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Iran Daily

Vol. 7988 • Thursday, November 27, 2025 • Azar 06, 1404 • Jumada al-Thani 06, 1447 • 100,000 rials • 8 pages



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INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE



Ali Larijani, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, recently travelled to Pakistan, where he met senior political and military officials. Although the visit was officially framed around economic goals and strengthening bilateral ties, the security dimension of the discussions cannot be overlooked. The two countries share serious security concerns both along their common border and in relation to Afghanistan. Pakistan also offered unequivocal support to Iran during the recent 12-day conflict between Iran and Israel in June. In an interview with Iran Daily, Amin Rezaeinejad, an expert on South Asian affairs,

though the visit was officially framed around economic goals and strengthening bilateral ties, the security dimension of the discussions cannot be overlooked. The two countries share serious security concerns both along their common border and in relation to Afghanistan. Pakistan also offered unequivocal support to Iran during the recent 12-day conflict between Iran and Israel in June. In an interview with Iran Daily, Amin Rezaeinejad, an expert on South Asian affairs,

said that while Iran and Pakistan appear determined to address shared security concerns, including terrorist and separatist groups and Afghanistan-related issues, a high-level security agreement between the two states is unlikely, at least in the short term.

IRAN DAILY: How do you assess Larijani's visit to Pakistan? What were its aims and outcomes?

REZAEINEJAD: The visits made over the past few months by Iranian officials to Pakistan have largely been aimed at examining security and political issues, while economic ties appear to be a secondary priority for now. The political and security-related topics of discussion can be divided into two areas. One concerns the Gaza crisis, Israel's attack on Iran, and Iran's nuclear file. The other relates to cross-border matters between the two countries, namely separatism and the activities of Tehr-

ik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the largest terrorist organization in the Subcontinent. These have long been central themes of bilateral discussions and remain so today. It seems both sides are seeking to wrap up these dossiers, particularly given that a third actor — the Taliban government in Afghanistan — now plays an active role.

For Iran, this is highly significant, as securing its eastern borders allows it to remain focused on Israel and the potential escalation that some experts believe may occur in the coming months. However, economic discussions may have also taken place — probably under China's guidance — geared towards strengthening the CPEC corridor in Pakistan and, on Iran's side, the North-South Corridor. Talks may have covered hydrocarbon exports from Iran to Pakistan to supply CPEC's energy needs, along with efforts to expand transit capacity between the two states so that Gwadar

Port can serve as a gateway for Chinese goods entering Iran and moving onward through the North-South Corridor to northern Europe, the Caucasus, Russia and Central Asia.

Given Pakistan's support for Iran during the recent 12-day conflict, how would you evaluate bilateral security relations? Could this be an opportunity for joint action against shared threats?

Expectations should not be set too high. Pakistan is currently testing a diplomatic approach that seeks to create balance in its foreign policy, leveraging the rise of the China-led Eastern bloc, supported by Russia and Iran, while maintaining ties with the Western bloc. Islamabad hopes to benefit from both camps while shielding itself from the risks of aligning too closely with either. In parallel with Pakistan's outreach to Iran and its growing ties with China and

Russia, senior Pakistani figures have also been engaging Western actors. For example, General Asim Munir, Pakistan's army chief, met Donald Trump only a short while ago. Pakistan has also signed a defense pact with Saudi Arabia and is keen to expand this partnership. For this reason, the situation should not be interpreted as a major breakthrough or a dramatic shift. Pakistan is essentially feeling its way through a new foreign-policy trajectory and assessing how far it can succeed. Iran has a place within this approach as part of the Eastern bloc, and Pakistan maintains some interest in developing its ties with Iran, but only to the extent that such engagement does not jeopardize its relationships with major powers like the United States or with regional states that remain the primary source of employment for Pakistani workers, such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait.

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Larijani casts 12-day war as US-Israeli plot planned years ago

'Iran, Pakistan determined to seriously confront terrorism'

International Desk

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Larijani said the 12-day aggression against Iran in June was a "plot" hatched by the United States and Israel years ago, stressing that Iran emerged victorious while the occupying entity is now grappling with severe internal disorder and decline.

Larijani made the remarks during a meeting with a group of heads of Pakistan's top think tanks and experts in the field of regional and international peace and security at a ceremony held at Iran's Embassy in the Pakistani capital Islamabad on Wednesday.

"This war was the result of an American-Israeli plot that had been designed years ago. [US President Donald] Trump also recently declared that since 2003 they had been working on a plan to attack Iran's nuclear facilities with their aircraft," Larijani said, add-

ing, "The power of God, however, prevented this assault."

"It was the will of the Iranian nation that revealed itself in this war. The Israeli regime, which thought it would defeat Iran, became completely frustrated," Larijani added.

Referring to the current situation of Israel, he stressed that the regime is facing internal disorder and a crisis rooted in its illegitimate existence.

"This regime is now facing reputational erosion and has never had such a challenge at the international level. The Zionists have fallen into a kind of internal disorder, and the statistics also show that an existential disorder for them lies ahead. Their posture of power in the region was never deep," Larijani emphasized.

He also stressed that the determination of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and the will of the Iranian nation triumphed over the enemy's weapons

and aggression in the recent war.

"The civilizational background of the Iranian nation is the secret of our heroic struggle and victory. Iran has been, is, and will continue to exist for thousands of years. It was the foolish idea of the aggressive enemy to imagine that it could break Iran with war," Larijani added.

Talks with Pakistani officials

Larijani, who was on an official visit to Pakistan, also held talks with several Pakistani officials for talks on security and economic cooperation.

On Wednesday, he held talks with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir in Rawalpindi, during which the two sides pledged to deepen cooperation on regional security challenges.

Pakistan's chief of army staff stressed the "need for closer collaboration with Iran to combat terrorism".

Munir also highlighted the growing



Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani (L) holds talks with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, on November 26, 2025.

importance of strategic cooperation between Tehran and Islamabad in light of the evolving geopolitical situation. On his part, Larijani acknowledged Pakistan's vital role in ensuring peace and security in the region and expressed Iran's commitment to further expand Iran-Pakistan ties.

Larijani also underlined that Iran and Pakistan are determined to seriously confront terrorism.

The Iranian top official also underlined the significance of dialogue and partnership between the two nations in tackling regional challenges and ensuring long-term stability.

Iran condemns US 'bullying approach' towards Venezuela



The world's largest warship, US aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford, is seen on its way out of the Oslofjord at Nesodden and Bygdøy, Norway, September 17, 2025.

● LISE ASERUD/REUTERS

ized the use of covert CIA operations in the Latin American country, while reiterating that he has not ruled out ordering a military intervention there.

The Iranian foreign minister also slammed the activities of the Israeli regime in the Caribbean and Latin America as a major threat to the peace, stability, and tranquility of the region.

Israel is seeking to expand its relations with small Caribbean countries in domestic security and intelligence, a move critics view as a strategic effort to extend its geopolitical influence that risks destabilizing regional dynamics and which some believe is connected to the recent US military buildup in the area. The Venezuelan Foreign Minister, for his part, expressed gratitude for Iran's principled positions and highlighted the importance of strengthening strategic relations between Caracas and Tehran.

He also underscored the resolve of the Venezuelan nation and government to resist and stand firm against US pressures and illegal interventions.

face of "US belligerent unilateralism."

Since late August, the US has deployed the world's largest aircraft carrier to the Caribbean, accompanied by a flotilla of warships, under the pretext of fighting drug traffickers.

It has conducted some 20 air strikes against suspected drug trafficking vessels in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific, killing over 80 people.

Venezuela says that the US anti-drugs campaign in the region is a pretext to overthrow President Nicolas Maduro and seize the country's oil reserves.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly accused Maduro of overseeing a drug cartel.

The US president has also autho-

International Desk

Iran slammed the United States' "bullying approach" towards Venezuela and other independent nations in the Western hemisphere amid US military deployments across the Caribbean under the pretext of fighting drug trafficking. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in a phone conversation with his Venezuelan counterpart Yvan Gil Pinto said that threats to use force against countries represent a clear violation of the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and peremptory norms of international law.

He underscored the collective responsibility of the international community to uphold the principles and purposes of the UN in the

High-level Iran-Pakistan ...

Iran and Pakistan's shared security issues are largely bilateral and are not central to Pakistan's foreign-policy experiment. For this reason, the prospect of a high-level security accord that could transform Iran-Pakistan relations does not appear realistic, at least in the short term.

Given the two countries' similar views on Afghanistan, how might they cooperate on this issue?

Afghanistan is a shared concern due to the role played by the Taliban government in relation to terrorism and security incidents occurring either inside Iran and Pakistan or along their borders. The Taliban authorities seem unwilling — or perhaps unable — to resolve these issues diplomatically. Considering the influ-

ence of the Haqqani Network within the Taliban government, Kabul may lack the capacity to control TTP, which is closely linked to this faction. This combination of factors shows the severity of the threat and highlights the need for Iran and Pakistan to coordinate their foreign policies toward the Taliban government so they can keep a lid on these risks. While Pakistan has taken a far more forceful approach, including carrying out military strikes inside Afghanistan, Iran does not appear to favor of launching a broad military campaign to suppress terrorist groups there, likely for its own strategic reasons. However, at the technical and diplomatic levels, the two sides can cooperate by coordinating their policies and sharing security data to manage these shared challenges.

Do you think Iran has the potential to mediate between Pakistan and Afghanistan in their recent conflicts?

A country can mediate effectively only if it holds active common interests with both parties. Iran does indeed share such interests with both Pakistan and Afghanistan, but the nature of these interests differs. With Afghanistan, the common ground is primarily economic and less security-focused, while with Pakistan the opposite is true; the overlap is mostly security-related and less economic.

This mismatch reduces Iran's capacity to act as a mediator. It also explains why forums such as the Doha process emerge, or why meetings in Turkey take place, where Ankara attempts to mediate.

Top security official: Tehran ready for negotiations without predetermined outcome

International Desk

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani said on Wednesday that Iran is ready to hold "genuine negotiations" with the United States, which its outcome is not predetermined.

"The Americans try to portray themselves as the turning point of every global development, but this is a form of self-deception. WE ACCEPT GENUINE NEGOTIATIONS, not artificial ones, AND THE OUTCOME OF ANY NEGOTIATION MUST NOT BE PREDETERMINED", Ali Larijani said in a post on X.

Tehran and Washington had held five rounds of nuclear talks since April, but a planned meeting on June 15 was cancelled after Israel and the US launched strikes on Iran, triggering the 12-day conflict.

During Iran-US talks, Washington insisted on zero uranium enrichment under any deal, which has been strongly rejected by Tehran.

Larijani's comments came as Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi visited France to hold talks with his counterpart Jean Noel Barrot to discuss Iran's nuclear program and the case of Iranian citizen held in France.

"This will be an opportunity for us to call on Iran to comply with its obligations to-

wards the IAEA and for a swift resumption of cooperation with the agency," Barrot said on Tuesday.

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 have long expressed concern that Tehran could be seeking the capability to develop nuclear weapons.

Despite their failure to fulfil their commitments under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, France alongside Germany and Britain triggered the return of UN sanctions against Iran in October, that had been lifted under a now-defunct nuclear deal. The 2015 deal, reached between Iran and the UN Security Council's permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — plus Germany, imposed curbs on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

But it unraveled when the United States, during Donald Trump's first term as president, unilaterally withdrew from the accord and reimposed sweeping sanctions.

The Europeans had pledged continued support for the deal, but the mechanism intended to offset US sanctions never materialized effectively.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Kuwait can act as Iran’s gateway to Arab markets, GCC: *Joint chamber*

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

The vice president of the Iran-Kuwait Joint Chamber of Commerce lauded on Wednesday the high capacity of trade between the two countries, stressing that Kuwait can serve as Iran’s gateway to Arab markets and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)’s member states.

Arash Nikpey told Iran Daily that the volume of exchanges between the two sides can be increased to approximately 1 billion dollars, which is more than three times the current volume.

“The potential for trade between Iran and Kuwait, if the land route is facilitated, a joint committee is formed, and administrative obstacles are removed, can increase from the current 300 million dollars to 1 billion dollars within two to three years,” Nikpey said.

Pointing to the fact that the Kuwaiti market is thirsty for high-quality Iranian products, he stated, “Due to Kuwait’s need for various products, Kuwait’s imports from other countries amount to over 52 billion dollars annually. However, Iran’s share of the Kuwaiti market is very small and has much room for growth. Iran, with its strong industry, agriculture, and services, as well as skilled workforce, can have a higher share of Kuwait’s import

market, especially in food security, technical services, and construction.”

Nikpey underlined that the lack of a direct land route between Iran and Kuwait, as well as visa issuance challenges, are among the serious and main obstacles to the development of trade exchanges.

“Despite Iran being on the other side of the Persian Gulf, Iran and Kuwait do not share a common land border; therefore, for cargo transportation, there are only three existing routes, each facing challenges,” he said.

“The first route is by sea (Iranian ports to Shuwaikh or Shuaiba port in Kuwait), which is time-consuming and sometimes costly. The next route is an indirect land route through Iraq, which is not very safe due to Iraq’s security conditions, customs restrictions, and high costs. The third route is by air, which is suitable for light and high value-added goods, but the transportation cost via this route is very expensive,” he added.

The vice president of the Iran-Kuwait Joint Chamber of Commerce stressed that establishing a land trade route (transit through Iraq) by launching a road route from Iran to Kuwait via Iraq would reduce transportation costs and increase the competitiveness of Iranian goods in the Kuwaiti market.

Nikpey also said forming a joint trade committee and developing a roadmap will help increase trade between the two countries.

Referring to the necessity of Kuwaiti investment in Iran and vice versa, he said Kuwait in recent years has made significant investments in technology, health, financial services, and agriculture sectors, which can help deepen economic relations.

“The potential for developing regular shipping lines between Iranian ports (Bandar Abbas, Bushehr, Khorramshahr) and Kuwait can be very effective in developing exchanges,” Nikpey said, adding, “Kuwait can act as Iran’s gateway to Arab markets and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and significantly contribute to trade development in the north-western Persian Gulf.”

Touching on Iran’s exports to Kuwait, he also said Iran’s main exports in past years were agricultural and food products, and Iran has shown the capacity to export high-quality fresh agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, dried fruits, dairy products, to Kuwait.

Nikpey pointed to tourism and health tourism as another area for co-operation between Kuwait and Iran.

“With its pristine nature and four seasons, Iran can be a destination for health tourism for Kuwaiti citizens because, with its skilled doctors, much lower treatment costs, and suitable medical services compared to other countries, Iran is an



Kuwait’s Shuwaikh Port
● AFP



Arash Nikpey

attractive destination for health tourists from many countries,” he said.

Regarding the main obstacles and challenges to commercial cooperation between Iran and Kuwait, Nikpey said, “Increasing international sanctions against Iran and banking and financial sanctions make money transfers and

the opening of letters of credit (L/C) between the two countries difficult or, in some cases, impossible. On the other hand, many Kuwaiti companies, due to their close ties with the US and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, are afraid of direct cooperation with Iran.”

Banking and currency problems and the absence of correspon-

dent banks and a transparent financial channel between Iran and Kuwait are obstacles to trade, he said, adding, currently, trade is often conducted through exchange offices or intermediaries, which increases costs and risks.

Nikpey stressed that Iran’s competitors in the Kuwaiti market are Turkey, China, India, and the UAE.



● IRNA

Pezeshkian stresses acceleration of flare gas curb projects to combat pollution

Economy Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized on Wednesday his administration’s commitment to accelerating efforts to curb gas flaring, saying no official should be indifferent to the burning of the country’s wealth and resources in the form of implementing the associated gas control plan.

Stressing that gas flaring has caused severe air pollution across the country, Pezeshkian said, “Not even a single day

should be overlooked in achieving the early results of the various parts of the containment plan.”

Emphasizing that equipment procurement for the containment project should not be delayed by administrative complexities, the president said, “Although domestic equipment procurement takes precedence over foreign procurement, the quality and final price of devices and equipment, the production capacity of domestic units, and whether these equipment are truly pro-

duced domestically or if their parts are imported from abroad and merely assembled here and offered at a higher price, must be carefully considered by suppliers.”

Pezeshkian also emphasized that, in addition to creating an online dashboard, the technical and visual monitoring of the progress of gas flaring reduction projects should be made available to him in his personal office as soon as possible, so that he can personally follow up on it on a daily basis.

Tehran-Ankara trade exchanges target \$10b milestone next year: *Minister*

Economy Desk

Iran’s industry, mining and trade minister emphasized in a meeting with his Turkish counterpart on Wednesday the necessity of removing obstacles to the development of economic cooperation between Tehran and Ankara, announcing a \$2 billion increase in the volume of trade exchanges that would bring the total trade volume between the two sides to \$10 billion next year.

Mohammad Atabak, who traveled to Turkey to participate in the ECO Trade Ministers’ meeting, made the announcement in his meeting with Omer Bolat as the two discussed trade relations between Iran and Turkey.

Atabak called Turkey one of the most important trade partners of the Islamic Republic of Iran and emphasized the necessity of increasing trade between the two countries.

“Trade between Turkey and Iran has the potential for a big leap, and we hope to achieve this great goal by removing some minor obstacles,” he said. Bolat, for his part, referred to a five percent increase in the volume of trade between Turkey and Iran in the current year and added, “We have now



Iranian Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Mohammad Atabak (L) meets with his Turkish counterpart, Omer Bolat, in the capital Ankara on November 26, 2025.
● IRNA

reached a trade volume of \$8 billion between the two countries, and we aim for \$10 billion next year.”

Based on the historical background and neighborliness of the two countries, Turkey is ready to develop trade relations with Iran, he stressed.

The two ministers also discussed some bilateral trade issues between the two countries, and understandings were reached in this regard.

35 Chinese trains cross Iran in seven months as int’l rail transport posts 12% growth: *Official*

Economy Desk

The director general of foreign trade of Iran’s Railway praised the achievements of the current government’s railway diplomacy, underlining the remarkable growth in Europe-China exchanges via Iran and the arrival of dozens of Chinese trains as the Islamic Republic moves to play a more active intermediary role.

Shahriar Naqizadeh was cited by IRNA as saying that Iran is located at the intersection of the most important corridors in the region, and with the recent six-party agreement in Istanbul, the ground for a leap in China-Europe exchanges via Iran has been provided.

Naqizadeh pointed to the country’s unique geographical location, stressing, “Iran is at the center

of important regional corridors and, as the corridor crossroads of the region, is the intersection of East-West and North-South corridors.”

Highlighting a historical growth in the entry of Chinese trains and a 12% increase in international rail transport, he said, “Last week in Istanbul, Turkey, we succeeded in reaching an important six-party agreement between China, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Turkey, the goal of which is to develop commodity exchanges from China to Europe via Iran. In this agreement, a very good understanding was reached on two axes: reducing tariff costs and reducing transit time.”

Naqizadeh stressed that the East-West corridor has now been able to reduce the transit time



● IRNA

of goods by about one-third compared to the sea route.

Referring to the unprecedented growth of incoming trains from China, Naqizadeh said, “Before 2024, only seven trains had entered Iran from China in seven years; but in the first seven months of this year, the thirty-fifth train is entering the country, and four more trains have departed from Xi’an station and will enter Iran in the coming weeks.”

Pointing to the country’s rail performance in the international sector, he said, “In the past year, we succeeded in exceeding five million tons of international transport. This year, despite the challenges, the growth trend continued, and so far, three million and 600 thousand tons of various goods have been transported in the international sector, which shows a 12% increase compared to the same period last year.”

Humanity forsakes Enlightenment's peace vision



By Morteza Golpoor
News editor at the political
desk of Iran Newspaper

P A N E L

Has the primordial norm of human history been war or peace? Have human beings, throughout the ages, subsisted in serenity, or have they traversed most epochs in war with one another? Dr. Habibollah Fazeli and Dr. Jahangir Moeini Alamdari, two members of the faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Tehran, responded to these questions in a panel discussion entitled "War and Peace in Contemporary Political Thought," convened on November 15 at the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of the University of Tehran. In accordance with the expositions of Fazeli and Moeini Alamdari, the exclusive axiom of human history has been war rather than peace; even in the modern age, particularly in the 20th century, the number of wars — internal or interstate — has multiplied. The rationale for organizing this panel was that these two esteemed professors of political sciences, beyond presenting a historical narration and elucidation of war and peace, examine the scientific substrata, political and social causes, and even instinctual and cultural grounds of the eruption and proliferation of wars.

The pivotal nucleus of their argumentation was a critique of the Enlightenment, in the sense that the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe, in realizing its claims of terminating wars and inaugurating an era of human peace, categorically failed. In explicating why this Enlightenment project collapsed, the two scholars offered distinct arguments. Habibollah Fazeli contends that the reason for the defeat of the Enlightenment strategy — and other strategies such as Liberalism and Marxism — in constructing the exemplary society and human being is the disregard of two categories: culture and instinct. Moeini Alamdari, invoking the views of Carl von Clausewitz, the German thinker and theorist of war, emphasized that, contrary to Clausewitz's position, war is not necessarily initiated or concluded by political will; rather, war, like all living systems, possesses its own autonomous and self-referential vitality, and for this reason, once a war has commenced, its termination is not contingent on the will of statesmen but derives from the internal mechanisms of war itself.

With this prologue, one may apprehend the titles of the two lectures more perspicuously. The subject of Dr. Fazeli's lecture was "War, Enlightenment, and Crisis in Contemporary Political Thought," while the subject of Dr. Moeini's lecture was "A Critique of Clausewitz's View of War Based on the Principle of Autopoietic Systems". These two professors of political science at the University of Tehran, beginning from two divergent points of departure, examined the reasons for the failure of pacifistic conceptions — particularly the Enlightenment strategy — to bring an end to wars; yet despite this divergence, they converged upon a single conclusion: given their analytical considerations and the evidence of the contemporary world, the likelihood of the expansion of wars in the future is greater.



Fazeli: Culture, instinct as two determinants of defeat of strategies



Habibollah Fazeli

Habibollah Fazeli began his remarks in the panel discussion "War and Peace in Contemporary Political Thought" with the premise that "whether in the classical age or in the modern age, political thought has always been entangled with war and peace."

According to this professor of political science at the University of Tehran, "the engagement with war was such that certain classical thinkers believed that if the quiddity and essence of war were apprehended, the causes of war would vanish."

Emphasizing that "from the thinkers of ancient Iran to Plato, Thucydides, and Aristotle, there is no political thinker who has not addressed the question of war," he explicated the temporal contexts in which thinkers engaged war. "In certain epochs, reflection upon war occurred amid wars themselves — such as Sun Tzu, Freud, and Ardashir — and at other times, after a war's occurrence or during the existence of a war-laden atmosphere within a polity, the idea of contemplating war would arise, as with us Iranians who have just experienced a war, or the Middle East, where war is virtually everyday sustenance." This professor at the University of Tehran, in articulating the enduring seriousness of war for humanity, referred to the renaming of the United States Department of Defense to the Department of War; and, noting that this change was instituted by a country that deems itself responsible for international order, declared, "This alteration from the Department

of Defense to the Department of War in America is profoundly meaningful."

Fazeli extrapolated the issue of war or conflict to everyday human life and said, "There is, in essence, no point or domain within life that has ever been devoid of war."

According to this professor of political science at the University of Tehran, "All these evidences, from antiquity until today, indicate that even during peace, war is contemplated and must be contemplated."

The member of the political science faculty, continuing his elucidation of why war merits perpetual consideration, referred to the expansion of the number and scope of wars in the modern age and said, "From 1945, when the Second World War ended, until today, 300 wars — inside and outside countries — have occurred, which collectively have resulted in the deaths of more than 200 million human beings."

He observed that "some of these wars were internal," enumerated the logic of civil wars as "race, language, ethnicity, and analogous factors," and stated that "civil wars occurring within countries and societies have generally entailed greater massacres and tragedies than external wars conducted against foreign enemies."

After presenting these historical introductions and empirical evidence concerning war and its role in human existence, Fazeli dedicated his time to explaining why the efforts — particularly those of the modern age beginning with the Enlightenment — to restrain wars have culminated in failure.

In explaining the causes of this failure — especially the failure of the Enlightenment to end wars and construct a peaceful world — he invoked the concept of "strategy" and clarified why modern strategies to create a

better world and a better human being have been defeated.

This professor of political science at the University of Tehran, declaring that "strategies collapse before two forces: culture and instinct," defined "strategy" thus, "Strategy signifies a political system or voluntaristic directive for engendering a condition, such as the will to engender a fascist system or the will to engender a communist system, or any other voluntaristic modality for constructing an unnatural utopian existence that possesses a program for everything from corporeal technologies to the furthest horizons of the world."

Fazeli, stating that "in this sense the Enlightenment is likewise a cognitive strategy," articulated the dimensions and aims of "the Enlightenment as strategy" thus, "In the Enlightenment strategy, the idea was pursued that one could construct another cosmos and recreate the human; in fact, the world could be fashioned otherwise — a world imbued with peace, wherein human beings act and behave on the basis of rationality, thereby diminishing the level of violence."

Why did the Enlightenment strategy fail to attain these beautiful and perhaps exalted aims and, in practice, instead of reducing wars, witnessed their escalation? Fazeli answered

thus, "Strategies — including the Enlightenment strategy — have two adversaries or opposing forces: one is the historical culture sedimented within societies, and the other is human instinct."

Explicating instinct and its role in the emergence of wars, he declared, "Classical Greek and Iranian philosophers regarded war as natural, such as Plato, who asserted that war is the progeny of the instinct of wrath. In the Middle Ages, Aquinas also deemed war natural and believed it could not be eluded."

Noting that "most classical political philosophers believed that war is the result of natural instinct and is ineluctable and that only its limits may be delineated," he continued, "But beginning in the 17th and 18th centuries, in the epoch of the Enlightenment, the thinkers of this era believed that another world could be constructed, and that human beings could be educated and rationalized so that they might become more ethical and less war-inclined." According to Fazeli, it is subsequent to these Enlightenment-associated ideas that strategies such as "the creation of perpetual peace" are born — ideas which held that republican systems in the world or Europe would not wage war against one another.



The illustration shows several prominent figures of the Enlightenment era, a European intellectual movement of the 17th and 18th centuries, which posited that democracy causes peace.

● [Fazeli](#)

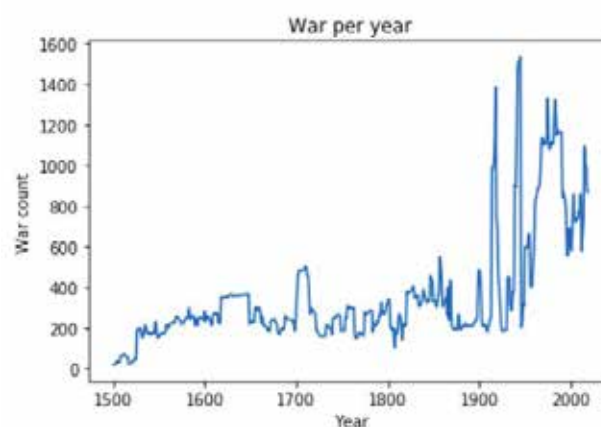


Why did the Enlightenment strategy fail to fashion a world imbued with peace and, in practice, instead of reducing wars, witnessed their escalation? Dr. Habibollah Fazeli answered thus: "Strategy signifies a political system or voluntaristic directive for engendering a condition. Strategies — including the Enlightenment strategy — have two adversaries or opposing forces: one is the historical culture sedimented within societies, and the other is human instinct."



The chart shows the growth in the number of wars between the 1500s and the 2000s.

● [ResearchGate](#)





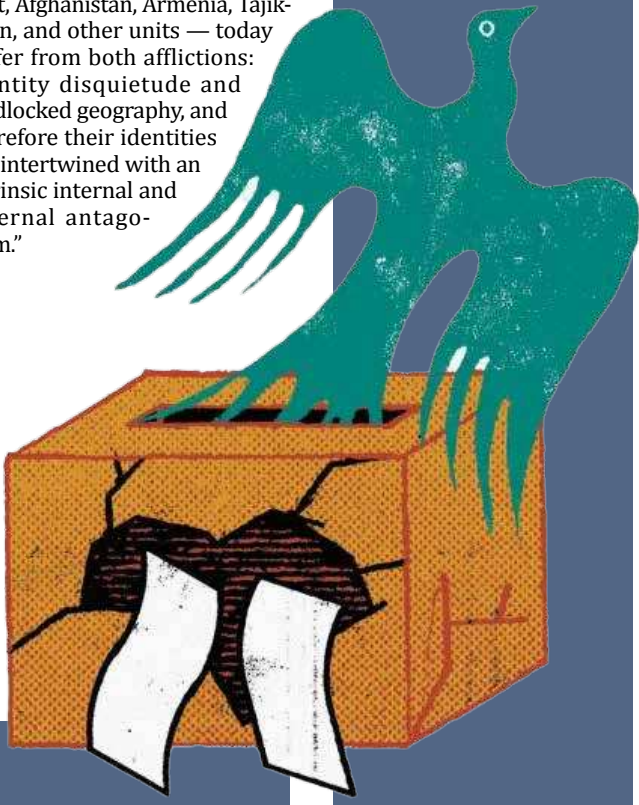
Referring to the fact that “the establishment of an international court, as Johann Gottlieb Fichte stated, or world peace as Emmanuel Kant articulated, and analogous ideas were all products of this Enlightenment strategy and its underlying vision,” he added, “The fact that political systems such as Communism, Fascism, or even Nazism sought to cultivate their desired human beings is also comprehensible within this framework; essentially, all such utopian logics believed that one could construct the exemplary or ethical human being and thereby halt war.” Fazeli interpreted Carl von Clausewitz’s theory of war within the same framework of strategy and Enlightenment anthropology and said, “Clausewitz, as one of the most consequential theorists of war, conceives war as a forceful duel between two human beings and situates it within the continuation of politics and political logic, concluding that if we resolve the quandary of political logic, then war itself becomes controllable.” Referring to the fact that “in the

17th and 18th centuries such claims were frequently propounded,” he explained that what definitively undermined Enlightenment ideas were the catastrophes and wars of the 20th century. “In the 20th century — which was the era of culminations and the maturity of the Enlightenment and reason — thinkers expected the century to be the age of peace, for the aim of the Enlightenment was that with the proliferation of knowledge, human beings would become less war-inclined. Yet the wars that occurred were such that thinkers like Isaiah Berlin and Eric Hobsbawm designated the 20th century ‘the most terrible century,’ for nearly 200 million human beings were killed.” Continuing this section of his discourse, he employed conceptual instruments to explain why such catastrophic wars transpired. He began by noting, “What is profoundly noteworthy is that the slaughter of these millions in the 20th century lacked religious or theological meaning; rather, it was

predicated on territorial ambition, language, race, and ethnicity.” He remarked that “territorial ambition, language, race, and ethnicity are all modern concepts,” and once more posed the question: “Why did the 20th century — contrary to Enlightenment expectations — unfold not as the century of ethics and peace but otherwise?” The political science professor answered, “One must seek the answer in two concepts: human instinct and the nature of the modern state.” In explaining the role of instinct and the modern state in the defeat of the Enlightenment strategy, he declared, “The Enlightenment failed in both its aims, for it possessed no precise image of human instinct and substituted a beautiful and dreamlike image for the natural reality, and in addition fabricated a new political unit with a particular political identity — the nation-state — whose intrinsic essence is internal and external war.” “Psychoanalytic and psychological research indicates that human beings desire war; yet the voluntarism

of the Enlightenment, upon which Marxism and Fascism also relied, believed that one could, contrary to this instinct, construct another world or another human being.” For this reason, Fazeli continued, “After 1945, when political thought attained greater maturity, many thinkers concentrated on the human psyche and emphasized that human beings desire war.” Noting that “besides human instinct, the second determinant of the Enlightenment strategy’s defeat — and the cause of the great wars of the 20th century — is the modern state,” he articulated the relation of the modern state to war thus, “One must first clarify that the modern state is distinct from the national state. The national state is based upon the logic of myths, language, history, and culture; thus, one may assert that the national state has a natural logic, whereas the modern nation-state is grounded in contractual logic.” He continued that, unlike the national state which is natural, “some thinkers believed that one could

construct state and nation and fabricate for them identity and history,” and affirmed: “Thus, the new state is an artificial identity annexed to an army, and the political and identity disquietude of these modern states is one of the causes of the 20th century’s wars.” He concluded: “The natural identity of national states means that these states are constituted upon two elements: the software element (historical identity) and the hardware element (geopolitics and access to water). They are ancient elements within modern forms. The fate of the Iranian national state in the Middle East is a quintessential exemplar of this analytical model. Conversely, the political units detached from Iran — such as Baku, the Kurdish region of the Middle East, Afghanistan, Armenia, Tajikistan, and other units — today suffer from both afflictions: identity disquietude and landlocked geography, and therefore their identities are intertwined with an intrinsic internal and external antagonism.”



Dr. Habibollah Fazeli (l) and Dr. Jahangir Moeini Alamdari (c), two members of the faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Tehran, take part in a panel discussion entitled “War and Peace in Contemporary Political Thought,” convened at the University of Tehran on November 15, 2025.

The illustration implies the failure of the Democratic peace theory, which posited that democratic countries will never go to war against each other.

Moeini: A critique of Clausewitz’s theory of war



The second speaker of the panel discussion, Dr. Jahangir Moeini Alamdari, another member of the political science faculty, based his discussion upon a critique of Carl von Clausewitz’s theory of war and its relation to political volition, and, invoking Clausewitz’s idea that “war is an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will,” presented alternative perspectives. Moeini said, “In contrast to Clausewitz’s theory, some thinkers maintain that war is indefinable, for instead of a single war, we confront wars; postmodernists belong to this group. The second view, belonging to idealists, holds that war intrinsically signifies a condition of the absence of law and a state devoid of rule, and therefore cannot be explained or defined.” Stating that “the third perspective philosophically diminishes the seriousness of speaking about war,” he added, “The third perspective argues that one cannot posit any substantive basis for war and that war must be regarded merely as an instrument in the service of politics, for it lacks independent logic and is defined solely by its relation to politics.” Moeini Alamdari, declaring that “I oppose all three perspectives,” offered his rationale, “I do not believe that war is so dispersed that no unity can be found for it; nor do I believe that war must be conceived upon the basis of the absence of peace; and third, I do not believe

that war is something subservient to politics or merely an instrument of the political realm.” The professor of political science, stating that “from the Peloponnesian War in Greece to the 12-day Israeli war against Iran, all wars possess specific structures,” added, “I elucidate these structures through the internal logic of war itself and demonstrate that the logic of war is not interpretable by the logic of politics.” Declaring that “my concern is not the origin of war, nor am I concerned with how war may be prevented,” he said, “My argument is that once war begins, its connection to politics is severed, and it exits the control of the political sphere and of statesmen. Therefore, one cannot, in practice, explain the logic of war using the language and logic of politics.” After these introductory statements, Moeini explained that “whatever the reason for the outbreak of war is, in all wars, nevertheless, the logic of war is singular, and moreover, the logic of war becomes entirely distinct from the logic of politics.” To explicate why the logic of war is autonomous and unrelated to politics, he invoked the theory of Au-

topoiesis in the biological sciences, which emerged in 1973. He said, “Autopoiesis elucidates how a system, independent of its environment, commences self-replication and self-production, and explains that such a system requires no external factor for its continued development.” Noting that “researchers in biology maintain that these systems — cellular and chromosomal replication — can generate ‘systems’ and require no external factor for their formation,” he articulated the nucleus of his own thesis thus, “Clausewitz’s claim that war is related to politics — that whenever a statesman wishes, he can initiate war, and whenever he wishes, he can end it — is incompatible with the autopoietic system, which is self-determining.” Moeini affirmed, “If we accept that the concept or reality of war is an autopoietic system, then, contrary to Clausewitz, the relation between politics and war dissolves.” “The further point is that these autopoietic systems persist independently of their environment or other systems, and thus, when a war begins, it cannot be readily controlled, managed, or directed by statesmen. In other words, the

‘logic of war’ determines its own conditions and transmits these conditions to the realm of politics, imposing determination upon it.” In articulating the outcome of his discourse, Moeini stated, “Thus, Clausewitz’s idea that politics and war are connected renders the comprehension of war difficult. Clausewitz, by positing a relation between politics and war, situates war upon the path of the Enlightenment, and consequently, war is interpreted through the prism of reason and unreason, or the natural and the unnatural; whereas the theory of autopoiesis asserts that the ‘order of war’ emerges from within war itself, and no order — including political order — is imposed upon it.” Offering another critique of Clausewitz’s perspective, he said, “Placing the concept of war within the duality of rationality and irrationality results in the immanent aims of war being explained through transcendent aims, and perhaps this very approach has been one cause of humanity’s failure to end war.” In other words, Moeini added, “The cause of humanity’s defeat — and specifically the Enlightenment’s defeat — in restraining war is that war has been interpreted through

a logic other than its own intrinsic logic, namely through reason, history, and analogous constructs, whereas war possesses its own internal logic and must be comprehended through that internal logic.” Stating that adopting Clausewitz as the basis for interpreting war can lead to a misapprehension of war, he affirmed, “Whereas according to the autopoietic concept, war is self-governing and cannot be explained or defined through politics.” The professor, emphasizing that “war is a ‘self-organizing’ phenomenon,” stated, “The fact that institutions of war emerge, and that these institutions operate independently of civil institutions, derives from this very self-organizing property of war, which is a momentous phenomenon.” Moeini concluded this section by stating, “Yet despite all this, one question endures with undiminished force: so long as wars continue and no end is conceivable for them, if war is an autopoietic or self-regulated system, how can one wage war while disregarding its logic?”

The article first appeared in the Persian-language Iran Newspaper.



The banner illustrates the evolution of wars through the ages.

Dr. Jahangir Moeini Alamdari offered his rationale: “I do not believe that war is so dispersed that no unity can be found for it; nor do I believe that war must be conceived upon the basis of the absence of peace; and third, I do not believe that war is something subservient to politics or merely an instrument of the political realm. My argument is that once war begins, its connection to politics is severed, and it exits the control of the political sphere and of statesmen. Therefore, one cannot, in practice, explain the logic of war using the language and logic of politics.”

Iran prepares for FIBA World Cup qualifiers in Lebanon

Sports Desk

The Iranian national basketball team, currently in Lebanon for the first FIBA World Cup qualifying window, is ready to compete after adding key legionnaires to its roster. Under the guidance of coach Sotirios Manolopoulos, the team is set to showcase its full potential, and fans are eager to see how the players will perform on the court. Due to recent developments, both of Iran's upcoming matches against Iraq in this window will take place at a neutral venue in Lebanon. However, in future windows, the Iranian "Skycrapers" are expected to host their opponents in Tehran, giving local fans the chance to cheer their team on at home, according to IRNA.

Following Iran's bronze medal finish at the FIBA Asia Cup in Saudi Arabia, the national team has strengthened further with the addition of players such as Behnam

Yakhchali, boosting the team's depth and competitiveness. The only setback at this stage is the injury to Mohammad Amini, who suffered an injury during his last training session with French club Nancy and will be sidelined for a while. Despite this, the rest of the national squad is fully fit and ready to compete, demonstrating that Iran is bringing its full strength to the World Cup qualifiers—a positive sign for the team and its supporters.

The qualifiers are organized into four groups, with Iran placed in Group C alongside Iraq, Syria, and Jordan. According to FIBA, Iran is ranked as the second-strongest team in the qualifiers, just behind Australia and ahead of China and New Zealand.

Group A features Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Guam, while Group B includes Japan, China, South Korea, and the Philippines. Group D consists of

Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, India, and Qatar.

Iran will compete in Lebanon with a lineup that includes Arsalan Kazemi, Arman Zangeneh, Navid Rezaeifar, Mohammad Sina Vaehdi, Mobin Sheikhi, Matin Aghajani, Mehdi Jafari, Jalal Aghamiri, Mohammad Mehdi Heydari, Hassan Aliakbari, Amirhossein Azari, Behnam Yakhchali, Salar Monji, and Piter Girgoorian, all under the leadership of coach Manolopoulos. The team's goal is to secure a victory against Iraq, building on a favorable historical record in which Iran has won two of the last three encounters between the two sides. FIBA has scheduled the first match between Iran and Iraq for today (November 27), with the return match set for November 30, both to be held in Beirut. The Iranian team aims to demonstrate its strength and cohesion on the international stage, laying a strong foundation for future qualifying windows.



IRNA

Sepahan defeat Al-Hussein to claim top spot in Group C

Sports Desk

Sepahan earned an important 2-0 victory over Jordan's Al-Hussein on Tuesday night, keeping their hopes of advancing as Group C leaders firmly alive.

In a first half dominated by Sepahan, the Iranian side launched repeated attacks on Al Hussein's goal, but their efforts failed to break the deadlock. The half's most controversial moment came when Sepahan appealed for a penalty following a challenge inside the area, but the referee judged the foul to have occurred outside the box, keeping the score 0-0 at halftime, IRNA wrote. With statistics clearly in their favor, Sepahan entered the second half de-

termined to convert their superiority into goals. Backed by their supporters — despite a lower-than-expected turnout — the Isfahan side finally broke through in the 73rd minute when Aria Yousefi's powerful strike found the back of the net past goalkeeper Mahmoud Al Kawamleh.

Al Hussein responded by pushing the game into Sepahan's half in search of an equalizer. However, deep into stoppage time, Sepahan extended their lead through Mohammad Askari, securing a decisive 2-0 triumph.

With this win, Sepahan reached seven points, overtaking Al Hussein at the top of Group C. The group leadership will ultimately depend on Al Hussein's fi-

nal match against Ahal; failure to secure the required result would send Sepahan into the AFC knockout stage as group winners.

The right-back of Sepahan Yousefi, who came on in the second half, showed an attacking mindset and had a direct impact on his team's victory, earning him the title of the best player of the match.

Sepahan head coach Moharram Navidkia expressed both satisfaction and emotion after the match. "I want to sincerely thank the fans who were able to attend today. They supported us with all they had."

"They were truly an excellent team, with a high standard of play worthy of Asia. Their style was attractive, and it was a match where fans could feel a goal com-

ing at any moment." He added, "Fortunately, we took our chances in the second half and secured the result. It was a good performance, and I hope we continue this form in our next match."

Al-Hussein head coach Joaquim Machado attributed his team's loss to avoidable errors.

"We made individual mistakes that cost us the match," he said. "It was a difficult game against a big team. Sepahan were better in the first half, but we also had chances and failed to convert them."

Machado continued, "Our mistakes hurt us, but I believe a draw would have been a fair result. We still have one more match, and our goal remains to finish top of the group."

Iran drawn into Pot 2 for 2026 World Cup group stage

Sports Desk

The teams participating in the FIFA World Cup have been placed into one of four seeded pots as they await the announcement of their opponents for the group stage. This tournament is set to be jointly hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico. With just 10 days remaining until the draw ceremony for the 2026 World Cup, FIFA has officially announced the seeding arrangement. Based on this, the Iranian national football team has been placed in the second pot (Pot 2) for the competition, according to IRNA.

Pot 1 includes teams such as Canada, Mexico, the United States, Spain, Argentina, France, England, Brazil, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. The second pot consists of Croatia, Morocco, Colombia, Uruguay, Swit-

zerland, Japan, Senegal, Iran, South Korea, Ecuador, Austria, and Australia.

Pot 3 comprises Norway, Panama, Egypt, Algeria, Scotland, Paraguay, Tunisia, Ivory Coast, Uzbekistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. Pot 4 contains teams like Jordan, Cape Verde, Ghana, Curaçao, Haiti, New Zealand, plus six playoff qualifier teams from the World Cup qualification rounds.

On December 6, FIFA will unveil the updated match schedule, detailing stadium assignments and kickoff times for each game. Organizers assure an optimized timetable to provide ideal conditions for teams and convenient viewing times for global fans.



Dorostkar proud of wrestling team's medal tally

Sports Desk

Pejman Dorostkar, head coach of Iran's national freestyle wrestling team, spoke about his team's performance after three challenging tournaments, the most recent being the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh.

He highlighted the difficulties faced due to the intense 2025 World Wrestling Championships, which left wrestlers fatigued, and the short interval between the two events created challenges in training intensity and weight management, according to varzesh3.com. "The Islamic Solidarity Games were a competitive event in which the Iranian wrestling team participated with full force to support the country's sports delegation. Our main goal was to improve Iran's ranking in the overall team standings."

Dorostkar emphasized that the competition was held at a very high level. He said, "Given that these Games were also important for other countries, they came with their full strength. Almost all the world and Olympic titleholders from the Islamic countries participated in this event, which made the competition even fiercer and more challenging than usual." He noted that wrestling, a premier and national sport in Iran, delivered with 12 medals in 12 weight categories, including 8 gold medals, helping Iran secure the third place in the overall team standings.

The coach praised standout performances by Younes Emami, who made a strong comeback, Rahman Amouzad and Amirhossein Zare, who continued their winning streaks by defeating notable champions. Amirali Azarpira also showed his



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true potential beyond the medals he has won over two years, while Ali Momeni earned a bronze medal. Regarding Kamran Qasempour, Dorostkar explained that athletes' physical conditions vary due to age and genetics. Qasempour had to cut weight twice in a short period, which made him somewhat vulnerable despite not losing exces-

sive weight. He also experienced a previous lymph node issue initially suspected to be brucellosis but later diagnosed as a dental problem requiring surgery. Though he suffered a shoulder injury during a wrestling exchange, Dorostkar is confident that Qasempour will recover fully and return to the mats with strength.

Evaz leads new wave of literary tourism

Iranica Desk

In the heart of a dry yet intellectually and socially rich region, the city of Evaz in southern Fars Province has earned the title of “Book Capital of Iran,” attracting nationwide cultural attention. The distinction, officially marked during the opening ceremony of the 33rd Iran Book Week, marks a new chapter in the city’s cultural development and literary tourism.

Evaz, with its long-standing history in culture, commerce, and charitable initiatives, now stands at the forefront of Iran’s cultural spotlight. The city not only boasts deep-rooted cultural traditions but also benefits from remarkable public participation, earning it the prestigious title of Iran’s Book Capital. Its selection in May and the hosting of the Book Week opening ceremony represent a milestone in Evaz’s journey toward becoming a national destination for cultural tourism, [chtn.ir](#) wrote.

The city’s recognition did not happen by chance. For years, Evaz has leveraged a unique model of community engagement and locally driven cultural management to establish a prominent place on Iran’s cultural map.

Hossein Ali Amiri, governor of Fars Province, described Evaz as a “symbol of knowledge, scholarship, and love for learning.” Historically, the city has been known for its religious schools, active libraries, and the presence of prominent scholars and intellectuals, establishing a



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deeply rooted culture of written knowledge.

According to Seyyed Abbas Salehi, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Evaz serves as “a national model of social participation in culture.” The city’s longstanding tradition of philanthropy extends beyond schools and hospitals to include supporting libraries, cultural projects, and social investment in literacy initiatives.

High-traffic libraries, active literary associations, and the engagement of younger generations in cultural activities created an environment in which Evaz naturally earned its place in the competition for Iran’s

Book Capital.

The title now acts as a powerful driver for cultural tourism in the city. While tourism in Fars Province has traditionally centered on Shiraz and its historic landmarks, Evaz is emerging as a cultural brand: an authentic, people-centered, and book-oriented destination in southern Fars.

This recognition has drawn the attention of national and provincial authorities to developing tourism infrastructure in Evaz. Key initiatives include:

- Developing literary-themed eco-lodges in historic homes
- Promoting handicrafts and cultural products inspired by

the region’s literary heritage

- Designing literary-historical tourism routes, including visits to libraries, cultural centers, and landmark institutions
- Attracting specialized, high-quality tourists

Evaz today attracts cultural tourists, writers, poets, researchers, and book enthusiasts. These visitors travel with clear objectives, stay longer, and contribute significantly to the local economy.

The title has also fostered a sense of social pride and belonging among Evaz residents, providing an opportunity to showcase the city’s lesser-known capacities on a

national stage.

Evaz not only holds cultural significance but also possesses notable social and architectural potential. Its history, vernacular architecture, local traditions, and lifestyle provide a strong foundation for literary and cultural experiences. Initiatives such as establishing an anthropology museum, launching book cafés, and revitalizing historic houses for cultural use can deepen this connection.

High civic engagement — including an 83.4% voter turnout in the presidential election — reflects Evaz’s socially and culturally active community. This social capital offers a strong

foundation for developing cultural tourism. Moreover, Evaz’s large and influential diaspora in the Persian Gulf countries presents a strategic opportunity to boost inbound tourism and strengthen regional cultural diplomacy.

Despite this golden opportunity, Evaz still faces challenges in reaching its full potential. Since becoming a county in 2019, several key offices have yet to be fully established, creating difficulties for tourists, investors, and residents. Local authorities also cite gaps in water supply, the need for dual-lane roads, and the establishment of fully equipped healthcare centers — all crucial for sustainable tourism development.

Being named Iran’s Book Capital is not a ceremonial accolade for Evaz; it is a cultural and economic investment that can drive sustainable regional development. The title provides a platform for Evaz to showcase its rich cultural heritage, hospitality, and tourism potential to the nation and the world.

If infrastructural challenges are addressed through national and local cooperation, Evaz could serve as a model for small cities in Iran, demonstrating how culture can become the axis of urban development.

For Evaz, the Book Capital designation is not a temporary title but a new identity — one that should be reinforced through lasting cultural experiences for tourists. A new era in the story of Evaz and its literary heritage has now begun.

Saveh to host Fourth National Pomegranate Festival

Iranica Desk

The head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Saveh, Markazi Province, announced that the Fourth National Festival of Saveh Pomegranate will be held in the city.

Reza Ayaz stated that the festival will take place from November 27 to December 6, 2025, in the historic complex of the Jaame Mosque of Saveh. This major cultural event, held this year under the theme “Festival of Iranian Ethnic Groups,” offers a unique opportunity to showcase the excellence of Saveh’s pomegranates while presenting the rich cultural diversity and traditions of Iran to the public and visiting tourists, [chtn.ir](#) wrote.

Saveh’s pomegranates are renowned across Iran for their exceptional quality, long shelf life, and rich flavor profile. The region’s favorable climate, fertile soil, and centuries-old agricultural practices have made Saveh one of the country’s most important centers for pomegranate cultivation. Many varieties

grown in the area are highly prized for their deep color, balanced sweetness and acidity, and their suitability for both fresh consumption and industrial processing. These qualities have helped establish Saveh as a leading supplier of pomegranates to domestic and international markets.

Highlighting Saveh’s significant capacity in pomegranate production, Ayaz added that the festival not only serves as an economic platform for promoting local pomegranate-based products and handicrafts, but also creates an important cultural gathering. By bringing together various Iranian ethnic groups and their vibrant traditions, the event aims to strengthen national unity and introduce the historical and cultural attractions of Saveh.

He concluded by noting that Saveh — recognized as the pomegranate capital of Iran — seeks once again, through this major cultural, agricultural, and economic event, to reaffirm its status as one of the country’s leading pomegranate-producing centers as well as a cultural and tourism hub.



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Experts urge protection for Javin’s ancient hand-carved architecture



Iranica Desk

Javin village, located in Semnan Province, not only has the capacity for national heritage registration but also holds potential for recognition on a global scale.

A cultural heritage enthusiast, Hossein Tarhomi, highlighted the village’s unique hand-carved structures in an interview with ISNA. He noted, “Unfortunately, little attention has been paid so far to the architecture of Javin and several other villages in the region, including Abdollahabad.”

A member of the Scientific Committee of Master Craftsmen and Ancient Technologies of ICOMOS-Iran, he added that last year a report was prepared and published on the region’s distinctive hand-carved architecture, particularly in the villages of Javin, Ij and Abdollahabad.

“Around 10 to 12 years ago, Iran’s Cultural Heritage Organization conducted research on Javin, which led to the national registration of the village’s hand-

carved castle,” he said.

He explained that Javin features terraced architecture, with some houses containing hand-carved sections that have received little attention. “In previous studies of this historic village, several structures, including its bathhouse, were overlooked,” he noted.

According to him, Javin is a unique village in Semnan Province with structures such as a Seljuk or Ilkhanid mihrab and a hand-carved castle that have not yet been nationally registered.

Tarhomi emphasized the need for national registration of the village, warning: “The lack of official recognition has made it difficult to protect the village’s ancient architecture, as construction in the village is often carried out without consideration for the heritage value of its buildings, which damages the authenticity of the architecture.”

He further stressed that both the village fabric and its historic bathhouse should be registered, adding that raising awareness and educating the local community could help better preserve the village.



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He also mentioned that Abdollahabad village has a hand-carved castle and houses with similar architecture. Likewise, Ij village contains hand-carved structures both within the village and in surrounding areas.

Highlighting that Javin is a living village with ongoing daily life, he expressed concern about the threat to some structures in these villages. “The construction of concrete and metal structures within the traditional village fabric and the operation of a nearby mine pose threats to the historical heritage. In contrast, Abdollahabad has a limited population and almost no new construction,” he explained.

Javin village is located 42 kilometers from Sorkheh, in the central district of the province. Among its registered historical sites are a historic castle, a Seljuk mihrab, and a wooden pulpit of Imamzadeh Abdollah. The mountainous village sits along the Javin River and on the southern slope of the Mian-Tigh Mountain, at the southern edge of the Alborz Mountain.



Iranian museums gain global recognition through education, innovation, and cultural diplomacy



By Hamideh Hosseini
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

At a time when museums are increasingly recognized as cultural ambassadors and bridges between nations, the election of Golnaz Golsabahi as the first Iranian woman Vice President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) marks a significant milestone for Iran on the global stage.

Golsabahi, who begins her third consecutive term on the ICOM Executive Board, was elected alongside Nasir Al Darmaki of ICOM UAE during the 27th ICOM General Conference, held from November 12–14 2025 at the Dubai World Trade Centre. Their appointments reflect the organization's commitment to balanced global representation and strengthened leadership across its network, which now spans 16 countries and includes a Treasurer, twelve Ordinary Members, and the leadership of the Advisory Council.

This position not only highlights Golsabahi's professional expertise and extensive experience in museology but also presents a unique opportunity to showcase Iran's rich cultural and historical heritage worldwide. In this exclusive interview with Iran Daily, she discusses her career path, the challenges and achievements of Iranian museums, the role of education and modern technologies in advancing museums, and the potential for cultural diplomacy and tourism.

IRAN DAILY: You are the first Iranian woman elected as Vice President of ICOM. What responsibilities does this role entail for you?

GOLNAZ GOLSABAHI: It involves engaging with the global museum community, including museum professionals worldwide who are connected

to ICOM through national and international committees and other museum institutions, and representing approximately sixty thousand ICOM members around the globe. My responsibilities also encompass overseeing governance, strategic planning, and institutional decision-making in a specialized, non-profit organization that is continually expanding each year. This role supports the President of the International Council of Museums while ensuring the benefits and interests of its members worldwide are met.

What motivated you to join ICOM 23 years ago, and what has kept you active ever since?

My motivation stemmed from a passion for continuous learning and the desire to participate in the most specialized global community of museum professionals. I sought a deeper understand-



Iran's newly elected Vice President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Golnaz Golsabahi (2nd R) and other participants pose for a group photo during the 27th ICOM General Conference in Dubai, the UAE, on November 14, 2025.

● IRAN DAILY

ing of the museum field through ICOM, to connect with colleagues who shared similar professional interests, and to collaborate with them. The opportunity to receive ongoing training, access up-to-date specialized research and resources, and gain practical experience, all of which ICOM provides, has been instrumental in sustaining my membership over the years.

Which qualities or experiences in your professional journey do you believe helped you attain this international position?

Hard work, persistence, continuous study paired with practical experience, commitment, and discipline in international teamwork; respect for multicultural work environments and mutual understanding with colleagues; and a consistent effort to advance museums and museology through engagement with ICOM. These factors helped build trust, establish strong professional relationships, and ultimately secure the votes necessary for this position.

You mentioned that Iranian museums have suffered from "inactivity" for years. What are your short- and long-term priorities to change this situation?

The inactivity of some Iranian museums stems from multiple causes, including broader national conditions and the structural dependence of certain museums or

museum institutions on the government. Nevertheless, many dedicated professionals, even in small regional museums far from the capital, work sincerely to enhance their collections, promote public knowledge, and preserve the country's heritage, and some have already achieved notable success.

Changing the inertia in museums' operations, given today's administrative structures, goes beyond my personal priorities. It requires coordinated, collective efforts from responsible institutions, many of which are governmental, as well as genuine commitment from museum organizations themselves. My role can be to raise awareness and provide educational guidance, or, at best, engage in intellectual and strategic collaboration with relevant governmental institutions. However, I firmly believe that continuous training and planning, both academic and hands-on, are essential to elevate professional museology in Iran. Such efforts could gradually help museums regain public engagement and foster interaction among themselves, or even on a global scale.

Considering that museums are 'cultural ambassadors,' what strategies do you plan to restore their educational and cultural diplomacy roles?

To restore the educational role of museums, it is crucial to enrich

museum staff, their experts and specialists, with knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm. Continuous professional development for these individuals, who are the backbone of museums, and enhancing their capabilities using the latest methods is essential. Naturally, this overview does not delve into specific methods or implementation strategies, but one cannot expect museums to educate the public effectively if they have not invested in training their staff first.

Regarding cultural diplomacy, we observe how various countries, near and far, leverage this to redefine their global position. Achieving this requires more than just a fine phrase; it demands substantial work, responsibility, planning, commitment, comprehensive support from higher authorities, vision, ambition, and a will focused on influence and progress. Only then can museums truly serve as effective cultural diplomats.

You have a program for hands-on museology training at the Bank Melli Iran Museum. Can you provide more details about this program and its impact on Iranian museum professionals?

As the title suggests, this program is designed for museum professionals to gain experiential, practical knowledge in a simulated educational environment. Participants will engage with specific subjects

through hands-on exercises, rebuild models, and practice skills, thereby enhancing both their knowledge and practical competencies.

How can ICOM's role in international museum interactions strengthen cultural tourism in Iran?

ICOM facilitates professional standards, capacity building, training, networking among museum specialists, and raising awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage. By improving museums and museology, ICOM provides a facilitative framework. Museums and institutions that leverage these resources can strengthen their operations, which in turn enhances their success in tourism interactions. A stronger museum naturally contributes to sustainable tourism, creating a virtuous cycle.

Considering collaborations with China and other countries, what opportunities exist to enhance cultural diplomacy and attract tourists?

Iran has abundant opportunities to strengthen cultural diplomacy. These opportunities can impress visiting tourists, investors, and policymakers in other countries. However, at present, these are primarily strengths rather than fully realized opportunities. Many foreign partners already un-

derstand our strengths and have capitalized on them as investment and cultural revenue opportunities. Therefore, interactions must be reciprocal: Prioritizing the benefits for Iran and its museums is essential, promoting inter-museum cooperation, boosting tourism, and enhancing institutional capacities and skills. Only then do our strengths convert into tangible development opportunities rather than remaining one-sided advantages for foreign partners.

How can ICOM's strategic programs through 2028 help Iranian museums achieve global online presence?

The question of "online presence" needs clarification. ICOM's Strategic Plan 2022–2028 is a visionary document outlining goals and pathways for the global council and its members. It considers global changes and professional and organizational necessities, guiding members and institutions in their governance, interactions, and museology practice.

If Iranian museums, governing bodies, and museum professionals recognize ICOM as one of the largest and most influential professional museum organizations in the world, they cannot ignore its policies. Participation in this global professional community is inevitable. Engaging actively ensures that Iran's museums can influence the international museology landscape and strengthen their professional impact.

With rapid social and technological changes, including AI, how do you see the future of museology in Iran and globally?

The field is undergoing profound transformation. Naturally, these changes may occur more rapidly in some countries and more gradually in others.

Do you have plans to integrate new technologies in Iranian museums, and what impact might this have on audience engagement?

Adopting modern technologies can fundamentally transform how audiences interact with museums, significantly attracting more visitors, especially younger generations.

In your view, how can Iranian museums draw inspiration from international institutions to foster innovation and scientific collaboration?

Iranian museums inherently possess great potential across multiple domains. We have knowledgeable and eager audiences, unique historical legacies, exceptional collections in diverse heritage fields, varied climates, and diverse cultures with unique material and immaterial heritage. While these strengths sometimes make us less dependent on external models, all values require recognition, preservation, development, support, and presentation. I believe studying successful international practices can provide inspiration and guidance.



Bank Melli Iran Museum
● ILNA



Glassware and Ceramic Museum of Iran
● ILNA