and other historical sites, there is a need for collective effort and collaboration to preserve and promote them. "These sites not only strengthen our sense of identity but can also serve as resources for learning and reflection on the country's history and culture." He stressed that in order to attract tourists and raise public awareness about the significance of historical sites, it is essential to develop tourism infrastructure and improve access to these monuments. Providing adequate facilities for vis-

itors can further enhance public understanding and interest in Iran's history and culture. Baesi then referred to other historical and cultural sites in Iran, noting, "Our country is home to countless historical and cultural attractions, each with its own story to tell. From ancient sites such as Persepolis and Pasargadae to Islamic monuments like the Jaame (Grand) Mosque of Isfahan and the Golestan Palace, each can serve as a resource for attracting tourists and increasing public awareness." He added, "In this regard, there is a strong need to educate and raise awareness among the public about the importance of these historical and cultural sites. By establishing educational and cultural

programs, we can familiarize the younger generation with the country's history and culture and strengthen their sense of responsibility toward preserving cultural heritage." Baesi concluded by stating that especially in the current era, where climate change and human-related crises pose serious threats to historical sites, the need for their protection and maintenance is greater than ever. He emphasized, "By utilizing modern technologies, we can draw greater attention to Adur Burzen-Mihr Fire Temple and other historical monuments. The use of social media and online platforms can serve as an effective tool for introducing and promoting a culture of historical preservation."

tishineh.com

Excavations at Beyg Baghlu Hill unearth prehistoric life in Ardebil

Iranica Desk

According to the results of the excavation, Beyg Baghlu Hill dates back to the Neolithic period, and studying this historic site can help complete the archaeological chronology and clarify the prehistoric cultural sequence in Ardebil Province, said the Director General of the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization. Jalil Jabari noted that the northwestern region of Iran holds particular significance for archaeological research due to the sequence of prehistoric periods, which, unfortunately, has not yet been explored in sufficient depth, ISNA wrote. He added that one of the reasons for the region's importance is its strategic location at the intersection of the Caucasus and the central Iranian plateau, which has historically facilitated cultural exchanges, trade, and the movement of human populations. Due to the lack of comprehensive studies, the Ardebil Province's Cultural Heritage Organization has made archaeological excavations and research in this area a top priority, aiming to uncover new insights into the region's ancient past. He further explained that the excavation at Beyg Baghlu Hill in Bileh Savar began on September 17 and will continue until October 22, after which the analysis of the artifacts uncovered at



chtn.ir

the site will commence. These studies are expected to shed light on the daily lives, social structures, and technological advancements of early human communities in the region. Such excavations not only enhance our understanding of prehistoric life in northwestern Iran but also provide valuable insights into the cultural interactions between the Caucasus and the Iranian Plateau, offering a broader

perspective on the development of early human societies in this strategically significant region. Moreover, the findings from Beyg Baghlu Hill could serve as a foundation for comparative studies with other Neolithic sites across Iran and the Caucasus, helping researchers reconstruct migration patterns, trade networks, and the spread of agricultural and technological innovations. By docu-

menting and preserving these artifacts, the excavation contributes not only to academic research but also to the promotion of cultural heritage tourism, allowing the public to engage with Iran's rich pre-

historic past. Ultimately, ongoing research at this site underscores the critical importance of protecting and studying archaeological sites, ensuring that the knowledge of early human civilizations is preserved for future generations while fostering a deeper appreciation of the historical and cultural legacy of the region. Bileh Savar is located 165 kilometers north of Ardebil, near the border with the Republic of Azerbaijan. Ardebil Province boasts remarkable cultural heritage potential and ranks among the top destinations for both domestic and international tourists due to its rich historical and cultural attractions. Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardebili Complex and Sa'in Caravanserai — are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In addition, 905 immovable properties, including 113 historical monuments and 792 archaeological sites, along with 78 movable cultural artifacts, 72 intangible cultural heritage elements, and 28 natural sites from the province, have been registered on Iran's National Heritage List.

IRNA



Iran, Turkey and Azerbaijan map out new environmental agenda

Social Desk

Iran, Turkey and Azerbaijan agreed to deepen practical cooperation on environmental protection and natural-resource management during a series of meetings held on the sidelines of the Zero Waste Forum in Istanbul. Shina Ansari, Iran's Vice-President and Head of the Department of Environment (DoE), met Turkey's First Lady Emine Erdogan and Azerbaijan's Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Mukhtar Babayev between October 17 and 19, outlining a plan to tackle shared environmental challenges stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Zagros Mountains, IRNA reported. Ansari told Erdogan that Tehran was ready to draw on Ankara's experience in waste management, biodiversity, and protection of wetlands. "Waste management is a fundamental priority in Iran's

environmental policy," she said, calling for a joint committee on forestry and water resources and regular exchanges of technical experts. Erdogan said environmental cooperation among neighbors could pave the way for "regional and global peace", adding that Turkey was open to working "in all fields" of nature conservation and resource efficiency. In a separate meeting, Ansari and Babayev agreed to revive previously signed accords and develop joint initiatives to protect the Hyrcanian Forests – a UNESCO-listed ecosystem stretching across Iran and Azerbaijan – and to coordinate regional positions on forest degradation at the upcoming UN Climate Conference (COP29) in Baku. Babayev, who also serves as COP29 President-Designate, emphasized the need to maintain continuity in regional dialogue.

Referring to President Ilham Aliyev's recent address to the UN General Assembly, he urged faster coordination among Caspian Sea states to address the falling water level, calling it a "pressing regional concern". Ansari backed the proposal and pressed for an early-2026 meeting of the parties to the Tehran Convention – a Caspian-region environmental pact – to be held in Tehran. "The agenda must be clear, and final approval for hosting should be secured as soon as possible," she noted. The Zero Waste Forum, running from October 17 to 19, brought together ministers, mayors, and environmental experts from across Europe and Asia under the theme "People, Places, Progress". Turkey launched the initiative in 2017 under Emine Erdogan's patronage, and it has since become a UN-endorsed global platform.



Head of Iran's Department of Environment Shina Ansari (7th R) poses for a group photo with ministers and delegates during the ministerial-level roundtable meeting on the sidelines of the Zero Waste Forum in Istanbul, Turkey on October 18, 2025. **IRIB NEWS**

Russia hails Iranian cinema as 'vivid voice' in global film dialogue



Arts & Culture Desk

Russia praised Iranian cinema as "a vivid voice on the world stage" as the two countries explore new cultural cooperation in film production, the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) said after a meeting in Moscow. The talks brought together Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali, Iranian Cultural Attaché Masoud Ahmadvand, and VGIK Rector Vladimir Malyshev, who also heads Russia's Association of Film and Art Universities and the BRICS Film Education Alliance. Malyshev described Iran's cinema as one that "commands respect for its artistic originality and human depth" and said VGIK would make collaboration with Iranian institutions "a special focus of our future outreach". He lauded Iranian filmmakers for their active participation in Russian film festivals and academic exchanges. Jalali emphasized the role of cinema in connecting nations, calling it a "powerful bridge" that brings societies closer through culture and shared creativity. "We are today witnessing rapid growth in



Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) Rector Vladimir Malyshev (2nd L) speaks with Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali (2nd R) during a meeting on joint film cooperation at VGIK in Moscow, October 18, 2025. **ILNA**

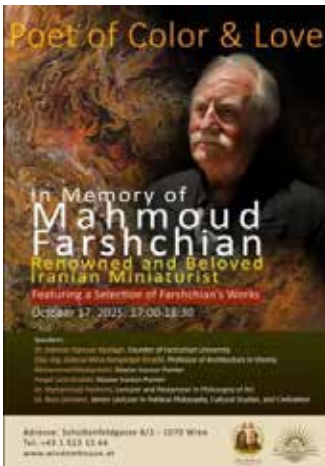
our movie industry cooperation," he said, citing recent joint productions, shared filming locations and participation in each other's film events. He added that Tehran "fully supports" the expansion of such exchanges and would follow up on the signed documents to turn plans into practice. Ahmadvand noted that the two sides discussed the possibility of co-producing films and strengthening links between VGIK and Iranian film schools, stressing that cultural understanding "is best achieved through artistic collaboration rather than words alone". The meeting took place at VGIK — the world's oldest film university, founded in 1919 — whose alumni include renowned directors such as Sergei Eisenstein, Andrei Tarkovsky and Nikita Mikhalkov. The Moscow-based institution remains Russia's premier center for film education and production training. The initiative follows the 20-year strategic partnership treaty signed by Presidents Vladimir Putin and Masoud Pezeshkian in Moscow on January 17, 2025, which entered into force earlier this year. Moscow views cultural diplomacy, particularly cinema, as a fresh lever to deepen ties with Tehran within broader BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization frameworks. Both sides agreed to set up working groups to draft the final documents for the upcoming film-production accord, expected to be completed in the coming months.

Vienna pays tribute to Farshchian, architect of modern Persian miniature

Arts & Culture Desk

A commemoration titled 'Poet of Color & Love' was held at Vienna's Avicenna Hall to honor Iranian miniaturist master Mahmoud Farshchian (January 24, 1930 – August 9, 2025) who passed away this year. The event was organized by Iran's Cultural Center in Austria and brought together art scholars, university professors and admirers of Iranian painting. Bahman Namvar Motlagh, founder of the Farshchian University and former head of Iran's National Academy of Arts, described Farshchian as "a rare individual" whose work spanned epic, myth, spirituality and ritual. He said the artist was "humble" and "never sat above others" and often quietly supported young and established artists alike. Motlagh highlighted how Farshchian's career began in the Isfahan school and later drew from the schools of Tabriz and Mashhad, then moved on to absorb European influences — a journey that, in his words, "led to a global aesthetic." Vienna-based architecture scholar Golmar-Mina Kempinger-Khatibi called Farshchian "unrivaled" in bridging classical Persian art with modern global currents. She recalled a story of the artist staying up all night as a child to draw 200 gazelles after his teacher

asked him to. She also noted that his time studying in Vienna in the 1950s, including contact with Paris Gouterlo of the Fantastic Realism school, shaped his style without severing his Persian roots. Farshchian's work frequently employed circular motifs, angels and mirror-like geometry derived from Iranian domes, and he credited a viewing of the sky under water — and even a temporary loss of sight after a ladder accident — as pivotal moments in his creative evolution. Painter Mohammad Mastandehi told the gathering his passion for art was ignited by Farshchian's bright colors and poetic spaces he encountered in school. He said the master "invested his father's inheritance entirely in learning," remained rooted in tradition and gave Persian manuscript painting a fresh voice for the contemporary world. Artist and researcher Fargol Leila Khatibi, a former student, recalled her 1970s study under Farshchian at the Tehran University of Fine Arts, stating he was the most recognized Iranian miniaturist internationally and made the genre accessible to the wider public. Philosophy of art lecturer Mohammad Hashemi analyzed Farshchian's pieces through an Islamic-philosophical lens, explaining that in his painting 'Abraham's icon-



oclastic,' Abraham stands luminous at the center destroying evil forces, while the circular forms symbolize perfection and reveal the artist's "transcendent experience." Finishing the event, Iran's Cultural Attaché in Austria, Reza Gholami, said Farshchian lived in a "spiritual world" and spoke like a great poet through color and line. He emphasized the artist's lifelong love of Iran, and his encouragement to young people, regardless of background, to progress the country. The ceremony included a curated exhibition of selected works by Farshchian — amongst them 'The Evening of Ashura' — before concluding with traditional Iranian music.

Iranian director Seiri takes flight at Iceland's Pigeon Film Festival

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian filmmaker Saeed Seiri won the Best Director Award for short films at the 15th Pigeon International Film Festival (PIFF) in Ísafjörður for his 14-minute drama 'She Is Not Here'. Written and directed by Seiri, the film tells the story of nine-year-old Kiana, who suffers deep psychological trauma after a tragic event and

later discovers that her sketchbook has a mysterious power capable of reshaping the world around her. The cast features Sara Mayeli and Alireza Gilouri, ISNA reported. The festival, held from October 9 to 12, brought together filmmakers from across the world to showcase works celebrating cultural diversity and visual innovation. Organizers praised Seiri's direction for its "fresh visual language" and

the film's "emotional depth" that lingers long after the credits roll. "This prize validates our belief in the voice of the young," Seiri said at the closing ceremony. "Kiana's story speaks of resilience and imagination in the face of pain." Festival director Fjölfnir Baldurs-son described 'She Is Not Here' as a "quietly powerful" entry that "draws viewers into a world both fragile and limitless."

Notice of tender for export sale No Z/1404/21

Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70,000 metric tons of Pellet (%Fe:65.00) on basis of F.O.B at Rajaei Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: www.geg.ir. All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 09:00 A.M. on 28. Oct.2025 to Golgohar complex in sirjan (50 km in shiraz road). Bidders are invited to the transactions commission department of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 09:00 A.M. on 28.oct.2025 at the office of the Seller.

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.

Analysis %		
%Fe	65.00	Min
%FeO	1.0	Ave
%P	0.04	Max
%S	0.01	Max
%SiO2	3.5	Max
%Al2O3	0.7	Max
%CaO	0.9	Max
%MgO	2.5	Max
CCS (kg/p)	Ave 250	
8-16 mm%	Min 90	
-6 mm%	Ave 5	
A.1%	Max 3.8	
T.1%	Min 95	
Porosity%	19-24	
Reducibility%	Min 90	