

# Japan pledges €210,000 in medical aid to shore up healthcare in southern Iran

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## INTERVIEW

Japan has signed contracts to provide €210,000 worth of medical equipment to underserved communities in southern and southeastern Iran, aiming to improve healthcare access and enhance human security for low-income populations.

The ceremony took place at the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Tehran, attended by officials from local hospitals, universities, and charitable organizations.

The contracts formalize two Grassroots Grant Assistance (GGA) projects under Japan's human security aid program. The first provides a mammography machine for underprivileged women in Hormozgan Province, through the Noor Cancer Charity. The unit, valued at €143,541, will be installed at Imam Ali Hospital in Rudan, Hormozgan, enabling annual screenings for approximately 11,000 women.

The second project donates an ultrasound device, costing €66,162, to support low-income patients in Sistan-Baluchestan. The machine will be installed at the Zahedan University of Medical Sciences Hospital, facilitating around 7,300 timely examinations annually.

Tamaki Tsukada (R), Japan's Ambassador to Iran, and Hooshang Adhami, CEO of Noor Cancer Charity, sign a contract on December 15, 2025, in Tehran to provide a €143,541 mammography unit for installation at Imam Ali Hospital in Rudan, Hormozgan.  
● IRAN DAILY

Ultrasound technology is crucial for detecting a wide range of conditions, including cancers, and for prenatal care.

Tamaki Tsukada, Ambassador of Japan in Tehran, explained that these contracts were approved under this year's GGA program. "Since its launch in 1999, the Japanese Embassy in Iran has implemented 173 projects across multiple sectors, including primary healthcare, vocational training, and regional development, all aimed at enhancing public welfare," he said.

He emphasized that the program seeks to identify even small-scale initiatives that directly benefit local communities. "Because the GGA mechanism does not require formal intergovernmental negotiations, it is a fast-moving process. Projects typically move from request to implementation in under a year," Tsukada said.

"Its agility and flexibility stem from the small scale of the projects. Even in hard-to-reach areas, embassy officials



personally oversee all stages, from identification and design to execution and follow-up."

The envoy highlighted that this approach aligns with Japan's broader philosophy of human security, which prioritizes individual empowerment, risk reduction, and the protection of human dignity.

Speaking on the mammography project, Tsukada noted that breast cancer

is the most prevalent and deadly cancer among Iranian women. The new Fujifilm machine in Rudan will enable first-time annual screenings for thousands of women in the province, significantly improving early detection and care.

Regarding the ultrasound project in Sistan-Baluchestan, he added, "Ultrasound is an essential tool for diagnosing a variety of illnesses, including

cancers, and for providing proper prenatal care. This device, installed at the Zahedan University of Medical Sciences Hospital, will allow timely and accurate examinations for approximately 7,300 patients each year."

The envoy expressed hope to visit the project sites in the near future. "I look forward to observing the progress firsthand alongside Iranian partners and local stakeholders," he said.

## Iran, Georgia ink overland tourism, motorsport cooperation deal



### Social Desk

Iran's Touring and Automobile Club (TACI) and the Georgian Automobile Federation (GASF) signed a memorandum of understanding on December 14, aimed at expanding bilateral cooperation in motorsport and overland tourism, the clubs announced.

The agreement, signed in Tehran, seeks to streamline cross-border travel, enhance road safety, and bolster operational collaboration between the two countries' automotive and tourism sectors, ILNA reported.

The accord provides a framework for facilitating motor vehicle transit, offering reciprocal roadside assistance, and or-

ganizing motorsport rallies with a tourism focus.

It also covers technical cooperation on camper and caravan refurbishment and the issuance of international driving and travel documents. TACI's chairman and CEO Mohammad-Hossein Soufi and GASF president Alexander Lumadze formally endorsed the document. Soufi described the memorandum as a "practical step" to strengthen professional ties, while Lumadze highlighted its potential to "expand interaction" in motorsport and travel infrastructure.

Beyond recreational travel, the partnership signals Tehran and Tbilisi's commitment to integrating safety protocols and

Iran's Touring and Automobile Club (TACI) chairman Mohammad-Hossein Soufi (L) and Georgian Automobile Federation (GASF) President Alexander Lumadze sign a memorandum of understanding in Tbilisi on December 14, 2025 to boost cooperation in motorsport and overland tourism.  
● ILNA

technical standards across shared routes, potentially lowering accident rates and improving roadside service efficiency. Motorsport and adventure tourism are emerging as strategic niches for both nations. Iran's vast northern and northwestern landscapes, coupled with Georgia's mountainous terrain, provide natural venues for rally events and cross-border expeditions.

## Minister urges shared recognition of intangible heritage

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi-Amiri, urged countries to view intangible heritage registration as inclusive rather than exclusive, and outlined recent international engagements to boost tourism and cultural cooperation.

He spoke at the 26th strategic council meeting of the ministry on December 15 in Tehran. "Registering intangible heritage does not negate another country," Salehi-Amiri said, emphasizing that multiple nations can submit heritage files without conflict.

He cited the example of Nowruz, Iran's traditional

New Year festival, which was registered jointly with 12 neighboring countries. "Some customs and artefacts are shared," he said, "so why create disputes?"

The remarks shows Iran's broader approach to cultural diplomacy and heritage management, aiming to reduce politicization and foster multilateral cooperation.

Salehi-Amiri highlighted that around 75% of Iran's manuscript collections, nearly 500,000 items, reside abroad, framing their presence as a global cultural asset rather than a loss.

Salehi-Amiri also reviewed his recent foreign visits, noting strengthened ties with China and Greece. In Beijing, discus-

sions focused on joint exhibitions of Iranian handicrafts and carpets, archaeological cooperation, and heritage preservation.

China's 160 million domestic tourists and 20 million outbound travelers present significant opportunities for bilateral tourism, he said.

He underlined that engagement must extend beyond capital-level contacts to provincial authorities, enabling direct collaboration between Iranian and Chinese regional administrations.

In Athens, Salehi-Amiri secured agreements for Greek influencers to visit Iran, promoting tourism and cultural exchange, alongside plans for joint handicraft exhibitions.

He stressed Iran's readiness for strategic cooperation, moving from dialogue to actionable projects.

Salehi-Amiri highlighted Boushehr province's historical port of Siraf, citing its potential for UNESCO World Heritage registration.

Governor General of Bushehr Arsalan Zare' described Siraf as a "strategic cultural asset" with extensive archaeological finds, Sassanid-era heritage, and musical traditions.

Zare' said the province's maritime economy, palm groves, and annual National Persian Gulf Day celebrations offer unique tourism draws, potentially boosting both regional revenue and cultural diplomacy.

## Berlin festival honors Iranian documentary 'Inferior Shadows'

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian filmmaker Ramin Khalighi's documentary 'Inferior Shadows' claimed the Best Feature Documentary Award at the seventh annual Doc.Berlin Documentary Film Festival, showcasing at the historic Babylon Cinema in Berlin.

The festival, part of the global Doc.World network, highlights leading regional and international documentaries and fosters dialogue between filmmakers and audiences worldwide. Out of roughly 2,000 submissions, 23 films from countries including France, Lebanon, Mexico, the United States, Poland, Belgium, Qatar, Canada, Estonia, Germa-



ny, and Iran were selected for the official program, ILNA reported. Khalighi's film, which previously won the Best DokuBox Film prize at the ninth DokuBaku International Documentary Fes-

tival in Azerbaijan, offers a close portrayal of a family grappling with poverty and addiction, surviving through scavenging for recyclables. "The story is a journey between

suffering and hope," Khalighi said. "It is an effort to endure and reach better days." During filming, three family members received treatment at a rehabilitation camp and returned to society, starting a new chapter in their lives.

Festival director Chris De Meister said in his closing statement that documentaries "do more than declare truth; they create spaces to confront moral dilemmas and spark dialogue."

He described 'Inferior Shadows' as "a profoundly brutal yet humane tragedy," noting that audiences remained silent for an extended period after the credits rolled, sensing "something rare and human."