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The US fundamentally shifts its approach toward Iran

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rated after the 12-day conflict.



Rumors that Iran had conveyed a message to the United States via Saudi Arabia continued to circulate in the media over the past week despite repeated denials from Iranian officials, until Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei personally dismissed the claim. In his Thursday address, Ayatollah Khamenei branded the allegation an "outright lie," stressing that the United States, given its warmongering posture, was unworthy of forging relations or cooperation with a country like Iran. Iranian officials, however, have consistently maintained that the diplomatic window with the US remains open, provided Washington steps back from dictation and agrees to fair negotiations. The Leader also referenced the Israeli war against Iran in June, describing its consequences for the United States as a major setback. Emad Abshenas, a Middle East affairs analyst, told Iran Daily that Washington has "missed the chance" it previously had to clinch certain understandings with Tehran, opportunities that, he argued, evaporated after the 12-day conflict.

IRAN DAILY: What message does the Leader's rejection of claims about sending a message to the US through a third country convey to global powers?

ABSHENAS: Following President Pezeshkian's letter to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, sent before the latter's trip to Washington, speculation quickly began to swirl that MBS might step in as a mediator and that the letter was effectively meant for Trump. Some Western outlets, including Reuters, actively ran with that narrative.

But the letter was strictly about Hajj pilgrimage. Saudi Arabia may well have offered to mediate and Tehran always welcomes such mediation efforts, but the notion that a message was delivered to the United States is inaccurate.

This categorical denial signals to the world that as long as Washington refuses to revise its positions and continues to dig in its heels over illegitimate demands, there is no logical basis for Iran to engage with the US. Historical record shows that America is unreliable, regardless of which administration is in power. Trump, in particular, is unpredictable and cannot be counted on. Under such conditions, meaningful engagement is not feasible, unless the United States fundamentally changes course in its approach toward Iran.

Ayatollah Khamenei said the US was not worthy of having relations with the Islamic Republic. How could this stance shape any potential future negotiations between Iran and the West?

Relations between states must be grounded in mutual respect. If one country insists on acting from a position of superiority, then nations that value their sovereignty simply won't accept that dynamic. The major issue with the US and Western powers more broadly is that they continue to view some countries in our region through a colonial lens, expecting them to obey and hand over their resources.

Whenever a nation tries to assert independence, Washington uses every possible tool to lean on it so others do not follow suit. The case of [former Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad] Mossadegh is illustrative. When Iran nationalized its oil under Mossadegh in 1951, the US and Britain imposed sanctions, undermined the government, and ultimately orchestrated its overthrow, all because they feared Iran would become a model for others.

In such circumstances, having relations with a country holding that mindset is not logical. When, and only when, the US accepts that Iran is not one of the states it can dominate, then friendly and even warm relations may become possible.

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Leader debunks rumors of message to US as 'sheer lies'

Washington 'suffered losses, failed to achieve any goals' in 12-day war



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei delivers a televised address to the nation on November 28, 2025.
● khamenei.ir

International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei dismissed on Thursday rumors that Tehran had sent messages to Washington for what is claimed in the media to be aimed at the

revival of long-stalled nuclear talks. Rejecting the rumors as "sheer lies," the Leader said in a televised speech that the administration of US President Donald Trump was "not worthy" of contact or cooperation with the Islamic Republic. "Such a government (the United States) is not

worthy of being approached or cooperated with by a government like the Islamic Republic," Ayatollah Khamenei said. "This is sheer lies, and such a thing certainly did not exist."

He touched on "US betrayal of even its friends in favor of the Zionist and criminal clique and efforts to incite wars worldwide for oil and underground resources, including in Latin America."

"Such a government is certainly not a government that the Islamic Republic seeks to cooperate or maintain relations with," he said.

Since late August, Washington has sent warships, surveillance aircraft, and special-operations units to the southern Caribbean, threatening Venezuela with an increased military invasion.

The Leader also stressed that the United States suffered severe losses and could not achieve its goal during the 12-day aggression against the Islamic Republic in June despite deploying its most advanced military equipment.

"The United States was severely damaged in the war, despite using the latest offensive and defensive weapons, it could not achieve its goal of deceiving the nation and winning their support. Instead, the

unity of the people increased, and the United States was also thwarted," he said in the televised speech.

"Of course, we also suffered losses, and, as is the nature of war, precious lives were lost. But the Islamic Republic demonstrated that it is a center of will and power, able to stand strong and make decisions without fear of the noise around it. Moreover, the material damage inflicted on the invading enemy was far greater than the material losses we suffered," he added.

The Leader said that according to some accounts, the Israeli regime had planned and prepared for the war for 20 years, in which they hoped to provoke the people and force them to fight against the system. On June 13, Israel launched an unprovoked war against Iran, assassinating many high-ranking military commanders, nuclear scientists, and ordinary civilians. More than a week later, the US also entered the war by bombing three Iranian nuclear sites in a grave violation of the United Nations Charter, international law, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In response, the Iranian Armed Forces targeted strategic sites across the occupied territories as well as the Al-Udeid

air base in Qatar, the largest American military base in West Asia, forcing the US and Israel to propose a ceasefire.

Ayatollah Khamenei cited US interventions in different parts of the world as a factor behind its increasing isolation in the world, saying that US interference in any region causes war, genocide, destruction, and displacement.

President thanks Leader's supportive message

The Leader, recommending support for the president and his administration, stated that running the country is difficult and demanding.

He said the current administration has already begun implementing positive measures, including continuing unfinished projects initiated by late president Ebrahim Raeisi, and expressed hope that the people would soon see the results.

In response, President Masoud Pezeshkian in a message on X thanked the Leader for his support for the government.

"I am grateful for the support and backing of the Supreme Leader. The government, relying on the support of the great Iranian nation and the efforts of all institutions, is seriously pursuing the path of progress."

Iran condemns Australia's listing of IRGC as 'sponsor of terrorism'

Designation a 'dangerous precedent' designed under Israeli influence

Iran condemned the Australian government's decision to designate the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a "state sponsor of terrorism", as relations between Canberra and Tehran took another downward turn.

"The political move by the Australian government is a dangerous and criminal precedent, designed under the influence of the Zionist regime [of Israel] to divert public attention from the genocide in Gaza," Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Thursday, according to IRNA.

"It amounts to collaboration by the initiators of this action with the criminals who are under investigation by the International Criminal Court," it added. The Australian government listed the IRGC on Thursday over accusations that the Guards had orchestrated attacks against Australia's Jewish community. The Iranian Foreign Ministry rejected the move as

"an illegal, unjustifiable act, and a violation of international legal rules and norms" in respect of the national sovereignty of states.

The ministry expressed "disgust at the adherence of certain Australian politicians to the evil policy of the genocidal Israeli regime in spreading lies against Iran", and underscored the Australian government's international responsibility for the designation.

"This irresponsible action is a continuation of the grave mistake the Australian government committed on the basis of completely unfounded accusations fabricated by the intelligence agencies of the Zionist regime, and it has placed the longstanding Iran-Australia diplomatic relationship at the service of granting concessions to the occupying Zionist regime," it said.

The ministry was referring to Australia's expulsion of the Iranian ambassador



Iran's Foreign Ministry
● IRNA

in Canberra in August, following allegations of Iran's involvement in two anti-Semitic attacks in the country. "This comes as Australian authorities, including New South Wales Police, explicitly acknowledged on October 25, 2025, that the allegation of Iran's involvement in actions against Jewish targets was fabricated, saying there is no evidence of Iranian interference in the alleged anti-Jewish incidents in Australia," the ministry said. The ministry reiterated

"the exalted, empowering, and honorable status" of the IRGC as part of the official armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which had played an "unparalleled role" in defending Iran's sovereignty and national security against foreign aggression and combating terrorism, including Daesh.

It added that Tehran would take "all necessary measures" to safeguard the reputation of its armed forces against hostile designations.

Araghchi: West Asia cannot endure more conflicts over Israel's onslaught

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned that West Asia "cannot withstand further tensions and conflicts" as the Israeli regime continues its aggression on regional countries.

His warning in an interview with the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) on Thursday came as Israel's war minister, Israel Katz, said that Tel Aviv is prepared to launch a new war on Lebanon.

"What is important is that the region cannot withstand further tensions and conflicts, and the main factor behind these tensions and conflicts is the Zionist regime, which has unfortunately been given an unacceptable immunity by the United States and Western countries, allowing it to do whatever it wants and for them to prevent any action against the Zionist regime in international forums," Araghchi said.

Israeli regime has intensified its attacks on Lebanon in recent months despite a ceasefire reached between the regime and Lebanon's resistance group Hezbollah in November 2024.

Since then, the regime has carried out almost 700 airstrikes on Lebanon at a rate of two attacks per day, an Israeli security institute said on Thursday.

The ceasefire was reached after more than a year of attacks against the backdrop of the Gaza war. Over 4,000 people were killed, and 17,000 others were injured in the attacks. Under the ceasefire, the Israeli army was supposed to withdraw from southern



Abbas Araghchi
● AFP

Lebanon this January, but instead only partially pulled out and continues to maintain a military presence at five border outposts. In the report, the Alma Research and Education Center found that 699 airstrikes were launched by the Israeli army across Lebanon over the past year on the pretext of targeting Hezbollah infrastructure.

On Sunday, an Israeli airstrike in Beirut killed the senior Hezbollah commander Haitham Ali Tabatabai.

Since the beginning of Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip in 2023, the regime has also targeted several regional countries including Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Iran.

In the latest attacks, 13 people were killed and 25 others wounded in an Israeli raid in southern Syria on Friday, Syrian state media reported, with Damascus accusing Israel of a "criminal attack" in a village where Israel claimed its troops came under fire during an operation to arrest militants.

The Israeli military said six soldiers were wounded, three of them severely, by militant fire during the raid in the village of Beit Jinn.

Iran ready to retaliate hostile acts with 'more severe' response: Minister

National Desk

Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh said Iran is ready to retaliate any hostile acts with a "firmer and more severe" response than before.

General Nasirzadeh said Iran's Armed Forces were operating with full strategic confidence, real-time monitoring, and superior battlefield awareness.

"Threats are tracked meticulously and without pause," he stated, adding that the core priority was not merely surveillance, but the sustained combat readiness of the country's defense forces.



Aziz Nasirzadeh
● ISNA

"Today, with full strength and complete intelligence dominance, Iran stands ready to answer any threat decisively, immediately, and far more intensely than in the past," the official noted. He said that Iran stands at its highest

level of defensive readiness yet, affirming that any hostile act will be met with a response "firmer and more severe than ever before."

The minister referenced Iran's measured but formidable demonstration of strength during the 12-day war that was imposed by the Israeli regime and the United States on the country in June, noting that the operation revealed only "a fraction" of the nation's true defensive prowess.

"We showcased part of our capability, but not the full spectrum of Iran's defense capacity," he said, emphasizing that greater deterrent strength remained strategically reserved.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



FM says ECO could become one of most dynamic blocs in Global South

Economy Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Friday said the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) region could become "one of the most dynamic emerging areas in the Global South" if member states fully use their collective potential. Speaking during the 29th ECO Council of Ministers meeting held virtually, Araghchi outlined a forward-looking vision for fostering cooperation among the organization's members, IRNA reported.

"Recent summits have shown that the political will to reinforce ECO exists at the highest level of member states," he said, adding that the Council of Ministers — as ECO's highest decision-making body — "must

continuously strengthen this valuable will and reproduce this momentum."

The Iranian minister called for "paradigmatic changes and structural redesign" in the regional bloc.

"To formulate a new vision, we cannot continue along the same old frameworks and pathways and ignore major global and regional developments and challenges," he added.

Araghchi said the 10-member bloc — comprising Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan — must move beyond past approaches to realize its full potential.

"Our countries must become more resilient, more integrated, and stronger in the face of

future risks and shocks," he said, underscoring that ECO "remains the best existing platform for the collective development and progress of its members."

The minister urged the ECO Vision Committee to develop "a more appropriate, efficient, and implementable document for the next 10 years," adding that any future strategy "must make our region more physically and technologically interconnected." The call for renewal comes after the 28th ECO Council of Ministers convened on December 3, 2024, in Mashhad, Iran, where foreign and deputy foreign ministers from all member states gathered in person — a meeting that set the stage for the current push toward institutional reform.



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi addresses the 29th ECO Council of Ministers meeting held virtually on November 28, 2025.
● SCREENGAB

Tehran, Moscow pledge deeper agro ties, eye joint food hub



Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah (2nd L) at the head of a delegation meets his Russian counterpart, Oksana Lut (3rd R), in Moscow, on November 27, 2025.
● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah and his Russian counterpart, Oksana Lut, agreed to expand Tehran-Moscow agricultural cooperation during their talks in the Russian capital on Thursday, pledging closer collaboration on trade, veterinary standards, and joint research.

The meeting centered on implementing the comprehensive strategic partnership treaty signed by the two countries' presidents at the Kremlin in January 2025.

"Agriculture is a key pillar of Iran-Russia trade — already accounting for two-thirds of our current exchanges," Nouri-Qezeljah said, adding that Tehran is prioritizing Russian agricultural products to meet domestic demand. "We are

fully prepared to supply Russia with high-quality agricultural goods and welcome Russian companies to invest in Iran's emerging food-processing and export infrastructure."

Strategic role in Moscow's agricultural agenda

Meanwhile, Lut emphasized Iran's strategic role in Moscow's agricultural agenda. "Iran is a major and important partner for Russia in agriculture," she said, noting that bilateral agricultural trade rose by 20% in the first nine months of 2025. "This year, we have resumed exports of mineral fertilizers to Iran — a significant step forward."

The ministers agreed to establish joint mechanisms for veterinary and phytosanitary quarantine cooperation to eliminate

trade barriers and pledged enhanced collaboration in technical fields, agricultural research, and farmer training. Plans were also finalized to launch joint agricultural research stations. Discussions extended to wheat and animal feed exchanges, veterinary vaccine production, plant breeding, and the deployment of advanced agricultural technologies. Both sides also explored avenues for cooperation within multi-lateral frameworks, including BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. On Wednesday, Nouri-Qezeljah met with executives of major Russian agricultural holdings to discuss grain swaps and feed imports, and separately conferred with Kazakhstan's agriculture minister on bilateral ties.

Russian firms invited to join Iran's food hub initiative

In a separate gathering

at the Iranian Embassy in Moscow, the Iranian minister invited Russian agribusiness leaders to participate in Tehran's plan to become a regional food-processing and export hub. He highlighted Iran's semi-idle grain-processing, oil-extraction, and animal feed facilities — now targeted for reactivation under the government's new policy aimed at maximizing their capacity.

"Given regional and African demand for grains and their derivatives, Iran's processing capabilities offer a strategic opportunity: importing more grain from Russia and re-exporting value-added products," Nouri-Qezeljah said. He confirmed that Tehran has issued necessary permits to scale up agricultural trade and encouraged Russian firms to join Iranian-led production and transit initiatives. Russian executives welcomed the proposal, citing Iran's geographic advantage along the North-South and East-West transport corridors as a key incentive for deeper collaboration.

Ardabil unveils 304 investment opportunities, launches 12 economic projects

Economy Desk

The first International Investment Conference of Ardabil Province opened on Thursday with the unveiling of 304 investment opportunities, as Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni inaugurated 12 new economic projects in the northwestern Iranian province.

The two-day conference, attended by Momeni, local businesspeople, commercial attachés, and ambassadors from several countries, aims to create a platform for domestic and foreign investment in Ardabil and foster multi-lateral economic partnerships, IRNA reported.

Delegations from Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Turkmenistan, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Kazakhstan, and Dagestan are participating in the event, according to Tasnim news agency.

During a ceremony at the newly-launched Ardabil Steel Complex, where the 12 projects simultaneously came online, Momeni said that 56 investment plans had reached the contracting stage during the international conference and \$50 million in currency-based memoranda of



Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni addresses a ceremony to inaugurate a series of projects in Ardabil, northwestern Iran on November 27, 2025.
● IRNA

understanding had been signed.

"We hope to soon receive reports on the implementation of these MOUs and contracts related to the identified investment opportunities," Momeni said.

The 12 newly operational economic projects are expected to directly create 400 jobs and include the Ardabil Steel Complex, the province's first agricultural park—centered on the Moghan Agro-Industrial Company—and the commencement of construction on Ardabil's Science and Technology Park.

Momeni praised Ardabil's potential, calling it a leading province in trade, investment, and tourism. "Ardabil could become a national hub in all

these areas," he said, citing strong coordination among provincial officials and the determination of local entrepreneurs as key drivers.

He also highlighted upcoming infrastructure developments, noting that completion of the Ardabil-Mianeh railway line in the coming months and its connection to Iran's national rail network would significantly boost exports from Ardabil to other provinces and neighboring countries.

"The completion of the Ardabil-Mianeh railway and its linkage to the national rail system is a major development that can facilitate exports and bring transformative change to the province," Momeni added.

The US fundamentally ...

Negotiations can take place only when both sides are prepared to work toward a mutually acceptable, win-win outcome, not when one party tries to impose or dictate terms.

This does not mean the door to diplomacy is closed. As Iranian officials, from Ali Larijani, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, have repeatedly stated, talks are always possible. But Washington's insistence on dictation is simply unacceptable.

The Leader said the US suffered a major loss during the war in June. From Iran's perspective, what does that loss represent?

Before the 12-day war, Washington still had an opportunity to reach an agreement with Iran. A deal

in the sixth round of talks was considered within reach, something that would have greatly benefited the United States. But the US chose to enter a war with Iran and lost.

Before the conflict, many anticipated that Iran would fail to stand its ground or that the Establishment could collapse. None of that happened. On the contrary, the Islamic Republic emerged more confident, and the Iranian people rallied behind their country.

This unity bolstered the confidence of the state, the Armed Forces, and the government, empowering Iran to confront US demands more decisively. Post-war Iran is no longer willing to accept what it might have tolerated before. Tehran is now convinced that Washington and Israel lack the capability to destroy Iran's nuclear program, which is now increasingly

opaque to Western intelligence, something that is clearly unnerving them.

Meanwhile, the Iranian Armed Forces identified their weaknesses and strengths and are now doubling down on their advantages to ensure that, should another conflict erupt, they respond even more forcefully. Beyond that, countries that once questioned Iran's capacity to face off against the US and Israel now hold a stronger conviction about Iran's capabilities, resulting in deeper engagement with Tehran.

Ayatollah Khamenei urged Iranians to remain united against external enemies despite internal differences. What challenges stand in the way of achieving such unity?

Iran's adversaries spend considerable effort try-

ing to undermine national unity, whether through extensive propaganda campaigns designed to sow discord, or via infiltrators inside the country who pretend to support the Establishment while effectively playing into the enemy's hands.

Besides, there are individuals whose poor performance or misguided decisions create social divisions. Many of these officials have proven ineffective for years yet remain in office, often inadvertently fanning the flames of discord.

But problems exist everywhere. Differences of opinion are part of normal political life everywhere. Iran is no exception. People may have grievances, hold divergent political views, or criticize one another but national unity is what foiled the plan that Israel worked on for 25 years, and the US for over two decades, to weaken and fragment Iran.

Metamorphosis of Reza Davari Ardakani

From modernity critic to development thinker



By Morteza Derakhshan

Expert on economic development

ANALYSIS EXCLUSIVE

The book "The Account of Reza," written by Mohammad Javad Safian and Jamal Same, is the result of several years of research, dialogue, and rereading of the thoughts of one of the most consequential contemporary Iranian philosophers; a thinker whose name is intertwined with the critique of modernity, with an obsessive concern regarding the relation of Iran to the new world, and with a pronounced sensitivity toward the concept of development: Dr. Reza Davari Ardakani. Yet what distinguishes this book from other writings on Davari is the narration of a quiet yet profound metamorphosis; a metamorphosis that commences with a philosopher critical of modernity and culminates in a thinker who today conceives development not as an optional preference, but as a historical necessity for Iran.

Story of an intellectual transmutation

In the earliest decades of his activity, Davari Ardakani articulated the necessity of transcending the "pillars of the welfare-seeking and technic-intoxicated Western mentality". Like many thinkers after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, he awaited the possibility that "another path" might be disclosed before Iran, a path distinct from the modern world. Yet gradually and through the observation of the realities of the age, he humbly acknowledged that "no other path" is opened before us. The new world has arrived with its technique, its science, and its specific order, and lagging behind it is not merely deprivation from its facilities; it is another modality of a-historicity. This transformation is the axial theme of the book; a narration that reveals how Davari transmuted from a philosopher critical of modernity into a philosopher thinking in terms of development.

He states with candor, "I had imagined that one might become emancipated from dependence on the new technique, but this was an optimistic fantasy. History follows a logical pattern." These sentences are not merely a confession by a thinker; they are a mirror reflecting our collective experience during two centuries of confrontation with the West. Davari's principal question: Why did we not become?

The root of Davari's entry into the discourse of development lies in his distinctive understanding of "the West". The West, for him, is neither a geography nor an ideology; it is "a relation to the world," a mode of being constituted upon science and the will to mastery. For this reason, Davari maintains that Iran during the past two centuries, without comprehending this relation, has merely adopted the externalities of the West — knowledge, technology, the accent of politics, and the forms of life — without entering its world.

To put it more plainly:

- We learned knowledge, but we did not transform it into science.
- We purchased technology, but we did not engender technique.
- We possess universities, but we do not possess problems.

In Davari's expression, our difficulty is "the absence of yearning". We desire science and development, yet we do not will them. This is the very point he articulates with explicitness and audacity in his preface to that book, "We possess science, but we do not possess the will to science. We desire development, but we must will development." In truth, Davari conceives underdevelopment not as an economic or political phenomenon, but as an existential one: a condition in which "the horizon of the future" is sealed, and society remains at the level of "entities" and does not ap-



Reza Davari Ardakani

prehend "being"; that is, it does not inaugurate possibilities.

The structure of the book is three strata of a single problem. The book comprises three theoretical sections and two dialogue-centered sections, all of which have been composed with precision and order by researchers of the intellectual movement of development.

1. Elements of development and underdevelopment in Davari's thought:

In this section, Davari's perspective on modern science, technique, the West, and the relation of Iran to them is synthesized. One of his crucial ideas is that:

- Modern science is not merely "knowledge," but a modality of relation to the world.
- Technique is not the product of science; rather, modern science has been technical from its inception.
- And a society deprived of technique is not only impoverished, but devoid of a world.

For the general reader, this section is among the most captivating because it reveals that underdevelopment does not signify "a shortage of machinery and factories"; rather, it signifies the absence of a relation and a historical horizon.

2. Between the critique of modernity and the acceptance of necessity:

In this section, Davari's most significant intellectual transformation becomes manifest. He asserts that the West cannot be merely imitated, yet it cannot be escaped. Modernity has opened possibilities that have transformed the world, and any society that disregards these possibilities becomes arrested in history. Davari's key point is that development is not "the pro-

gram of governments," but:

- dependent on political rationality,
- dependent on historical experience,
- and, above all, dependent on collective yearning.

One of his important sentences is: "One may learn science, but one cannot inject it into a society that is not receptive to it."

3. Planning, research, and development:

In this section, Davari presents six perspectives on the relation between research and development and demonstrates that development planning, without a transformation in a society's understanding and horizon, yields no result; for planning is not merely technical but contingent on what a society desires and what possibilities have been disclosed to it.

4. The section of development dialogues:

The dialogue section of the book is where Davari speaks without self-constraint. The fifth section of the book, as well, is the quintessence of four extensive sessions in which prominent critics — including Beheshti, Tabatabaei, Shariati, and others — confronted Davari.

This section may be the most engaging for readers, for in these sessions, Davari:

- talks more simply and without affectation,
- narrates his lived experience in dealing with the Revolution, the university, intellectuals, and politics,
- and speaks of his own errors.

For example, he repeatedly emphasizes that his conception of "the distinct Iranian path" was erroneous and declares: "I had no right to suppose that we might proceed upon another path without historical prerequisites." These admissions constitute part of the narrative allure of the book, for they reveal the portrait of a transformed, sincere,

and unpretentious philosopher.

But why is this book significant?

This book is not merely an analysis of Davari's thought; it is a mirror through which one may behold the problem of Iran's development. Three fundamental reasons for its importance are:

1. It examines the problem at its root:

it begins neither from economics nor from politics; it begins from "our understanding of the world".

2. Davari's transformation is our transformation:

the path he traversed in 50 years — from the delusion of "another path" to the comprehension of the necessity of development — is the same path in which Iranian society remains disoriented.

3. The dialogues are a document of an important moment:

few books in Iran contain a philosopher at the age of 85 who sits for four sessions with dozens of critics to speak about development.

An invitation to reconsideration

The Account of Reza is not merely the exposition of a theory; it is an invitation to reconsider the past and the future of Iran. In this account, Davari states that if we desire development, we must possess the will and yearning for it. We must transcend the level of imitation of Western externalities and attain the profundity of its relation. And this is achievable only through understanding, dialogue, and the acceptance of historical realities.

Ultimately, the book seeks to ask: Do we desire to become developed? And if our answer is affirmative, what must we alter within ourselves? This is the question with which Davari lived for many years — and which, thanks to this book, he has now shared with us.



People walk past a mural of an imagined banknote on a street in Tehran, Iran. The text on the mural reads, "The credibility [of Iran's rial] is dependent on the wills."

● TASNIM



Reza Davari Ardakani repeatedly emphasizes that his conception of "the distinct Iranian path" was erroneous and declares: "I had no right to suppose that we might proceed upon another path without historical prerequisites." These admissions constitute part of the narrative allure of the book, for they reveal the portrait of a transformed, sincere, and unpretentious philosopher.



What does West desire from Iran?



By Reza Fazlali
Expert on Middle Eastern affairs

OPINION

The most fundamental rationale for the establishment of the United Nations was the pursuit of human rights concerns. The Second World War and matters associated with genocide impelled a global consensus to engender a new organ that would avert the recurrence of analogous tragedies in the future. This foundational logic, which entrusted the Security Council with mechanisms to shape a transformed architecture for the future, designated global peace and international security of the human community as its universal referent.

Regrettably, this mechanism demonstrated over time, amid numerous crises, that it lacked the requisite efficacy in practice. Owing to the structure and configuration of the voting rights of the victorious and powerful states of that war, a deliberate or inadvertent conflict between legitimacy and law, on one side, and the extant reality of international interactions, on the other, emerged within this organization, thereby calling into question the sustainable administration of global order and security. To such an extent that if the international order does not conform to the desirable interests of the great powers endowed with voting prerogatives (veto), even if it lacks legitimacy among the public opinion of nations, it will not be affirmed or will not endure, due to various inequitable obstructions, without other states possessing any consequential influence in practice.

Hence, the world sought an alternative trajectory for transformation within the purgatorial condition of the status quo. As James Rosenau asserted, an order exists within disorder, and its reason lies in the conduct and decisions of actors — actors who neither perceive nor heed others. Unfortunately, no rule or functioning system has possessed the capacity to transcend this turbulence and global crisis, at least within the past 25 years.

The event of October 7, 2023, after two years and with an indeterminate agreement, and likewise the assault of Israel and the United States against Iran, revealed with greater clarity the passivity and inaction of global authorities, particularly the United Nations.

Circumstances for Iran after October 7, although perhaps endowed with certain strengths, may simultaneously contain vulnerabilities. Until the position of Iran within Middle-Eastern developments is regulated in a desirable fashion, suitable conditions for the global powers in the region will likewise remain unattainable. I am convinced that at present, the West does not intend to steer Iran toward narratives akin to the collapse of Libya or Syria since Iran's disarray would engender the diffusion of unrest and tumult into its surroundings and even increase global energy prices. For this reason, although Trump conducts military assaults against Iran and intermittently does not refrain from threats in his rhetoric, he extends, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, an overt hand of amity toward Iran in a manifest contradiction between the logic of international relations and the logic of international law.

Consequently, I believe the trajectory that has commenced regarding Iran cannot, except in particular unanticipated circumstances, be halted or altered, and international organizations and secondary powers cannot, in practice, effectuate any outcome. Despite the profuse divergences between Europe and the United States (though regarding Iran, they possess no divergence), one of the conditions set by the European powers for delaying the initiation of the snapback mechanism was direct



● NASH WEERASEKERA/AL MAJALLA

negotiation and agreement with the United States.

Let us speak without obfuscation. The global powers from Washington to Moscow, from Brussels to Beijing, each contemplate Iran through a distinct prism: one in pursuit of concord, another intent on containment, and a third envisioning partnership. Yet ultimately, the principal question endures: what do the powers of the world desire from Iran? The Islamic Republic must, at the outset, determine its own position regarding the desires of the great global powers, even if they are not just. Until these challenges unfold in accordance with the inclinations of the great powers, these confrontations shall persist, and no hope may be placed in international mechanisms.

Presumably, the most salient characteristic of the present and even future configuration of international relations is the existence of concealed confrontations devoid of overt enmity, such that numerous non-state actors and influential players will undertake activities far more substantial than today. However, the form and scope of their activities shall be rigorously regulated not according to their own objectives, but rather within the framework preferred by the great powers — particularly China and the United States.

From the author's perspective, the governing system of the United States seeks to equip and construct a durable bloc that remains under its dominion and volition within its sphere of influence; indeed, Russia and Iran must likewise be situated within this framework. Without doubt, an individual such as Trump and those similar to him are not the theorists of this undertaking; they merely assume the executive role of this conception since the intention is the stabilization or augmentation of their essential role in the future world order.

For this reason, at the zenith of Europe's confrontation and war with Russia, and amid military assaults against Iran and manifold sanctions, Trump speaks in his interviews and speeches of future amity and concord with these two states. Thus, certain analysts assess Trump's relationship with Putin as positive. Conversely, the Chinese likewise manifest interest in the continuation of the existing environment. They pursue the acquisition of allies in this ongoing process no less ardently than the United States.

Perhaps some may even inquire how the states of the region themselves conceptualize these matters. We must not forget that most states seek to amplify their influence and power and to exploit other states, and in this pursuit,

they customarily observe no principles whatsoever. For this reason, what is declared in the media and speeches by statesmen differs profoundly from what is determined in the closed chambers of policymakers. Just as we observed in the United Nations regarding the snapback mechanism, although many consultations had been undertaken prior to the session, only four of the 15 votes favored the annulment of sanctions for the benefit of Iran.

With such a mentality, during the sidelines of the latest United Nations summit, according to Araghchi, Trump's representative (Witkoff) did not even consent to appear for negotiation, not even direct negotiation, because Iran had conditioned dialogue exclusively on resolving nuclear issues and sanctions. According to the extant evidence, the West no longer accepts negotiation solely on nuclear matters; their discourse concerns the range of missile capabilities or the regulation of proxy-force challenges and similar issues, which they raise without any clemency or concession. Thus, for their preferred future order, no bargaining by Iran and no retreat by the West, particularly the United States, shall be acceptable.

Without doubt, all the matters articulated are merely the conjectures and suppositions of the author, for in the realm of politics and global relations, a single event, incident, or tempest in some corner of the earth may transform all the foregoing theories.

Indeed, the agreement of Hamas with

Israel, or Trump's negotiations with Putin regarding the war with Ukraine, does not constitute the defeat of either side, for a cessation of hostilities may signify a bilateral success. I harbor no doubt that they intend to weaken Iran toward a cessation of compulsory hostilities on the basis of the same structure articulated at the beginning of the discussion — an Iran that, in a condition of isolation, lacks the capacity for overt exchange even with its neighbors. The developments of the Middle East are contingent upon a global order that is presently being shaped by an intra-regional order, and until a geography such as the Middle East attains a stable condition, no planning or design for the governance of a comprehensive preferred order will exist. Iran, possessing throughout the expanse of history a noble past with abundant human and non-human resources of great value, has had — and continues to have — significant potential; yet it must, at the outset, discern its contemporary position in the world in an authentic manner and strive as many other states do. Thereafter, through multidirectional engagement, in pursuit of short-term and long-term objectives while preserving its own principles, it must gradually advance, through rational planning, toward progress in which national and collective interests have been considered.

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FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers: Iran drains 19 threes to beat Iraq in group opener



Sports Desk

Iran got off to an emphatic start in the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Asian Qualifiers, draining a remarkable 19 three-pointers to defeat Iraq 94-68 in the first-round Group C clash in Zouk Mikael, Lebanon, on Thursday. Sina Vahedi led the way with a game-high 21 points, while point guard Behnam Yakhchali chipped in 19 on his long-awaited return to the national team. Martin Aqajanjpour (15 points), Arman Zanganeh (13), and Navid Rezaeifar (11) also finished in double figures for Iran. For Iraq, point guard Ramon Galloway and Abdullah Hayder Alibraheemi topped the scoring with 20 and 12 points, respectively. Iran's three-point tally was the third-highest ever recorded by a team in a single game in the histo-

ry of the Asian Qualifiers – behind Australia (21) and New Zealand (20). Iran was just one make shy of becoming only the seventh team in World Cup Qualifiers history to hit 20 threes in a game. It was not a one-man show either, as both Aqajanjpour and Yakhchali knocked down five three-pointers apiece, while Vahedi and Zanganeh each connected three times from beyond the arc. The victory lifted Iran to the top of Group C – which also includes Jordan and Syria – ahead of Sunday's rematch against Iraq. In other Group C action, American-born Jalen Cole Harris scored 22 points and Ahmad Al-Dwairi added 18 as Jordan beat Syria 74-59 in Amman. Elsewhere in the qualifiers, Saudi Arabia defeated India 75-51 in Riyadh in Group D, thanks to a game-high 23 points from Mu-

hammad-Ali Abdurrahkman. Lebanon survived a late scare against Qatar to begin its World Cup bid with a narrow 75-74 win in Doha. The top three teams from each of the four groups will advance to the second round of the qualifiers. The twelve qualified teams will be split into two groups and will face the three teams advancing from the corresponding group twice – Group A will be paired with Group C, and Group B with Group D. The top three teams from each second-round group, along with the best fourth-placed team, will qualify for the 2027 World Cup in Qatar.



Iranian center Salar Monji (51) goes up for a basket during a victory over Iraq at the FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers in Zouk Mikael, Lebanon, on November 27, 2025.

● FIBA

Iran to boycott World Cup draw ceremony over US visa denial

Sports Desk

No Iranian representative will take part in Friday's 2026 World Cup draw ceremony in Washington, D.C., Amirmahdi Alavi, spokesman for the Iranian Football Federation, announced on Friday. The decision comes after the United States refused to issue entry visas for several members of the Iranian delegation – most notably Mehdi Taj, chairman of the national governing body. Iran topped Group A in the third round of the Asian qualifiers in June to secure its seventh World Cup appearance – and fourth in a row. The expanded 48-team finals will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico from June 11 to July 19 next year. "No Iranian representatives will attend the ceremony," Mehr News Agency quoted Alavi as saying. "After consultations with the federation's board, the

Ministry of Sports, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the decision was communicated to the FIFA," added Alavi, who blamed the measures taken by the United States as "non-sporting and deviated from standard athletic procedures." Alavi said FIFA has assured Iranian officials that the matter will be seriously addressed. According to Varzesh3, Iran head coach Amir Qalenoee and Mohammad-Mahdi Nabi, the federation's vice-president, are among five Iranians who were granted US visas. However, Alavi stressed that there are no guarantees the delegation would not face additional issues if they were to attend the ceremony. Ranked 20th in the latest FIFA Men's Ranking, Iran will be placed in Pot 2 for the World Cup draw, alongside fellow AFC teams Japan, South Korea, and Australia, as well as Croatia, Morocco, Colombia, Uruguay, Switzerland, Senegal, Ecuador, and Austria.



● FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP

IHF Women's Handball World Championship: Iran off to losing start against Switzerland

Sports Desk

Iran got off to a losing start at the IHF Women's Handball World Championship in Germany and the Netherlands, suffering a 34-9 defeat to debutant Switzerland in the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch on Thursday. Entering the tournament on the back of a historic bronze medal at the Islamic Solidarity Games earlier this month, Iran was determined to begin strongly, and goalkeeper Fatemeh Khalili delivered early with a series of solid saves. However, mistakes in Iran's attack quickly opened the door for Switzerland, which – carried by Era Baumann's early impact – took control and moved into a 7-3 lead by the 10th minute. As the match progressed, Switzerland grew increasingly confident. Coming in as the clear favorite, the European side steadily showed why. Mia Emmenegger, Tabeca Schmid, and Baumann led the offense, combining for 13 of Switzerland's 19 first-half goals. Most of Switzerland's scoring came through quick transitions, as the team pushed to finish its attacks as fast as possible. Iran, meanwhile, struggled with the pace; their average attacking sequence lasted around 39 seconds and often ended unsuccessfully, allowing Switzerland to dictate the flow until the end of the half. Little changed after the break, as Iran's problems continued at both ends of the



Iran's Nastaran Goodarzi (76) makes an effort during a defeat against Switzerland at the IHF Women's Handball World Championship in 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands, on November 27, 2025.

● IHF

court. The team went 11 minutes without a goal, while Switzerland maintained its pressure even with heavy rotations across the squad. Seraina Kuratli was exceptional in goal, picking up where Lea Schüpbach had left off, saving six of Iran's first seven attempts of the half. Eleven of Switzerland's 14 outfield players found the net at least once, with Melanie Felber stepping up after halftime to finish with seven goals. Kuratli concluded her impressive performance with 12 saves from 14 shots, underlining Switzerland's control from start to finish and earning the hummel Player of the Match award.

For Iran, Fatemeh Merikh was the standout performer with three goals in what proved a difficult start to the World Championship. This marks the second time Iran has scored only nine goals at the flagship event and their second-lowest tally overall, after recording eight goals against Angola in 2021. Iran will be back in action in Group against Hungary today before facing Senegal on Monday. The top three teams in the group will advance to the main-round phase, while the bottom side will compete for 25th-32nd places in the President's Cup.

6th International Fajr Cup: Qashqaei, Salehipour claim double golds on Day 1

Sports Desk

The opening day of the 6th International Fajr Cup in Tehran saw two Iranian weightlifters claim gold in their respective categories on Thursday. Competing in the men's 65kg division, Hafez Qashqaei – the 2019 world clean & jerk silver medalist – lifted 122kg in the snatch and secured a best clean & jerk of 160kg to take the total gold with 282kg. He finished 11 kilograms clear of Uzbekistan's Diyorbek Odilov, while Tajikistan's Faizali Sangov claimed bronze with 201kg. Meanwhile, Iliya Salehipour, entering the platform after a triple-medal run at the Islamic Solidarity Games earlier this month, posted 155kg in

the snatch and 192kg in the clean & jerk for a 344kg total to win a closely contested 88kg event. Uzbekistan's Bekzod Gofirjonov topped the snatch standings with 156kg but settled for silver with a 341kg total. Turkmenistan's Ramazan Torayev earned bronze on 316kg. Former world champion Mirmostafa Javadi marked his long-awaited return from injury – which had kept him out of the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh – with a runner-up finish in the 79kg class. He opened strongly with a 166kg snatch to edge Turkmenistan's Gaygysyz Torayev by one kilogram. Torayev, however, responded with a 187kg clean & jerk to secure the total gold at 332kg, one kilogram ahead of Javadi. Uzbekistan's Khayitboy Abdushukurov finished third with lifts of

147-174-321. Elsewhere, Seyitjan Mirzayev (124-150-274) stood atop the podium in the 60kg division, followed by Sri Lanka's Liyanagedara Lagas and Tajikistan's Mustafa Zabiroy. Turkmenistan's Bunyad Rashidov captured the 71kg title with a 150-165-315 total, while Khusinboy Matrasulov of Uzbekistan took silver with 305kg and Iraq's Saif Al-Lami earned bronze on 292kg. Weightlifters from Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia are competing at the four-day tournament in Tehran. The gold medalist in each weight category receives \$1,000 in prize money, with \$600 awarded for silver and \$400 for bronze.



Iranian weightlifter Hafez Qashqaei is seen in action in the 65kg class at the Fajr International Cup in Tehran, Iran, on November 27, 2025.

● IRNA

Mehrabad Mosque of Bonab among 40 UNESCO nomination candidates

Bonab Kebab; key cultural asset of city

Iranica Desk

Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Ali Darabi, announced during an official visit to Mehrabad Mosque of Bonab, in East Azarbaijan Province, that the ancient structure is among 40 mosques across 15 Iranian provinces nominated for UNESCO World Heritage status. During his tour, Darabi also visited the Red Mosque, Ali Qapu Square, the historical villages of Savar and Tutah Khaneh, and the traditional bazaar of Bonab. In addition, he inspected a series of development, restoration, and infrastructure projects related to tourism in the region. These site visits aim to evaluate the progress of ongoing heritage and tourism projects, identify new tourism capacities, and accelerate the completion of development plans. Local authorities continue to emphasize infrastructure enhancement as a key strategy



● gardeshgari724.com

for strengthening the cultural and economic vitality of Bonab, according to IRNA.

Darabi was accompanied by several local and provincial officials as they toured major



● IRNA

heritage sites and reviewed restoration efforts throughout the county. A meeting held later at the Bonab Governor's Office focused on upgrading tourism infrastructure, expediting restoration projects, and addressing financial requirements. During the session, Mohammad Bagheri Bonabi, Bonab's representative in the Parliament, stressed the

importance of seeking global registration for Bonab Kebab and Mehrabad Mosque, while also highlighting the need to further develop tourism infrastructure — particularly in the villages of Savar and Tutah Khaneh. Darabi stated that Bonab Kebab, Mehrabad Mosque, and the historic village of Sur are all moving toward international recog-

niton. He expressed hope that next year's Bonab Kebab Festival — expected to host ambassadors from several countries — will help pave the way for achieving global listing for the city's famous culinary tradition. Meanwhile, Mohammad-Hossein Qale'hei, the Governor of Bonab, emphasized the importance of nationally registering "Bonab Kebab" and preparing the necessary groundwork to elevate the annual festival to an international event. Citing the economic significance of the dish, he noted that nearly 370 kebab establishments currently operate in the city, providing substantial employment and underscoring the major economic impact of Bonab Kebab on the region. Qale'hei added that national registration and the expansion of the festival would further promote Bonab's culinary identity and tourism potential, contributing to economic growth and sustainable employment.

Hike, swim, trek in Buchir Canyon of Hormozgan Province

Iranica Desk

Buchir Canyon is one of Hormozgan Province's hidden treasures — lesser known than many of southern Iran's natural attractions, yet remarkably generous in the beauty it offers every visitor. With its towering rock walls, crystal-clear waters, and winding natural pathways, the canyon provides a unique encounter with the untouched landscapes of Iran's southern region. Visitors can experience the gentle sound of flowing water, the cool mountain breeze, and the rich palette of autumn colors simultaneously — sensations rarely found together elsewhere in the country.



Located in Parsian near the village of Buchir, the canyon stretches roughly 1,000 meters, with depths reaching up to eight meters in certain areas. Access begins from the main Parsian-Bandar-e Moqam road, leading travelers through villages and lush farmlands before the route turns into a rugged, mountainous dirt path, IRNA wrote. Navigating this trail requires patience and care, but the scenery along the way — from palm groves to striking rock formations — more than compensates for the effort. Carrying a local map or a reliable GPS device is strongly recommended to ensure

accurate navigation. One of the key elements that makes Buchir Canyon so captivating is its unique route, which combines hiking, swimming, and light water trekking. In some sections, visitors must wade through cold, clear water, while other parts of the path are rocky and uneven. This combination creates an adventurous and exciting experience, ideal for nature enthusiasts and fans of outdoor thrills. Buchir is known not only for its striking beauty but also for its diverse plant and animal life. Around the canyon, visitors can spot native desert vegetation such as wild thyme and various small bush species. The area is also home to local birdlife, includ-

ing finches and nightingales. For nature photographers, this biodiversity offers excellent opportunities to capture truly exceptional moments. Autumn is the best time to visit Buchir Canyon. During this season, the weather is mild and pleasant, and the intense summer heat has completely subsided. In addition, the autumn leaves and the changing colors of the surrounding trees create stunning and eye-catching scenery. For photography enthusiasts, visiting in the fall offers the perfect opportunity to capture unforgettable images. Staying near the canyon makes the trip more convenient and

enjoyable. The best options include the village of Buchir and nearby towns such as Parsian and Bandar Maqam. In these areas, eco-lodges and small guesthouses provide visitors with the chance to experience local culture and daily life up close.



● alibaba.ir

Tasting local cuisine is an essential part of the Buchir Canyon experience. Freshly baked Kak or local bread, often served alongside traditional dishes, adds extra delight to the trip. Local beverages, such as tea infused with cardamom and cinnamon or freshly made Doogh (a traditional Iranian yogurt-based drink), offer visitors an authentic and enjoyable taste of the region, providing a closer connection to its culinary culture. Visiting Buchir Canyon requires physical readiness and attention to safety. Some of the most important considerations include proper non-slip footwear, life jackets and swimming gear, traveling with a guide, checking weather conditions, and having basic swimming and first-aid skills. Possessing foundational knowledge in swimming and first aid can help ensure the safety of you and your companions.

Surrounding attractions

Exploring the attractions around Buchir Canyon makes the trip

even more rewarding. Highlights include a 15-meter waterfall with crystal-clear water flowing within the canyon, and the historic village of Buchir, featuring traditional architecture and ancient sites such as the old citadel, which showcase the local

culture and history. Additionally, nearby mountains and nature trails offer hiking and trekking enthusiasts the chance to experience breathtaking and unique landscapes. An important aspect of visiting Buchir Canyon is practicing sustainable tourism. Avoiding litter, refraining from damaging plants and wildlife, and respecting local culture ensure a responsible and memorable journey. By doing so, the natural environment is preserved, allowing future visitors to enjoy this remarkable site. With its combination of natural scenery, adventurous activities, and local life, Buchir Canyon is one of southern Iran's most exceptional destinations. Visiting the canyon provides opportunities for relaxation, excitement, and immersion in local culture. With proper planning, adherence to safety guidelines, and the right equipment, a trip to Buchir Canyon promises an unforgettable experience that will remain in your memory for years to come.

Kerman is timeless heart of Iran's carpet heritage

Iranica Desk

Today, the name of Kerman — one of Iran's major and historic provinces — is inseparably linked with the art of carpet weaving. As one of the oldest cities in the country, Kerman has long upheld its status as a leading center of this craft. The history of Kerman carpets stretches back many centuries, even predating the Safavid dynasty. One of the oldest surviving examples is a carpet fragment preserved in a museum in Mashhad, estimated to be over 500 years old. Like the products of many other regions, Kerman carpets have evolved significantly over time. This craft reached a remarkable level of prosperity during the Safavid era. However, by the Qajar period, carpet production witnessed a dramatic decline. By the late 19th century, only six workshops remained active in the region, operating no more than thirty looms. After this period of stagnation, the industry experienced a revival. Numerous workshops were established once again, primarily to meet the growing demand

for exports to Europe and the United States. By the early 20th century, hundreds of workshops and thousands of looms were operating throughout Kerman, visitiran.ir wrote. Beyond their originality and rich diversity of design, Kerman carpets are renowned for the distinctive colors and dyeing techniques used in their yarn. Their color palette includes nearly 30 shades, created through the blending of herbal dyes and traditional dyeing methods. Among these colors is a unique and vibrant non-herbal red derived from cochineal, highly prized for its depth and brilliance. The motifs and patterns seen in Kerman carpets are equally varied. Some of the most celebrated include the Lachak-o-Toranj (paisley), Khushe Angoori (grape bunch), and Derakhti (tree) designs. The Derakhti motif itself appears in numerous stylistic interpretations. The Shah Abbasi pattern — related to the grape bunch motif — was especially prominent in earlier centuries, and continues to inspire many contemporary designs derived from its classic form.



● IRNA



ACHA General Assembly

Iran pushes China for new cultural, tourism, heritage pact



Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Reza Salehi Amiri (L) meets with his Chinese counterpart Sun Yeli in Chongqing, China, on November 27, 2025.

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri pressed Beijing on Thursday in Chongqing to "push ahead" with a new phase of cultural, tourism and heritage cooperation as he delivered President Masoud Pezeshkian's message to China's head of state, using a meeting with Culture and Tourism Minister Sun Yeli on November 27 to table concrete proposals for a broader, project-driven partnership. Salehi-Amiri told his Chinese counterpart that Tehran wants the robust political and economic partnership to spill over

into heritage, tourism and handicrafts, IRNA reported. He framed the two countries as "civilization-states" with millennia of historic depth and argued that their ministries can "shape more serious and effective exchanges". He pointed to Iran's "stable security environment" and broad tourism potential as a springboard for Chinese engagement. He invited Sun to Tehran's international tourism fair in February and to the Nowruz gathering hosted by 13 countries, calling him "Iran's special guest". The invitation, he said, could "open new paths" for bilateral meetings and fresh

lines of cooperation. The Iranian minister also sketched out a set of cultural initiatives. He proposed an "Asian mechanism" for heritage cooperation as a joint soft-power platform and floated 2026, the 55th anniversary of formal ties, as the year for a branded, China-Iran cultural program spanning archaeology, performing arts and exhibitions. He praised Chinese archaeologists' role in several Iranian digs, including at Masuleh, which is heading for UNESCO inscription, and urged more joint work. Iran, he added, stands ready to collaborate with Chinese institutions on museum technologies and artificial intelligence to promote cultural attractions. Although he described Iran as "one of the safest countries in the region" with 20 recognized tourism genres, he noted that tourism flows from China remain far below the strategic weight of bilateral ties. Sun welcomed the proposals, calling them "valuable" and mutually beneficial. He said the 55th anniversary offered a timely platform for joint exhibitions, conferences and projects, provided both sides keep the agenda rooted in "practical measures".

Maldives as a 'reliable' cultural, tourism partner

Salehi-Amiri then turned to South Asia on Friday morning, meeting Adam Naseer Ibrahim, the Maldivian Minister for Dhivehi Language, Culture and Heritage,

again on the sidelines of the ACHA gathering. Both ministers agreed to open a fresh chapter in cultural, scholarly, heritage and tourism ties and to ramp up exchanges on climate-related threats to coastal and island heritage. Salehi-Amiri stressed Iran's deep civilizational imprint, noting more than a million identified heritage sites, thousands of them registered nationally, alongside 29 UNESCO-listed tangible sites and 26 intangible entries. Fifty-eight more sit on Iran's tentative list. He said Iran's pivot to "maritime tourism" has state backing, involving seven coastal provinces, and urged cooperation with the Maldives on research-driven and managerial frameworks. He offered Iran's academic and technical expertise in archaeology, conservation, Iranian studies and cultural research through joint courses and scientific projects. For people-to-people ties, he proposed an "Iran Cultural Week" in Malé and a corresponding Maldivian showcase in Tehran, alongside journalist exchanges so that media figures can "see and narrate" each other's tourism landscapes. He highlighted Iran's breadth in handicrafts, 299 of the world's 400 recognized forms, and suggested a Malé exhibition as a catalyst for further artistic and cultural ventures. Health tourism, he said, remains one of Iran's strongest assets. With more than

a thousand hospitals and a large pool of specialists, Iran attracts patients from the US, Europe, the Persian Gulf and Central Asia. Tehran, he added, is ready to integrate this sector into joint programs with the Maldives. He spoke of the "historic and profound" cultural links between the two nations, noting that Maldivian urban architecture and elements of its artistic vocabulary carry Iranian influence. With most Maldivian heritage rooted in oral traditions, he said his country needs Iran's scientific and educational support to document and protect these traditions. He also pushed for cooperation on coastal heritage, climate impacts, health tourism and handicrafts, and said he would welcome participation in Tehran's festivals.

Tehran unveils Asian heritage vision

Salehi-Amiri outlined Iran's plan to boost regional heritage cooperation, highlighting Asia's shared cultural and spiritual traditions. He proposed a four-point framework covering a regional heritage program, an observatory to track UNESCO nominations, a network of national heritage offices, and exhibition spaces at ACHA meetings. Iran also offered to host the General Assembly in 2027 to strengthen collaboration and showcase Asia's heritage capabilities.

Majidi wins special honor at Eurasia Int'l Film Festival in Moscow



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi stepped onto the stage of Moscow's Workshop "12" theater on Thursday evening to receive the first "Diamond Butterfly" Special Award at the First Eurasia International Film Festival, a prize the organizers created to recognize his decades-long contribution to world cinema. Nikita Mikhalkov, the veteran Russian director and founder of the Eurasia Film Academy, handed Majidi the crystal-cut

statuette in a packed hall that included Culture Minister Olga Lyubimova, presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky and Iran's ambassador Kazem Jalali, Fars News Agency reported. Before the award, the festival rolled a curated reel from Majidi's works, including his historical epic 'Muhammad (PBUH)', underscored by Iranian music. The audience rose to its feet for several minutes. Majidi, who built his international reputation on stories anchored in childhood and moral struggle, returned to that theme on stage. He spoke of his long commitment to portraying children with dignity and paused to honor the "innocent children of Gaza", saying he hoped war-hit youngsters everywhere would find a path to peace. China clinched the festival's top prize. Xu Zheng's drama 'Against the Current' took Best Film along with a \$1 million award, a sizeable purse for a debut festival but one Mikhalkov said was intended to "set the bar high" for future editions.

Winners in the other categories collected \$250,000 each. Seventeen countries submitted 34 films to the festival's first run, with organizers pitching the event as a new Eurasian platform for ethical storytelling and cultural exchange. Entries ranged from Russia and Serbia to South Africa and Pakistan, with some titles shooting for gritty realism and others leaning on spiritual or historical narratives. Iran entered three titles, 'Call Me Ziba', 'In the Arms of the Tree' and 'My Daughter's Hair', continuing the country's long-standing push to keep its art-house cinema visible on the international circuit. By the end of the night, Mikhalkov called the "Diamond Butterfly" a symbol of a broader cultural pact he hopes to forge among Eurasian filmmakers. Whether the festival grows into the "Eurasian Oscars" he envisions remains to be seen, but the debut edition closed with a flourish, and Majidi at its center.

Hamburg Kurdish festival crowns Iran's 'Khalil', 'The Plain Sings'

Arts & Culture Desk

Two Iranian films 'Khalil' and 'The Plain Sings' won the top honors at the 16th Hamburg Kurdish Film Festival Awards, where organizers in Germany's northern port city closed a five-day showcase of what they called cinema's "courage" and "diversity". Seyed Payam Hosseini clinched the best short-film award with 'Khalil', a tightly drawn drama he wrote, produced and directed. The film follows a 13-year-old boy who frets over whether his late father's soul reaches heaven or sinks into hell, pushing himself to "make sure" as he navigates grief. The short features Taha Cheraghi, Omid Cheraghi, Taha Mohammadi, Hossein Moradi, Mousa Hedayati and Shobo Soleimani. Daricheh Cinema Group and Panah Film Institute handle its international rollout. The jury granted a special commendation to 'The Plain Sings', Gita Feizi's pastoral tale of a young shepherdess forced to take a consequential decision after a wolf tears into her flock.



The cast includes Darya Kakayi, Afshin Khedri, Sara Ahmadnejad and Saman Saed Moucheshi, with Daricheh Cinema Group overseeing global distribution. HKFF, held from November 19 to 23 under the banner "Remembrance, Resistance, Insight: Cinema from the Heart of Diversity", aimed to bring disparate cultures, generations and viewpoints into the same room. Organizers said the program sought to keep memories alive and build bridges between "past and future".

Toxic air continues, shutting schools, offices

Social Desk

Several Iranian cities are grappling with hazardous air as pollution levels climb across the country, forcing authorities to impose temporary closures and issue health warnings. Officials said the situation is expected to persist through next days, IRNA reported. On Friday, Iran Meteorological Organization reported stable atmospheric conditions over much of the country, intensifying the accumulation of pollutants in urban and industrial areas. Kobra Rafiee, a senior meteorologist, said scat-

tered rain showers were expected only in the Caspian Sea provinces and North Khorasan, while the northwestern, western, and central Zagros regions could see rainfall and snow from Monday to Tuesday. Calm conditions elsewhere are trapping dust and smog, reducing visibility and worsening air quality. In Tehran, local authorities recorded dense smog with a maximum temperature of 16 °C on Friday and a minimum of 7 °C overnight. Jaafar Barzegar, head of the province's crisis management office, warned that orange-level pollution alerts could last from Friday after-

noon through Monday night or Tuesday morning if emission sources are not controlled. The rising pollution has prompted Tehran's municipal authorities and other provincial offices to consider schools and government offices closures on November 29. In addition to the capital, cities such as Karaj and Isfahan may suspend classes for the week. Health officials emphasized that children, the elderly, and people with chronic illnesses are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of the smog. Abbas Shakerinia of Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences cautioned that respi-

ratory problems could escalate if exposure continues. Nationwide, air-quality monitoring data show a marked deterioration. Compared with the previous year, the pollution index in 2025 has increased by roughly 20 percent. Tehran alone has experienced 12 red-alert days, two days of very unhealthy "purple" air, and two days in dangerous "brown" conditions, with only six clean-air days since the start of the year. Citizens report frequent headaches, shortness of breath, and other symptoms as the haze blankets the capital. Persistent air stagnation, combined with traf-



fic emissions, industrial output, and heating fuel use, continues to burden major urban centers.