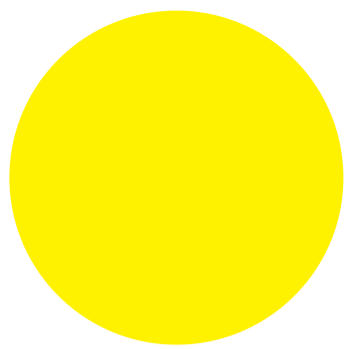


Environment chief
urges UN to shield
climate cooperation from
sanctions at COP30

8 >



Iran Daily

Vol. 7972 • Saturday, November 08, 2025 • Aban 17, 1404 • Jumada al-Awwal 17, 1447 • 100,000 rials • 8 pages



> irandaily.ir

| newspaper.irandaily.ir

| IranDailyWeb

Deputy FM: Resumption of Iran-US talks depends on Washington's intention

2 >

Pezeshkian: Gov't poised to clear obstacles to national production, investment
Internal divisions 'root cause' of calamities among Muslims

3 >



Sudan's crisis a new Cold War front

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

4 >



Riyadh 2025 Islamic Solidarity Games:

Iran routs Qatar in men's volleyball; held by Afghanistan in futsal

6 >



Qaenat hosts harvest festivals celebrating barberries, pomegranates

7 >



UNESCO recognizes Cyrus Cylinder as early global human-rights document

8 >



The Cyrus Cylinder is on display in the Ancient Iran room of the British Museum in London, Britain on April 26, 2008.
worldhistory.org

Israel-Iran conflict reshapes regional dynamics

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE



Following years of simmering tensions and covert hostilities, Israel launched a direct military strike against Iran in June, marking a dramatic escalation in their long-standing enmity. Tehran responded with force, prompting the United States to intervene by targeting three of Iran's principal nuclear facilities. A ceasefire was brokered on the twelfth day, as Washington sought to prevent the conflict from spiraling into a wider regional war. This unprecedented confrontation has reverberated far beyond the immediate belligerents, reshaping strategic calculations across the Middle East. In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Scott Lucas, a political analyst

and a professor of American studies, draws a vivid analogy, describing the region's geopolitics as a "kaleidoscope" constantly shifting in response to seismic events like the 12-day war. He explores the implications of the conflict in the following Q&A.

IRAN DAILY: How do you see the trajectory of regional developments in the Middle East after the Israeli aggression on Iran in June?

LUCAS: Geopolitics in Iran and the Middle East are like a kaleidoscope. An episode such as Israel's 12-day war on Iran in June will turn the situation, not just for the Islamic Republic and Israel but for other countries. And there will be other events that will also turn that kaleidoscope so we have new patterns of relationships.

From my perspective, Iran is now facing serious challenges, not just because of the war but also because of developments throughout the region since October 7, 2023. Hamas' surprise and

deadly attack inside Israel on that day, followed by two years of Israel's mass killing inside Gaza, interacted with climatic events in other countries.

Hezbollah was decimated in Lebanon by Israeli strikes, losing almost all of its senior leadership. The Assad regime suddenly fell in Syria in December 2024. Yemen's Ansar Allah has also been weakened by Israel's aerial attacks. Iraq has avoided the worst of the violence, but is taking a political path in which Iran's long-time influence is diminished. Iran's nuclear program was seriously damaged by the Israeli war. The extent of the damage is still being withheld by the Iranian leadership, but best analyses indicate that the program's development has been set back by at least a year.

Perhaps more importantly, the Israeli attacks effectively ended Iran's talks with the Trump Administration about a resolution of nuclear issues. With that path closed off and with Iran's continued conflict with the International Atomic Ener-

gy Agency, the Islamic Republic is facing the imposition of "snapback" sanctions. These will add to economic difficulties.

Do you believe Iran and Israel might enter another round of conflict? If so, how intense do you expect it to be?

I do not expect Iran to instigate direct conflict with Israel. Instead, the leadership will seek to rebuild its position in other countries primarily through diplomatic, political, and economic measures, apart from Yemen, where it may try to continue some support military assistance to Ansar Allah.

At this point, I do not expect Israel to launch another direct assault on Iran. The pretext of curbing the nuclear program has been removed by June's damage. The Trump Administration is currently leaning on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to push back hard-right ministers in his cabinet who decide further confrontation, amid the fragile halt to mass killing in Gaza.

Page 3 >

Deputy FM: Resumption of Iran-US talks depends on Washington's intention



Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Saeid Khatibzadeh (L) speaks during an interview with Japanese media in Tokyo, Japan.
● **SNV**

Tokyo on Thursday. The official pointed to the US excessive demands in September, including zero uranium enrichment in Iran and limits on its range of missile, saying that missiles were a matter of protecting national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and not up for negotiations. Iran has repeatedly said it will not give up its right to uranium enrichment under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Iran and the US held five rounds of Oman-mediated indirect negotiations in the Italian and Omani capitals early this year before Israel derailed the diplomatic efforts by waging a war in June. More than a week into the war, the US joined the aggression and bombed Iran's nuclear facilities that were under the International Atomic Energy Agency's watch.

International Desk

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Saeid Khatibzadeh said resumption nuclear talks with the United States is possible and depends on Washington's intention of reaching an agreement on "an equal footing." Negotiations between Iran and the US over Tehran's nuclear program

have been suspended following US and Israeli aggressions against Iranian nuclear facilities in June. "If the US has any genuine intention of reaching an agreement with Iran on an equal footing, uses the language of respect and abandons the delusions it has, then everything is achievable," Khatibzadeh said during an interview with Japanese media in

The US attacks damaged Iran's nuclear facilities in Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan. The US-Israeli strikes also claimed the lives of more than 1,000 people Iran, including military commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians. Iran's nuclear program has been a source of contention with Western countries for more than two decades. While Iran insists that its nuclear activities are entirely peaceful and aimed at civilian purposes such as energy production and medical research, Western powers — particularly the US, UK, France, and Germany — have long expressed concern that Tehran could be seeking the capability to develop nuclear weapons. In 2015, Iran proved the peaceful nature of its nuclear program by signing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with six world powers. But the US unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018 and reimposed biting economic sanctions. Tehran adhered to the deal even a year after Washington's withdrawal, and then began rolling back on its commitments. The European parties (France, Germany, UK) to the deal also

failed to fulfill their commitment to the agreement. Several rounds of talks between Tehran and the US to revive the agreement failed, and in August, the European trio triggered the so-called "snapback" process on the pretext of Iran's non-compliance with its obligations, leading to the reimposition of the UN sanctions. Iran has called the European move "illegal and illegitimate".

Trump's claims

On Thursday, US President Donald Trump said Iran had asked for US sanctions to be lifted and that he was open to discussing the matter. "Frankly, Iran has been asking if the sanctions could be lifted. Iran has got very heavy US sanctions, and it makes it really hard," Trump said during a dinner with Central Asian leaders. "I'm open to hearing that, and we'll see what happens, but I would be open to it." Over the past years, the US has intensified its diplomatic and economic pressure on Iran over its peaceful nuclear program and other issues.

Iran condemns 'savage' Israeli attacks on Lebanon

International Desk

Iran strongly condemned on Friday "savage" Israeli attacks on Lebanon, after the regime launched new strikes on Lebanon in violation of a ceasefire agreement with Lebanese resistance movement, Hezbollah. In a statement, the Iranian Foreign Ministry urged "the United Nations, the international community and regional countries to confront the warmongering" of Israel while offering "condolences on the martyrdom of Lebanese citizens during the savage attacks". The ministry warned about the dangerous consequences of Israel's impunity and the continuation of its belligerent and expansionist policies on regional peace and security. "The Zionist regime's attacks against Lebanon, which have martyred and wounded over a thousand innocent civilians since last year's ceasefire and destroyed infrastructure and residential areas, are a blatant violation of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the independent country and amount to a heinous crime against international peace and security," it added. "These criminal attacks, which are undoubtedly planned and carried out with the United States' full support and partnership, are yet another indication of the criminal, terrorist, and hegemonic nature of



Smoke rises following an Israeli airstrike in the town of Tayr Debba in southern Lebanon on November 6, 2025.
● **MOHAMMAD ZAATARI/AP**

the Zionist regime. Their sole aim is to undermine Lebanon's sovereignty and security and to obstruct the country's reconstruction and development." On Thursday, Israeli warplanes conducted a wave of airstrikes on the southern Lebanese towns of Kfar Dounin, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Ayta al-Jabal, Taybeh, and Tayr Debba, killing at least one person and injuring nine others. The regime claimed it had struck a series of targets belonging to the Hezbollah movement in its stronghold in southern Lebanon. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun denounced the strikes as a "fully fledged crime" under international

law. "The more Lebanon expresses its openness to the path of peaceful negotiation to resolve outstanding issues with Israel, the more Israel intensifies its aggression against Lebanese sovereignty," he wrote on X. Israel launched its aggression against Lebanon in October 2023 in response to Hezbollah's pro-Palestinian airstrikes against the occupied territories. The regime, however, agreed to a truce on November 27, 2024. Since then, it has breached the ceasefire agreement hundreds of times and carried out near-daily fatal strikes on Lebanon.

FM slams US threats against Venezuela

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi deplores the United States' hostility towards independent countries, particularly its threats against Venezuela.

"The US domineering and aggressive behavior is evident across the world," Araghchi said on Thursday, referring to recent threats by American officials against Venezuela.

He added that the US only favors countries that serve its own interests and pursues a hostile policy in dealing with independent nations, Press TV reported.

This is how the US has treated the Islamic Republic of Iran for years, he emphasized.

The top Iranian diplomat said the international community condemns Washington's threats against Caracas, expressing Tehran's solidarity with the Venezuelan nation and government.

Araghchi noted that participants at the 19th Midterm Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement in Uganda's capital, Kampala, in October, had a consensus that US pressures and sanctions run counter to international rules and principles.



The Navy warship U.S.S. Sampson docked at the Amador International Cruise Terminal in Panama City in October 2025.
● **MARTIN BERNETTI/GETTY IMAGES**

The United States has stepped up military deployments in the Caribbean under the guise of a counter-narcotics mission, sending warships, aircraft, and special operations forces close to the Venezuelan territory. While US officials frame the moves as security operations, governments across Latin America warn the buildup resembles preparations for coercive regime-change efforts, citing recent US strikes on boats accused of drug activity. US President Donald Trump, however, has played down the prospect of a direct war with Venezuela while threatening that Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's "days are numbered." The US president has accused the Venezuelan leader of drug

trafficking without presenting evidence. Maduro, in turn, says Washington is using narcotics allegations as a pretext to pursue Washington's plan for a "regime change" and seize control of Venezuela's oil wealth. Meanwhile, Republicans in the US Senate have voted down legislation that would have required Trump to obtain congressional approval for any military attacks on Venezuela. Fears are now growing that Trump will use the military deployment in the region — which includes thousands of US troops, a nuclear submarine and a group of warships accompanying the USS Gerald R Ford, the US Navy's most sophisticated aircraft carrier — to launch an attack on Venezuela in a bid to oust Maduro.

Trump's confession proves US complicity in Israel's aggression, Iran spox says

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry's spokesperson reacted to US president's admission that he was "very much in charge" of Israel's war against Iran in June, calling it "undeniable evidence" of Washington's direct intervention. "From the very beginning, it was clear that the United States had fully participated in the crime of Israeli aggression against the Iranian nation," Ismaeil Baqaei said in a post on X on Friday. US President Donald Trump on Thursday claimed re-

sponsibility for Israel's attacks on Iran, contradicting previous assertions that the regime acted unilaterally. "Israel attacked first. That attack was very, very powerful. I was very much in charge of that," Trump told reporters. But in the early hours of the aggression, Washington stressed that Israel acted on its own and warned Tehran against retaliating against US troops and interests in the region. "Tonight, Israel took unilateral action against Iran. We are not involved in strikes against Iran, and our top priority is protecting American

forces in the region," US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said at that time. "Do you remember when US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced on June 13, 2025, that Washington had no role in the aggressive and terrorist action of the Zionist regime against Iran, emphasizing that it was a 'unilateral action' by Israel and that 'we are not involved in attacks against Iran?' Baqaei asked. Calling it "an obvious lie," the spokesman said that Trump's confession added up to "undeniable evidence" of the US "direct intervention and active complicity"



Ismaeil Baqaei
● **IRNA**

in Israel's unprovoked aggression against Iran and, at the same time, amounted to an open acceptance of US responsibility for "committing an illegal act and a flagrant violation of international law."



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Pezeshkian: Gov't poised to clear obstacles to national production, investment

Internal divisions 'root cause' of calamities among Muslims

Economy Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a visit to the western province of Kordestan on Thursday that his government is ready to remove any hurdles on the path to promoting national production and investment.

"The government is ready to remove any obstacles in the way of production and investment. This commitment from the government is pursued with full force and is not just a slogan," Pezeshkian said in a meeting with investors and economic stakeholders in Kordestan.

"Continuous meetings are held in Tehran and other provinces for coordination and removal of obstacles, and if a problem arises, the issue will be reviewed and resolved at the level of governors general and between provinces."

Pointing to the importance of technology and systematic development, he said, "In today's world, competition is about productivity, and productivity cannot be

achieved without the use of knowledge and new technologies. We must use technologies that are compatible with our infrastructure and long-term goals. These technologies should be tools for achieving justice and facilitating participation, not new obstacles."

Stressing that the existing human and intellectual capital in the country is more valuable than any natural resource, Pezeshkian said, "Countries lacking underground resources have only been able to reach a superior position through thought and management. What guides an economist on the right path is not merely calculations, but understanding their place as part of a larger system."

The president said the cooperation of the three branches of government at the national level is underway to remove obstacles to production and trade, adding, "Coordination with the Parliament and the Judiciary is being strengthened so that no law hinders economic prosperity."

Pezeshkian also expressed hope that

through synergy among the government, Parliament, and the people, a "proud, powerful, and advanced country will be built on the path of justice and progress."

In a meeting with Kordestan's religious scholars and clerics, Pezeshkian emphasized that only unity and Islamic brotherhood could confront the conspiracies of the United States, Israel, and global Zionism. Stressing that division and discord among Muslims are the explicit desire of the enemies of Islam, the president said internal conflicts serve the interests of Israel, the United States, and their allies.

"Such divisions are exactly what Israel, America, and global Zionism want, so that the Islamic Ummah becomes preoccupied with disputes, and they can commit any aggression they desire. If unity and cohesion prevail among us, no power will dare to covet Islamic lands," he said.

"Internal disagreements are the root of many calamities for the Islamic Ummah, and only by returning to faith, brotherhood, and holding fast to the rope of God



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd L) is seen in a meeting with religious scholars and clerics in the western province of Kordestan on November 6, 2025.
● president.ir

can one escape this cycle."

Pezeshkian also reaffirmed that Israel would never dare to bomb the oppressed

people of Gaza if Muslims had not remained silent in the face of the occupying regime's aggression.

Parl. speaker urges further action to reach \$10b Iran-Pakistan trade



Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (2nd L) meets with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (R) in the capital Islamabad on November 7, 2025.
● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mo-

hammad Baqer Qalibaf said in a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Fri-

day that to achieve the goal of reaching \$10 billion in trade between the two countries, it is necessary to take more action in the banking, barter, and free trade sectors.

Qalibaf also said executive work must proceed regarding border markets and customs affairs, stressing that customs barriers must be removed, and trade facilitated.

"We in Iran are ready to develop relations," Qalibaf told Sharif. "Just as we can use our agricultural products, you can also use our energy capabilities. The Iranian government and Parliament have taken steps forward in this direction."

Pakistan, Iran's most populous neighbor with bilateral trade

exceeding \$3 billion, has joined Iran in expressing a determination to boost trade volume to \$10 billion through targeted planning and by removing existing barriers.

During the official two-day visit of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian to Pakistan in August, Tehran and Islamabad signed 12 memoranda of understanding (MOUs) in various sectors.

The agreements cover a wide range of areas, including tourism, agriculture, judicial and legal cooperation, industry, science and technology, transportation and transit, cultural heritage, and commercial and economic cooperation.

Qalibaf on Friday also referred

to the support of the people, government, and parliament of Pakistan for Iran during the Israeli-US 12-day war, saying, "I would like to thank the justice-seeking people of Pakistan who, with their high political understanding, stood by the people of Iran alongside the government and parliament of Pakistan during the difficult conditions of the 12-day war. This support will remain in the minds of the people and officials of Iran."

Sharif, for his part, said Iran and Pakistan, as two friendly countries, have always stood by each other in difficult times.

"During Pakistan's recent conflict, the Iranian nation and government stood by Pakistan, and the Pakistani nation and govern-

ment also stood by Iran during the 12-day war, strongly condemning this crime against Iran and supporting Iran during those days," he said.

The Pakistani premier stressed that, "During foreign trips and meetings with officials from other countries, we declared the unacceptability of the Zionist regime's attacks against Iran, and I am happy that the war ended with wisdom and prudence from the Leader, people, and armed forces of Iran."

Sharif underlined that Islamabad supports Tehran's right to peaceful nuclear energy and uranium enrichment, and considers Europe's efforts for the implementation of snapback mechanism unacceptable.

Only 30% of saffron exported via official channels amid export challenges: Guild head

Economy Desk

Gholamreza Miri, head of the Khorasan Razavi Saffron Exporters Union, said in an interview with IRNA published on Friday that despite sanctions and numerous export barriers, only 30% of saffron exports are carried out with the business cards of saffron exporters, and the rest have been done by traders.

"Exporters cannot export to all target countries due to sanctions, so they are forced to give saffron to traders in other countries so that our saffron reaches the customer at the destination, and intermediary traders receive 100 to 150 dollars per kilogram of this product depending on the quality of the saffron," Miri said.

"In fact, despite sanctions and numerous export barriers, only 30% of these exports are carried out with the business cards of saffron exporters, and the rest are done by other traders."



● IRNA

Miri underlined that out of 100 million tons of exported saffron, only 30% of is done with the business cards of exporters. Hailing exports as the economic engine of countries, the union chief said, "These problems have fueled the smuggling of saffron. According to statistics, 10 tons of saffron are smuggled out of the country every month, most of which is low-quality and can, in addition to economic damage,

harm the reputation of Iranian saffron in global markets."

Miri added, "Our exporters have worked for years to maintain the export markets for this product, but smugglers sell saffron in global markets at 25 to 30 percent below the domestic price of this product." The official emphasized the necessity of removing export barriers, supporting processors, and reforming currency regulations.

"Despite sanctions, Iran's saffron export markets have expanded from 47 to 71 countries, and undoubtedly, removing these obstacles can pave the way for further export development," Miri said.

"We hope that by removing export barriers and facilitating exports, our exporters will be able to export saffron using their own business cards, and saffron will no longer fall into the hands of non-Iranian traders, preventing the loss of Iran's export markets."

Imports through IKIA customs top \$6b in seven months



Economy Desk

Gholamhossein Nouhi, the director general of Customs Office at the Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKIA), said on Thursday that from the beginning of the Iranian calendar year (March 21) until October 22, a total of 37,804 tons of goods worth \$6.16 billion were imported into the country through the air terminal.

"The main imported goods through the customs office included gold, mobile phones, medicines and pharmaceutical raw materials, medical parts and equipment," Nouhi added. He underlined that in the first seven months of the year, customs procedures for medical equipment worth \$795 million, mobile phones worth \$1 billion, medicines worth \$366 million, and gold worth \$1.941 billion were carried out by his office.

Pointing to the export of goods through the Customs Office of IKIA, Nouhi said, "The value of exported goods this year was \$143 million, and the main exported goods were medicines and saffron."

Israel-Iran conflict ...

Is the United States likely to become directly involved in a potential future conflict and in what form?

If Israel was to renew a direct assault on Iran, the Trump Administration could become involved, as it did with its airstrikes on the Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan nuclear complexes in June.

But I do not foresee the administration seeking this involvement. Its em-

phasis at the moment is on the ceasefire in Gaza, which involves limiting Israeli military for now.

More significant will be the administration's attempt to restart a process of "normalization" between Arab states, including those in the Persian Gulf, and Israel. That will involve further maneuvers between the US and countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE, in which Donald Trump and his family have large business in-

vestments.

How do you see the regional outlook after the Gaza-Israel agreement? Do you consider this agreement sustainable or fragile?

The Phase 1 of the ceasefire is shaky. It has already been broken twice by Israel, with the killing of more than 150 Gazans, and there are further Israeli attacks even as the ceasefire is supposedly restored. Only 24% of the aid

mandated by Phase 1 is entering Gaza. The declared Trump 20-point "plan" is only a sketch. That means there is a security vacuum in unoccupied areas of Gaza, which is filled by Hamas. This in turn means the Gazan group is unlikely to disarm.

It may be impossible to return the bodies of all the dead Israeli hostages, given the scale of destruction across the Strip. This will bolster the argument of hard-right ministers in the

Netanyahu cabinet who want to renew the military assault.

And at this point, there is no sign of a Phase 2 for lasting arrangements for governance and security across Gaza. Nor is the scope of Israeli withdrawal clear.

Beyond Gaza, violence in the West Bank, including by Israeli settlers is escalating. The Netanyahu cabinet is likely to press ahead with the expansion of illegal settlements.

Sudan's crisis a new Cold War front



By Mohammad-Ali
Ghanamizadeh Fallahi

Expert on international affairs

O P I N I O N
E X C L U S I V E

Despite the predominance of the economic development discourse in mainstream global analyses, Africa has found itself thrust into the epicenter of 21st-century geopolitical shifts. The continent's strategic value does not stem solely from its vast and unparalleled reserves of natural resources — ranging from hydrocarbons and rare minerals to water basins — but also from its unique geographic position along vital maritime corridors such as the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the coasts of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. This position has turned Africa into a decisive arena for both global powers and emerging regional players. Moreover, its booming population — as both a potential consumer market and a reservoir of human capital — along with Africa's growing influence in multilateral institutions, has added new layers to current geopolitical equations, making any neglect of the continent a costly strategic oversight.

Throughout modern history, Africa has served as a pressure valve for global rivalries — a go-to stage for major powers to play out their geopolitical competitions. Rooted in the Cold War's proxy-war model between East and West, this phenomenon has carried over into the present in new forms. Within this framework, Africa's domestic conflicts and ethnic-religious rifts have morphed into battlegrounds where global and regional rivals settle scores indirectly. Powers such as Russia, China, the United States, and Middle Eastern actors weave their influence through arms supplies, logistical backing, or deployment of militias, pushing forward their strategic goals — from securing military footholds and resource access to edging out competitors — without the heavy price tag of direct conflict. This trend not only throws into question the sovereignty of host countries but also cements Africa's role as a geopolitical release valve in the global order.

Tangible examples can be drawn from Angola's civil war, where Cold War-era superpowers (the Soviet Union and Cuba backing the MPLA, and the US and South Africa supporting UNITA) faced off in a full-scale proxy battle on African soil. The pattern has resurfaced in modern times with even greater complexity — in Libya's crisis, for instance, where rival camps of Russia, the UAE, and Egypt squared off against Turkey and Qatar; or across the Sahel, where France (through Operation Barkhane) and the US found themselves countering Russia's expanding grip through the Wagner Group.

From a geoeconomic standpoint, Sudan — endowed with vast oil and gas reserves, fertile plains along the Nile with immense agricultural promise, and a direct path to the vital Red Sea corridor — holds on to a pivotal economic position in East African trade. It acts as both a resource producer and a key transit hub for landlocked neighbors such as Ethiopia and South Sudan on their way to global markets. Its Red Sea coastline serves as a gateway linking Africa with the Arabian Peninsula and Asia-Europe trade routes.

Sudan's real geopolitical weight, however, lies in its command over Africa's eastern shores and its proximity to the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait — one of



● TRN

the world's arteries for energy transit and the lifeline for Middle Eastern oil shipments toward Europe and America. Any power that manages to get a foothold in Sudan gains leverage over this crucial maritime chokepoint, arming itself with a potent tool to pressure rivals and keep tabs on both military and commercial shipping flows. This dynamic has made Sudan an unavoidable player in Red Sea and Horn of Africa security affairs — a magnet for military basing and security cooperation by the likes of Russia, China, Turkey, and the Persian Gulf states.

The recent fall of El Fasher city in the North Darfur state to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has set off a new chapter in Sudan's multifaceted crisis. El Fasher, historically and culturally Darfur's heartland, also stood as the Sudanese army's last major western stronghold. Its loss opened the door for RSF expansion across borders with Chad, Libya, and the Central African Republic — zones deeply tangled up with smuggling networks, illicit gold trade, and militia groups with foreign ties. The city's fall signals a shift in Sudan's internal balance of power and a widening geopolitical scramble in Darfur,

long a crossroads for external interests — from the UAE's alleged support for the RSF to Egypt's and Saudi Arabia's fear of Khartoum's collapse. At a broader level, the Sudan conflict plays into a proxy contest among regional blocs jockeying for long-term influence and striving to keep Sudan within their own sphere of geopolitical influence — much like what unfolded in Libya and Yemen.

Regionally, the escalating violence in Darfur is stirring up fears of spillover into neighbors like Chad and the Central African Republic. This development could shake up the Horn of Africa's security landscape and even spread to the Red Sea's trade and energy arteries. Sudan has thus outgrown a mere domestic crisis, turning into a multi-tiered battleground drawing in powers from Russia and the UAE to Turkey and the United States.

Overlooked amid the chaos is the notion that this wave of violence may be aimed at undercutting Turkish and Russian footholds in Africa — especially Sudan. Given Washington's sharply more aggressive foreign policy over the past year, particularly after Israel's imposed 12-day war against Iran in

mid-2025, the Western bloc is doubling down on efforts to wear away its rivals' positions — chiefly Russia, China, and even NATO-member Turkey — across various fronts to resist the transition of the world order.

Geographically and operationally, control over Sudan's western zones and the Red Sea coastline grants both local and foreign-backed actors relative access to the Bab al-Mandab Strait — a conduit tying together international shipping routes and the Yemeni front. This lays the logistical groundwork for future cross-border operations or maritime use of Sudanese territory. According to the Atlantic Council, there is mounting evidence of foreign networks and transregional involvement in propping up the RSF and cashing in on their battlefield gains — a trend that could turn Sudan into a launchpad for pressure against the Axis of Resistance, particularly the Ansarullah (Houthis).

At the higher geopolitical tier, these developments come at a time when Western and regional players are stretched thin by other crises — from Lebanon's flare-ups to security claims about far-flung countries — making Sudan an appealing platform to spread the

“

Overlooked amid the chaos is the notion that this wave of violence may be aimed at undercutting Turkish and Russian footholds in Africa — especially Sudan. Given Washington's sharply more aggressive foreign policy over the past year, particularly after Israel's imposed 12-day war against Iran in mid-2025, the Western bloc is doubling down on efforts to wear away its rivals' positions — chiefly Russia, China, and even NATO-member Turkey — across various fronts to resist the transition of the world order.



This image grab taken from handout video footage released on Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) Telegram account on October 26, 2025, shows RSF fighters holding weapons and celebrating in the streets of El-Fasher in Sudan's Darfur.

● RSF

pressure or even kick off pre-planned strikes. Diverting opponents' attention and keeping them tied down elsewhere drives up their cost of intervention or retaliation.

The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and the UAE in Sudan boils down to more than just regional one-upmanship — it's part of a broader push toward a new Middle Eastern order anchored in the consolidation of the Abraham Accords and the merging of Arab-Israeli security interests. Both Persian Gulf powers are racing to cement their

positions as the West's and Israel's key partners in safeguarding energy routes and trade stability. Sudan comes into focus as the mid-link in a chain stretching out from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean — its control tied hand in glove with Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab security. Thus, for both the UAE and Saudi Arabia, locking down Sudan represents a step toward proving their geopolitical mettle in shaping the region's emerging security architecture.

From a strategic lens, the bond be-

tween Sudan and Yemen is completely direct. In the logic of Persian Gulf powers, controlling Sudan sets the stage for control over Bab al-Mandab and, by extension, the world's vital trade and energy sea lanes. Victory in Sudan could serve as a springboard for political or military pressure on Yemen's Ansarullah forces. For Tel Aviv and its Western allies, weakening the Houthis would sweep away a pillar of the Resistance Axis and pave the way for secure energy and trade routes linking the Persian Gulf to the Mediterra-

nean. Hence, Sudan, Yemen, and Bab al-Mandab form a single geopolitical triangle whose mastery boosts their strategic weight against Tehran, Ankara, and even Cairo. Beneath the surface, this competition reflects a bid for legitimacy and relevance in Washington and Tel Aviv's prospective regional security plans.

While Saudi Arabia treads carefully toward normalization with Israel, the UAE is seizing on military, financial, and port leverage in Sudan to carve out its place as a dependable Western partner.

From Israel's perspective, Sudan's stabilization and its return to the orbit of countries that signed the Abraham Accord would mark a major stride toward narrowing down the Resistance's footprint and shoring up maritime security across the South. In this sense, victory in Sudan would amount to more than a domestic triumph; It would stand as a geopolitical breakthrough in the making of a new Middle East order — and in redefining the Arab role within the evolving security equation of Israel and the West.

Sudan's war a business model of violence



By Muhammad Shahzaib Hassan
Research Assistant at the
Institute of Strategic Studies,
Islamabad

OPINION

Two years on, the catastrophe unfolding in Sudan is often described as a collapse of order or the failure of diplomacy. Both descriptions are correct, but they conceal a deeper truth. The violence in Sudan today is fueled by a political economy in which military actors, illicit markets, and external patrons profit from prolonging conflict while civilians bear the human cost.

The immediate eruption of open fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on April 15, 2023, should be read in that light. The outbreak was not a sudden rupture but the predictable outcome of a security sector embedded in commercial interests and regional patronage networks.

The RSF is not simply a paramilitary: It is an economic actor with extensive commercial reach. Since its transformation from Janjaweed militias, the RSF and its leadership have captured significant portions of the gold sector and other lucrative trades. Independent investigations estimate RSF-controlled production at nearly 10 tons of gold in 2024, a windfall that has financed fighters, enabled arms purchases, and created a structural incentive to sustain conflict rather than to seek a negotiated settlement.

External patronage has amplified and internationalised local incentives. Credible reporting and rights organisations have traced advanced Chinese-origin weaponry and sophisticated drones into RSF arsenals, with several investigations pointing to re-exports routed through Persian Gulf intermediaries. These arms inflows are not incidental luxuries; They change battlefield calculations, permit strikes on civilian infrastructure, and entrench actors who profit from continued instability.

The humanitarian toll has been immense and continues to grow. The conflict has produced tens of thousands of deaths and uprooted millions; Recent reporting places the number of displaced at well over 10 million and rising, creating what is now among the largest internal displacement crises globally. At the same time, the World Health Organization has verified repeated attacks on health facilities and personnel, further degrading the capacity to treat the wounded and protect civilians. Viewed through incentives, the pattern is clear. At the micro level, RSF commanders and affiliated business networks extract rents from mining concessions, checkpoint levies, and control of trade routes, revenues that are convertible into salaries, weapons, and patronage. Private military contractors and mercenary operators have profited where securitised extraction offers them contracts and access. At the macro level, regional states and



● FT

intermediaries that provide materiel, basing rights, or diplomatic cover can materially alter the conflict's trajectory and the calculus of those fighting on the ground.

This diagnosis requires a different policy response. Humanitarian relief is indispensable, but aid alone cannot end a war financed by mineral extraction and illicit trade. The international community, therefore, needs to target the arteries of the war economy. Practically, that means rigorous enforcement of the UN arms embargo, forensic tracing and curtailment of illicit gold and other mineral exports, coordinated asset freezes against identifiable networks, and strengthened customs and financial intelligence cooperation to block illicit air and sea routes used to traffic arms and revenues.

At the same time, protection measures must be operationalised and scaled. Secured corridors for civilian evacuation, legal protection and resourcing

for hospitals and clinics, and rapid, predictable funding for neighbouring states hosting refugees are urgent priorities. Humanitarian action must be resourced in a way that reduces dependency on local powerbrokers who use aid access as leverage; Conditionality and independent monitoring are essential to prevent co-option.

There is also a moral and legal imperative to name and hold to account those who profit. Describing Sudan as "chaos" strips agency from actors who actively cultivate the conditions of violence. Where credible evidence exists, prosecutions, sanctions, and targeted diplomatic pressure are legitimate tools to alter behaviour. If states or intermediaries are shown to be re-exporting weaponry in breach of embargoes, they must face political and economic consequences for enabling mass suffering.

Finally, any durable settlement must prioritise Sudanese agency. Interna-

tional measures should bolster credible transitional institutions, strengthen civil society oversight, and ensure that post-conflict economic arrangements do not reproduce the war economy. A peace that merely carves up revenue streams for competing militias will be ephemeral; A peace that dismantles the structures making violence profitable and restores accountable governance may endure.

Sudan's current tragedy is not an accident of history; It is the predictable outcome of a system that monetises violence. If the international community is serious about preventing further slaughter, it must follow the money and the munitions as diligently as it follows the rhetoric of diplomacy. Only by making war unprofitable will the incentives for peace begin to emerge. The time to act is now.

The article first appeared on Middle East Monitor.



● Sudanese gather to receive meals in Al Fasher, a city besieged by Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), in Darfur on August 11, 2025. ● AFP



The RSF is not simply a paramilitary: It is an economic actor with extensive commercial reach. Since its transformation from Janjaweed militias, the RSF and its leadership have captured significant portions of the gold sector and other lucrative trades. Independent investigations estimate RSF-controlled production at nearly 10 tons of gold in 2024, a windfall that has financed fighters, enabled arms purchases, and created a structural incentive to sustain conflict rather than to seek a negotiated settlement.

Riyadh 2025 Islamic Solidarity Games:

Iran routs Qatar in men's volleyball;
held by Afghanistan in futsal

Sports Desk

Iran claimed a second successive win in the men's volleyball event of the Islamic Solidarity Games, cruising to a straight-set triumph (25-22, 25-15, 25-18) over Qatar in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Thursday.

Opposite spiker Ali Hajipour and middle blocker Yousef Kazemi were the Iranian top scorers with 11 points apiece, while Amirreza Aftab-Azari chipped in 10.

Abdelrahman Bakry led Qatar with a team-high 11 points.

Iran had beaten Bahrain in a five-set thriller (25-21, 22-25, 25-16, 22-25, 15-7) on Wednesday.

Peyman Akbari's men will face Türkiye today in their third outing of the round-robin tournament, which also features Chad and Saudi Arabia.

Türkiye opened its campaign with a 3-1 win against Qatar on Wednesday.

The top two in the six-team standings will meet in the gold-medal game on Thursday.

In the women's competition, meanwhile, Iran suffered its second consecutive defeat, falling to Türkiye in straight sets (25-19, 25-16, 25-13) earlier on Thursday.

"Our players weren't intimidated by Türkiye, but the reality is, the Turkish players were extremely tall, and we have to be logical about that fact," Iran head coach Lee Do-hee said after the game.

"However, if our players work more on their individual techniques, they will definitely improve. And if they play with more precision in the future, they can even beat teams like Türkiye," added the South Korean.



● volleyball.ir

"We were inconsistent with our receptions today, and our passes lacked speed. If we can improve these two areas, we can make up for our losses.

"Our next two opponents, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, are less challenging, so we have a good opportunity to put in a better performance and get a result. We still have a shot at a medal. "It would have been much better for us if we had played these two games at the start of the tournament. We're still regretting the match against Azerbaijan; we could have performed better even in the game against Türkiye."

Beaten in straight sets by Azerbaijan in their opener, Iranian women will face Afghanistan and Tajikistan on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively, in the round-robin event, as they look to stay on course for a place in Thursday's bronze-medal match.

Frustrated in futsal

Iran head coach Vahid Shamsaei was left frustrated by his team's "complacency" after the Asian powerhouse was held to a 2-2 draw against Afghanistan in Group B of the futsal event on Thursday.

Masoud Yousef put Iran ahead

twice, only to see his goals canceled out by Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini and Mahdi Nowruzzi on both occasions, as Shamsaei's men recorded their second draw in Riyadh, having finished with a similar scoreline against Morocco on Tuesday.

"After such a strong performance against Morocco, I didn't expect the team to play this way against Afghanistan," Shamsaei said after the game, taking responsibility for "failing to get the players properly motivated for this game."

"I have a lot of respect for the Afghan team; they played with total

commitment. Our players, I think, played with complacency today. "They need to realize that in futsal, it's the players' effort that counts, not their reputation. Afghanistan simply outworked us. We thought the win was in the bag after getting off to a strong start," added the Iranian futsal great.

This marked Afghanistan's second impressive result against Iran in two weeks, following a 2-1 win in the Asian Youth Games final.

Asked if the controversial showdown in Manama – in which the two teams got involved in a

physical altercation in the closing stages – had affected Thursday's game, Shamsaei said: "The incidents that occurred during the youth match against Afghanistan have absolutely nothing to do with me and my team. There are simply no excuses for our technical flaws today, and we hold our hands up. Today's game was a slap in the face.

"The players must act professionally from now on. They have to forget about today's setback and focus on the next game against Tajikistan, which is a must-win for us if we are to progress to the semifinals."

Morocco marched to a 7-1 win over Tajikistan earlier on Thursday to move to the top of the group standings with four points, edging Afghanistan on goal difference.

Uzbekistan routed Azerbaijan 13-2 to maintain its perfect record in Group A, while Saudi Arabia bounced back from the first-day defeat against Uzbekistan to beat Libya 5-1.

Kurash medals

Elsewhere at the multi-sport event, Iranian athletes collected four medals in kurash, though they will not be counted in the official medals table, as kurash is one of two demonstration sports – along with pencak silat – in Riyadh.

Ramin Ahmadzadeh defeated his Uzbek opponent to capture the ultimate prize in the men's -81kg category, while Majid Vahid Barimanlou (men's -66kg) and Donya Aqaei (women's -70kg) settled for silvers in their respective events.

Tahereh Azarpeivand finished with a consolation bronze in the women's -57kg division.

Asia Oceania Wheelchair Basketball Championships:

Iran eager to end

20-year wait for men's title



● ISNA

Sports Desk

Iranian wheelchair basketball team will look to end a 20-year wait for the men's trophy at the IWBFA Asia Oceania Championships, when it gets its campaign underway against China in Bangkok, Thailand, today.

The men's Division A event features Iran, China, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and defending champion Australia – which defeated Iran in last year's final – and will be held in a round-robin format.

All six teams will be joined by the two highest-ranked Division B teams in the quarterfinal.

Afghanistan, Chinese Taipei, India, Iraq, Kuwait, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia complete the lineup in the second-tier division.

The tournament serves as a qualifier for the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games, with both finalists also securing spots at next year's World Championship in Ottawa, Canada.

"Our goal is to reclaim the Asian title after 20 years. It's a tough challenge, of course, with Australia and Japan – winners of multiple Paralympic medals – in the mix," Iran head coach Reza Soltani told ISNA.

"However, Iran is a different

team and in a strong position, especially with our overseas professional players, who compete in top-notch leagues abroad. We are hopeful that by winning the title, we will also secure our spot in the World Championship."

Iran will face Japan on Sunday, before playing on Australia, South Korea, and Thailand, respectively, until Wednesday.

In the women's competition, meanwhile, Iran will compete against Cambodia, India, Laos, the Philippines, and Thailand in the single round-robin Division B, with the top team of the table joining Division A trio Australia, Japan, and China in the semifinals.

Iran U23 names squad
for Kyrgyzstan tournament

Sports Desk

Iran's under-23 head coach Omid Ravankhah named a 23-man squad for the four-team friendly tournament in Kyrgyzstan in the upcoming international break.

Iran will get the tournament underway against Russia on Wednesday, before facing Kyrgyzstan (Nov. 15) and Bahrain (Nov. 18), respectively.

The event will be part of Iran's preparation for the 2026 AFC U23 Asian Cup, which will start on January 6 in Saudi Arabia.

On his debut on Iran's bench, Ravankhah guided his team to an impressive first-place finish in Group I of the Asian Cup qual-

ifiers in September – thanks to a clean sweep of three victories against Hong Kong (4-0), Guam (6-0), and the United Arab Emirates (3-2) in Abu Dhabi.

Iran has been drawn in Group C of the finals alongside Uzbekistan – last year's runner-up – 2020 champion South Korea, and Lebanon.

Team Melli will face South Korea in the group opener on January 7, followed by games against Uzbekistan (Jan. 10) and Lebanon (Jan. 13).

The following is Iran's full squad for the visit to Kyrgyzstan:

Goalkeepers: Mohammad Khalifeh (Iranco), Amir-Mahdi Maq-soudi (Sepahan), Omid Amiri (Nassaji Mazandaran)

Defenders: Mohammad-Mahdi Zare' (Akhnat Grozny), Danial Eiri (Malavan FC), Masoud Mohebbi (Khaybar FC), Arshia Vosouqifard (Fajr Sepasi), Farzin Mo'amelegari (Shams Azar), Seyyed Mahdi Mahdavi (Iranco), Bahram Goudarzi (Iranco) Midfielders: Amir-Mohammad Razaqinia (Esteghlal), Abbas Habibi (Malavan FC), Mohammad-Javad Hosseinejad (Dynamo Makhachkala), Mahdi Jafari (Malavan), Hamidreza Zarouni (Khaybar), Alireza Safari (Chador-malou), Arya Shafidoust (Sepahan) Strikers: Saeid Saharkhizan (Esteghlal), Hojjat Ahmadi (Esteghlal Khuzestan), Mohammad-Hossein Sadeqi (Persepolis), Erfan Jamshidi (Paykan), Afshin Sadeqi (Paykan), Arash Mortazavi (Zob Ahan).



● FFIRI

Qaenat hosts harvest festivals celebrating barberries, pomegranates



● edgolden.net



● bagheiran.com



● IRNA

Iranica Desk

With the end of summer and the arrival of colorful autumn, the season of harvesting strategic crops begins in Qaenat, South Khorasan Province — a land known as the cradle of gold and the red ruby. Although consecutive droughts have brought the breath of the desert soil to the verge of exhaustion, autumn still unfolds its magical hues, captivating the eyes of onlookers. In Qaenat, this beauty reveals itself through branches adorned with the crimson of barberries and pomegranates, followed by the golden bloom of saffron — sights that enchant both the eye and the soul, chtn.ir wrote. This year, festivals and ceremonies celebrating the harvest of pomegranates and barberries have been held across various

parts of the town. Some villages have already hosted these traditional events, while others are still planning to do so, ensuring that this chain of gratitude continues — an expression of humility and thankfulness for what God has ordained and nature has bestowed. These ceremonies, often observed as festive gatherings, serve several important purposes and offer meaningful benefits. They provide opportunities for families, friends, and enthusiasts to come together and share joyful moments around a common theme. At the same time, the participation of tour groups from other parts of the province and the country helps showcase the region's overlooked and undiscovered potential. As part of the nation's rich cultural and historical her-

itage, such festivals play a vital role in preserving and passing down local traditions and customs from one generation to the next. In addition, many participants in these events engage in helping one another — acts that strengthen the spirit of empathy and cooperation within the community. Festivals and ceremonies generally create a lively and positive atmosphere that can reduce stress and enhance collective happiness. These factors highlight the importance and necessity of holding thanksgiving ceremonies in society. The aforementioned festivals and rituals have been organized over several weeks through the efforts of many dedicated individuals, and they will continue in the coming days. These organizers are skilled professionals with expertise in their respec-

tive fields, striving to generate innovative ideas using modern methods and to bring them to fruition — learning from each experience and continually improving quality. They pay close attention to detail, precision, and organization. Teamwork and open dialogue are highly valued, as they believe collaboration enhances both creativity and performance. Fully aware of their social responsibility, they are determined to fulfill it and take pride in the outcomes of their work — qualities that make their efforts trustworthy and commendable. The meaningful presence of campers and travel caravans in the town for the third time was another valuable opportunity — thoughtfully arranged by the community-minded organizer of the event for this very season. More than 200 camper

units and caravans participated across the town and province, their picturesque presence often lining several kilometers of streets and alleys, adding a charming touch to the landscape. Numerous community-based programs were held as part of these festivals and thanksgiving ceremonies — a testament to the planning, creativity, and

dedication of the organizers, particularly the Islamic Councils, rural administrations, and local volunteer teams, in fostering social vitality through these celebrations of gratitude. They even encouraged sports clubs to join the effort by organizing village tours and offering their services, further enriching the festivities with new energy and engagement.

Introduction to the book:

Alas, Iran Should Not Be Destroyed A nation's spirit endures



"Alas, Iran Should Not Be Destroyed" is one of the most ambitious work of Dr. Farah Razi, one of Iran's most influential sociologists. This book was published in 2024 by Sahami Enteshar Publishing Company. More than a study, it is a passionate conversation between a thinker and his homeland — a meditation on Iran's struggles, its resilience, and its untapped strengths. The title, borrowed from the legendary Persian poet Ferdowsi, evokes both lament and hope: a warning against decay and a celebration of endurance. The book is the result of fifteen years of independent research, carried out without institutional funding. Razi observes Iran not as a failed society but as a nation in transition — one negotiating its passage from traditional to modern forms of identity, authority, and thought. His analysis is sweeping yet compassionate, grounded in a deep belief that Iran's social spirit remains vi-

brant beneath the surface of crisis. At the core of his argument lies the concept of the informal society — the vast network of moral, cultural, and communal forces that have long sustained Iran beyond the reach of formal power. This invisible backbone, composed of scholars, teachers, merchants, artists, and ordinary citizens, has often preserved social cohesion when political structures faltered. For Razi, the true strength of Iran does not reside in its state apparatus, but in the enduring ethics and solidarity of its people. Throughout the book, he moves across the major institutions of Iranian life — education, religion, politics, economy, and culture — balancing critique with affirmation. He acknowledged the persistence of inequality and imitation, yet insists on the cultural intelligence that has allowed Iranians to adapt, resist, and recreate meaning through cen-

turies of upheaval. Time and again, Iran has drawn on its rich moral traditions and collective wisdom to rebuild itself from within. Razi's language, while analytical, often borders on poetic. He draws on Persian poetry, Qur'anic verses, historical anecdotes, and personal reflections, creating a text that feels as alive as the society it describes. His voice is that of both a scientist and a humanist — a scholar diagnosing a nation's ills, yet also a believer in its power to heal. Among his central themes is the renewal of thought. Razi argues that Iran's future depends less on material wealth or political reform than on intellectual and moral revival. He envisions a society guided by honesty, merit, and collective responsibility — a society that transforms its traditions into sources of creativity rather than constraints. For him, faith and reason, heritage and progress, need not be enemies

but partners in a distinctly Iranian path to modernity. In the book's later chapters, optimism shines through his caution. Razi sees Iran as a repairable society — one endowed with cultural depth, historical continuity, and spiritual vitality. The nation's trials, he suggests, have been tests of endurance, shaping a people who know how to survive and rebuild. "As long as thought and conscience remain alive among Iranians," he writes, "Iran will never be destroyed." Ultimately, Alas, Iran Should Not Be Destroyed is not merely a diagnosis of decline but a declaration of faith — in the resilience of a civilization, in the integrity of its people, and in the enduring promise of renewal. It is a work that turns sociology into a form of cultural testimony, reminding readers everywhere that the strength of a nation lies not in its power, but in its spirit.



UNESCO recognizes Cyrus Cylinder as early global human-rights document

Arts & Culture Desk

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) formally approved a resolution recognizing the Cyrus Cylinder as a foundational human-rights document. The resolution was adopted by consensus at the 43rd General Conference of UNESCO held in Samarkand on November 6.

The text describes the Cyrus Cylinder as “a foundational document in the history of human civilization” and “the first written manifestation of the principles of freedom, justice, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity”.

The Cyrus Cylinder, a clay artifact dating back to the 6th century BC, was unearthed in 1879 amid the ruins of ancient Babylon, located in present-day Iraq, and is currently housed in the British Museum.

Widely hailed as one of the earliest known declarations of human rights, the cylinder embodies enduring principles of tolerance, religious freedom, and social justice.

Under the recent decision, UNESCO has been tasked with integrating the teachings drawn from the charter into its educational, cultural and human-rights programs.

Iran, supported by Tajikistan and Iraq, spearheaded the initiative and successfully secured backing from a wide range of UNESCO member states, including Egypt, Iraq, Colombia, India, Nigeria, Algeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Senegal, Armenia and Poland.

Ali Ahmadnia, head of the Iranian government information affairs, explained that the initiative to jointly register the Cyrus Charter as a UNESCO World Heritage item was originally proposed by Iran some ten months ago during high-level talks between the presidents of Iran and Tajikistan and was formally included in the final agreement between the two nations.

Following the agreement, both countries began drafting a joint resolution through their respective UNESCO representative offices. Iraq, where the Cyrus Charter was originally discovered in ancient Babylon, later joined the initiative. “Iran’s pivotal role in this process is undeniable,” Ahmadnia emphasized. “From initiating the proposal and engaging in negotiations with the UNESCO Secretariat and national commissions, to encouraging other countries to voice their support for the resolution, Iran has been at the forefront every step of the way.”

As one of the world’s oldest known inscriptions associated with governance and human-community values, the Cyrus Charter dates back more than 2,500 years and emphasizes respect for cultural and religious diversity among other enduring principles.

The resolution also links this recognition to broader global frameworks, noting that the charter’s values align with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), because of its emphasis on inclusive societies and cultural cooperation.



During the event in Samarkand, Iran’s Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, Ambassador Ahmad Pakatchi, and Hassan Fartousi, Secretary-General of Iran’s National Commission for UNESCO, highlighted that this recognition represented not merely a national milestone but a global affirmation that the respect for human dignity and cultural plurality finds roots in ancient Persian civilization.

This marks the first time an ancient Iranian document has been formally recognized at the global level as a human-rights charter. The accreditation of the Cyrus Charter at UNESCO thus sends a powerful message of cross-cultural dialogue, inclusive heritage, and historical continuity of values of justice and diversity.

The full resolution invites UNESCO’s Director-General to apply the charter’s

principles across programs on justice, rights and intercultural dialogue, and encourages Member States to promote awareness of its values worldwide.

In a statement following the vote, Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran described the decision as “a reaffirmation of the place of Iranian civilization in the founding of universal concepts of justice, human dignity and cultural dialogue”.

Environment chief urges UN to shield climate cooperation from sanctions at COP30

Social Desk

Head of Iran’s Department of Environment, Shina Ansari, met with UN Secretary-General António Guterres on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil on November 6, calling for the protection of global environmental cooperation from what she described as “unilateral, unjust and illegal sanctions.”

Ansari stressed that the environmental sector must remain immune to coercive measures, adding that international collaboration on climate and sustainability should advance “without restrictions and in the spirit of shared global interests.”

Guterres endorsed Ansari’s view, underscoring the need for climate justice and the equitable consideration of all nations in addressing the growing impacts of climate change. He reiterated that promoting fairness in mitigation



and adaptation efforts remains one of the UN’s top priorities. COP30 is the 30th annual United Nations Climate Change Conference, part of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) process.

Held from November 10 to 21 in Belém, this year’s summit marks the first time the global climate conference is being hosted in the Amazon region. Each year, the conference brings together world leaders, policymakers and experts to discuss strategies for adaptation to climate change and reducing greenhouse-gas emissions. Brazil is also hosting a high-level leaders’



Head of Iran’s Department of Environment, Shina Ansari, (R) meets UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, in Belém, Brazil, on November 6, 2025. IRNA

summit ahead of the two-week negotiations, setting the stage for renewed commitments to sustainability, environmental protection and global climate action. A high-level Iranian delegation is attending the event, viewing it as a strategic opportunity to strengthen both bilateral and multilateral partnerships, particularly in areas such as technology transfer, capacity building, and enhanced access to international climate finance mechanisms.

Three Iranian films nominated for inaugural Eurasia ‘Diamond Butterfly’ awards in Russia

Arts & Culture Desk

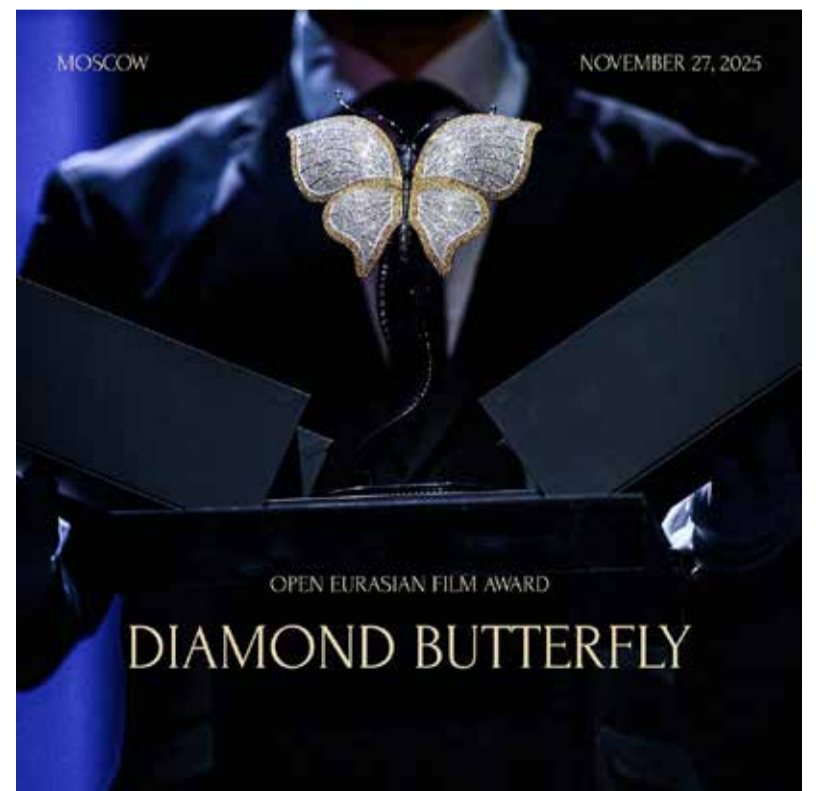
Iran has nominated three feature films for the first edition of the Eurasia Film Award, known as the “Diamond Butterfly”, according to Masoud Ahmadvand, Cultural Counsellor at the Iranian Embassy in Moscow.

Ahmadvand told IRNA on Thursday that the selected titles are “Call me Ziba” (produced by Maziar Hashemi and directed by Rasoul Sadr Ameli), “In the Arms of the Tree” (produced by Mohammad Reza Mesbah and directed by Babak Khajeh Pasha), and “My Daughter’s Hair” (produced by Saeed Khani and directed by Hessam Farahmand).

The Eurasia Film Award ceremony will take place on November 24, in Moscow, Russia, with winners announced in 12 categories. Established by Russia’s Ministry of Culture in partnership with the Russian Cultural Foundation, the award seeks to celebrate films that highlight human values, cultural heritage, and shared universal meaning rather than focusing on commercial success.

The competition is open to filmmakers worldwide who demonstrate respect for national culture and traditional values. According to the organizing committee, the best film will receive a grand prize of \$1 million, while other winning entries will be awarded \$250,000 each.

Winners will also receive a butterfly-shaped statuette adorned with 5,000 diamonds. The award ceremony will be held in the presence of Nikita Mikhalkov, founder of the Eurasian



Academy of Cinematic Arts.

So far, 31 films from 18 countries, including Russia, Iran, China, India, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Pakistan, Indonesia, and South Africa, have been submitted for consideration.

Russian presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky previously said the Diamond Butterfly prize is designed to be an in-



The inaugural ceremony of the Eurasia Diamond Butterfly Film Award is scheduled to take place in Moscow, Russia, on November 24, 2025.

dependent, artistically free alternative to Western awards such as the Oscars, adding that its guiding motto is “Every truth without love is a lie.”