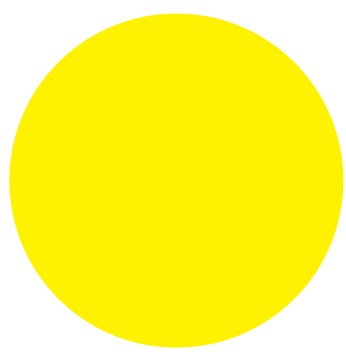


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## 'Devouring' Iran has long been US objective: *Leader*



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addresses a large gathering of Iranian people in Tehran on January 17, 2026.  
[khamenei.ir](http://khamenei.ir)

### National Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei stressed on Saturday that the all-time goal and policy in different US administrations has been to "devour" Iran and reassert Washington's pre-1979 Revolution military, political, and economic dominance on the Islamic Republic, much as what transpired in the recent unrest and American "sedition" in Iran.

"Having a country this vast with this population, capacities, and scientific and technological achievements — on this geographical po-

sition no less — is unbearable to them," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a meeting with thousands of Iranians in Tehran on the occasion of Eid al-Mab'ath, the anniversary of the appointment of Muhammad (PBUH) as the last and greatest prophet of God.

Instigated by expressions of support on behalf of US President Donald Trump as well as Zionists, armed groups and individuals in various cities, including the capital Tehran, turned the peaceful protests of guilds and businessmen into violent clashes, claiming innocent lives and destroying

and setting on fire various economic centers, religious and public sites, busses, and urban amenities.

The Leader underlined that in previous seditions, it was mostly up to media figures and low-level politicians to fuel the fires of violence.

However, this time, he added, the president of the United States personally intervened by making unfounded claims and empty threats, as well as encouraging seditionists to advance because "help is on the way."

As such, the Leader said that Donald Trump is regarded by Tehran as a

"criminal", both for inflicting damage and casualties on the country and for accusing the Iranian nation to be "saboteurs and murderers."

Despite all this, Ayatollah Khamenei stated that "the Iranian nation has broken the back of sedition," calling on officials to uncover the nature and goals of the sedition and its trained agents. "Fortunately, and by God's will, this sedition was snuffed out by our cognizant nation and officials," he asserted.

The Leader pointed out that relevant Iranian bodies, including the Foreign

Ministry, are obligated with holding the US accountable for its crimes by adopting the proper methods.

"We will not push the country toward war, and we will not let go of internal and, more importantly, international criminals either," he highlighted.

Ayatollah Khamenei further stressed the necessity of Iranians keeping united in defense of the Islamic Republic and their beloved country.

God willing, he concluded, the Iranian nation will break the back of seditionists just as it broke the back of sedition.





# Pezeshkian says gov't focused on heeding public's legitimate demands

*Putin: Iran's recent unrest resembles 'color revolution' scenarios*

## International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Friday that his government's approach in domestic policy is people-oriented, stressing that all efforts are focused on listening to the "legitimate demands of the people" and reducing problems caused by "unjust sanctions" imposed on the country. The Iranian president made the remarks during a phone call with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin following recent protests in Iran over economic problems, which turned violent after US and Israeli interference. Demonstrations in Iran, caused by the national currency deval-

uation, began on December 28. The protests remained peaceful for a week during which President Pezeshkian and his administration entered talks with the protesters' representatives to hear their demands. Instigated by expressions of support on behalf of US president as well as Zionist-relayed instructions, armed groups and individuals in various cities, including the capital Tehran, transformed the protests into violent clashes. A yet-to-be-specified number of people, including protesters and security forces, have lost their lives in the clashes. During the phone conversation, Pezeshkian highlighted the direct role of the United States,

the Israeli regime, and some European countries in the deadly incidents. The Russian president said that Moscow is closely monitoring the developments in Iran. He described the recent events in Iran as similar to "color revolution" scenarios, adding that, "We fully understand that long-term unjust sanctions can cause economic and social problems in Iran, but rioting and vandalism have no compatibility with peaceful and civil protest." Putin denounced measures by the rioters who attacked governmental, public and religious buildings, as well as violent attacks on security and law enforcement forces with foreign



Vladimir Putin



Masoud Pezeshkian

support. "The million-strong march by Iranians after these events in support of the Islamic Establishment, the Leader, and their government clearly shows the reality in Iran. We hope that with the Iranian government's

measures in the economic field, we will witness improvement and strengthening of economic issues, while our diplomatic efforts to explain Iran's conditions and positions and prevent escalation of tensions in international forums continue," the

Russian president added. Putin also referred to the latest status of bilateral relations between Tehran and Moscow, affirming that Russia always welcomes the further expansion of relations with the Islamic Republic.

## NIGC sets new record in sweet gas production, transmission



IRNA

## Economy Desk

The National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) set a new record for gas sweetening and transmission to the national grid, increasing daily volumes to 882 million cubic meters in more than first nine months of the Iranian calendar year, began on March 21, according to the company's head. Addressing the 14th Winter Fuel Coordination Meeting on Friday, Saeid Tavakoli said that on January 13, 162.1 million cubic meters of gas were injected to power plants, breaking another record for gas delivery this year, IRNA reported. Tavakoli said that from the start of the year through January 11, more than 3.2 billion cubic meters of additional gas were delivered to power plants and at least 1.5

billion cubic meters more to industries compared with the same period last year. However, the deputy oil minister cautioned that such gains do not signal a return to normal conditions and were achieved only through staff efforts and proper consumption management. Tavakoli stopped short of mentioning the exact output figure of the same period last year. However, the NIGC announced last January that more than 872 million cubic meters of gas were produced and injected into the network daily. The official attributed some part of the achievement to the recovery of the damaged unit at Fajr Jam gas refinery in the southern province of Bushehr. A unit at Iran's Fajr Jam gas refinery was brought back online on January 6 follow-

ing repairs, months after the facility was hit during Israel's aggression on Iran in June. According to Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad, the refinery suffered "serious damage" on two of its eight gas sweetening trains when it came under attack. One of the damaged trains had been repaired and brought back online under a six-month timetable, Paknejad said during a visit to the city of Jam to reopen the unit. Fajr Jam is one of Iran's largest gas refineries, processing feedstock from the Nar and Kangan gas fields and part of the natural gas from phases 6, 7 and 8 of the South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf. The facility has the capacity to process around 125 million cubic meters of natural gas per day and also produces gas condensate and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Tavakoli also added that despite colder weather this year — averaging about 1 degree lower than last year since September — and an increase in household consumption of an average 23 million cubic meters per day due to 700,000 new subscribers, there were no gas outages in any sector. He called the achievement a symbol of pride for the company.

## Tehran raps G7 'duplicious approach' toward human rights

## International Desk

The Iranian Foreign Ministry condemned "meddlesome" remarks by the Group of Seven about recent developments in Iran, describing it as the evidence of the "duplicious approach" of the G7 member states toward the issue of human rights. In a statement, the Foreign Ministry said the G7, influenced by American propaganda and the Israeli regime, knowingly ignores the fact that Iran's peaceful protests were driven to violence through the entry of organized elements of terrorists equipped by Israel between January 8 and 10. The statement added that a large number of protesters, police, and law-enforcement officers were attacked, killed and wounded during the same period. "The explicit statements and remarks by current and former American officials, as well as Zionist regime's officials, encouraging violence and slaughter of the people, alongside solid documents collected by security authorities, indicate the direct role of the Israeli regime in equipping and organizing armed terrorists and US support for them," it added. The Foreign Ministry said the Is-



IRNA

lamic Republic with all its power will undertake the responsibility to protect the security of its citizens and public order against "imported terrorism," and also to defend the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran against any foreign threat or aggression. The statement also referred to the G7 member states' "shameful record of gross human rights violations in their own countries and the West Asia region," saying that they lack "any legitimacy or moral standing to judge others." "Undoubtedly, the collective memory of the Iranian nation will not forget the support by American,

German, British, Canadian authorities, and some other G7 members for the Zionist regime's military aggression against Iran and the slaughter of hundreds of Iranians in June 2025," it added. The Foreign Ministry concluded that instead of issuing "deceptive and interfering statements," the G7 members should stop meddling in Iran's internal affairs, end the "unjust and illegal sanctions" against the Iranian nation, and refrain from exploiting the noble concepts of human rights as a cover for intervention in Iran's internal affairs and for provoking violence and terrorism.

## Chamber head urges close cooperation among Muslims for sustainable growth

## Economy Desk

Head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture called for close cooperation between economic actors and private sector businessmen of the Muslim countries to achieve an economic development and sustainable growth. In a congratulatory message to the Muslim world on the occasion of Mab'ath, the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) divine appointment, Samad Hassanzadeh said that the chambers of commerce of the Muslim nations can play a pivotal role in building up an extensive international network,

ISNA reported. "Renowned tradespeople in Islamic Iran and the Muslim world have proved throughout history that with resort to the noble religion of Islam and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), they can present a distinguished model of immaculate, trust-worthy and profit-oriented commerce that favors the entire society and is shot of self-oriented racketeering," Hassanzadeh said. "Creating trade networks among economic stakeholders and merchants of private sectors in Islamic countries can bring about invaluable blessings and beneficence for the sustainable economic growth

and development across the globe," he added. The Islamic Republic prioritizes fostering cooperation with Islamic countries — home to over 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide. The Islamic world's share in economic value creation, AI-related scientific production, and technological development is estimated at less than 5 percent, according to the Iranian vice president. "This figure starkly contrasts with the vast potential and capabilities of Islamic countries, Mohammad Reza Aref said at the second Ministerial Meeting of the OIC-15 Dialogue Platform in Tehran in May.

## Top general: Enemies distort Iran's reality via 'cognitive' war, propaganda

## National Desk

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi said on Saturday that Iran's enemies have distorted reality of recent developments in the country by using the mainstream media and "cognitive war." "Over the course of a soft war, the enemy influenced a number of people in the society through its propaganda empire and cognitive war, turning the reality upside down," Mousavi said at a meeting with Iran's cultural officials. The top general called on the officials and the relevant cultural authorities to transfer the Islamic Revolution and the Sacred Defense ideals to the younger generations as a way to tackle the "enemy's tricks in the cultural area." He also called for revealing the enemy's crimes against the Iranian nation. Since the beginning of recent protests in Iran over eco-

Abdolrahim Mousavi  
MEHR

omic woes on December 28, the Western media have launched a campaign against the Islamic Republic over its response to the deadly riots, which were triggered by the protests over national currency devaluation.



# Rangooniha Mosque; unique structure with extraordinary architecture

Iranica Desk

Oil, refinery, and people brought prosperity to Abadan in Khuzestan Province. The city hosts a number of unique attractions one of which is a mosque with unusual architecture called Rangooniha Mosque, built by Muslim immigrants from Rangoon of India, now called Yangon. Thanks to its eye-catching and exceptional decorations, it is often considered as a destination for tourists travelling to Khuzestan Province, especially those from India. The story of this mosque began when the first English group arrived in Abadan to establish a refinery. They were employees of the Rangoon Refinery in Burma (Myanmar). This group brought a number of assistants to Abadan, who were mainly of Rangooni origin and Sunni



Muslims. Therefore, after their arrival, they set out to establish a mosque on the banks of the Arvand River in the late Qajar period, around 1912 CE, according to Mehr News Agency. Upon seeing the mosque, every

visitor, instinctively remember the mosques and temples of India, particularly those located in the northwest of the country and the city of Punjab. The decorations of the building bear a strong resemblance to intricate plaster



● IRNA

work, although it is actually done with cement. It is said that some of the building materials used in this mosque, such as dyes, were brought from India to Iran. The mosque remained undamaged during the Iran-Iraq War.

The main prayer hall of the mosque, square-shaped on one floor and with an area of 150 square meters, was built using oil transmission pipes and railway tracks for the main and secondary beams. The walls of the

mosque are made of bricks, and mortar made of sand and lime has been used. Four eight-sided minarets are located in the four corners of the building, and the they are completely hollow-built with bricks and mortar made of sand and lime. The historical and valuable Rangooniha Mosque has been registered on the National Heritage List. Visiting the Rangooniha Mosque is not permitted throughout the entire year; its doors are only open to the public during specific times. It is advisable to contact the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Abadan to confirm the mosque's operating hours before planning your visit. Historical relics are vital parts of our heritage. It is essential to appreciate these treasures and to avoid causing any damage to them.

## Tir Gorge serving as beckoning destination for sightseeing, fishing

Iranica Desk

About 50-kilometer from the city of Tohid, Ilam Province, amid the picturesque Zardalan region of Holeylan town, the breathtaking and captivating Tir Gorge is situated. Farzad Sharifi, the Director General of Ilam Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization told

ISNA that the gorge overlooking Seymareh River serves as a shortcut, connecting the tropical section of Zardalan to its colder part. Tir Gorge has a pristine and dreamy nature, with a breathtaking landscape. The Seymareh River flows through it, and on either side stand mountains like iron walls, adding to a beautiful touch to

the region. The tall and very beautiful cliffs on both sides of the gorge, with oak forest, rare bird species that fly and sing in the area, nesting among the mountain rocks, and the beautiful road overlooking the Seymareh River, are among breathtaking landscapes of the region. Tir Gorge is a very attractive destination for sightseeing, fish-

ing and recreation in the region. Ilam Province, located in western Iran along the Zagros Mountain, is renowned for its rich and diverse natural landscapes. The province is home to dense oak forests, dramatic mountain chains such as Kabirkuh, and numerous springs, rivers, and waterfalls that create a unique ecological environment.

In addition, Ilam's varied climate and unspoiled landscapes make it a suitable destination for eco-tourism, hiking, and nature-based travel. The ongoing registration of natural sites as national heritage not only contributes to their long-term protection but also helps introduce Ilam Province as a significant natural tourism destination in Iran.



● ISNA

## Iranian clubs to host Asian games in neutral venues



● MNA

Sports Desk

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has ordered Iranian clubs Tractor, Sepahan, and Esteghlal to play their upcoming home games at the Asian competitions in neutral venues. The continental governing body's decision has been driven by the escalating regional tensions and recent unrest in the country. Iranian top-flight champion Tractor will face Qatar's Al Sadd in its penultimate outing in the league stage of

the AFC Champions League Elite on February 10. Dragan Skocic's side sits second in the West Zone's 12-team table with 14 points – four behind Saudi heavyweight Al Hilal – and has already secured qualification for the round of 16 of Asia's top-tier club competition with two matches to spare in the league phase. Sepahan and Esteghlal, meanwhile, have advanced to the knockout stage of the AFC Champions League Two after finishing runner-up in their respective groups.

Esteghlal, which claimed a comprehensive 3-0 away victory over Bahrain's Al Muharraq in a must-win clash in December to finish behind the UAE's Al Wasl in Group A, will play Jordan's Al Hussein in the first leg of their last-16 tie on February 10 – a day before Sepahan goes head-to-head with Qatari club Al Ahli. The Persian Gulf Pro League trio are expected to host their opponents in the United Arab Emirates, according to reports in the Iranian media.

## Taremi on Forest radar: Report



Sports Desk

Mahdi Taremi could leave Olympiacos to join English Premier League club Nottingham Forest FC during the January transfer window, Iranian sports news website Varzesh3 wrote, citing reports by The Athletic and Four Four Two. The Iranian international striker, who joined the Greek top-flight heavyweight from Inter in the summer, has been in flying form this season, scoring 13 goals, while registering three assists, in 22 games across all competitions for The Legend. Taremi, 33, is second in the Greek Super League's lead-

ing marksmen chart with eight strikes – four adrift of his Moroccan teammate Ayoub El Kaabi. Forest sits 17th in the English top-flight table with 21 points, seven clear of the relegation zone. Only bottom-club Wolverhampton has scored fewer goals (15) than Forrest, which has managed to bag 21 strikes in as many games this season. Forest's prolific striker Chris Wood is set to be sidelined for a lengthy spell after undergoing surgery recently and is not expected to return to action before the closing stages of the campaign.

## WTT Youth Contender: Iran's Shirvani claims runner-up trophy

Sports Desk

Iranian table tennis prodigy Nikan Shirvani settled for runner-up finish at the WTT Youth Contender event in Manama, Bahrain. The Iranian boy fell to a 3-2 loss to his Russian opponent in the under-13 singles final on Thursday to collect his first trophy of the new international season. Shirvani enjoyed an impressive run of results at the annual event last season. The Iranian claimed the

under-11 title in Tunis last January, thanks to a final victory over Andya Mohammed of Iraq, and then repeated the success in April, defeating Moldovan Nicolae Bucur in straight games in the final. Shirvani also bagged a third-place trophy on his return to the Tunisian capital in October, courtesy of a last-four setback in a five-game thriller against Russian Matvei Manankov, who competed as a neutral athlete, in the under-13 age class.



● IRTTF





# Minister hails Fajr Film Festival as symbol of national identity

Arts & Culture Desk



Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance described Fajr Film Festival as a symbol of Iranians' national identity. Abbas Salehi, during his visit to the Fajr Film Festival secretariat on January 17, added that "whenever Iran is at greater risk, we should work harder for our country," IRNA reported.

He said Iran hosts various cultural events, but only a few have become identity symbols, emphasizing, "As we find ourselves in more critical conditions, we require more identity symbols; when geography, identity, and history are at risk, the role of such cultural symbols becomes more prominent."

Salehi said the festival, in previous years, has provided a kind of strength that is not merely symbolic or injective. Salehi considered the Fajr Film Festival as a symbol of Iranian cinema and stressed, "Iranian cinema is part of the identifying markers of Iran, and the image of Iran is intertwined with its cinema; to such an extent that after 'Iranian Poetry', 'Iranian Cinema' is known worldwide."

He noted, "When cinema holds such a position, then the symbols of this cinema also gain importance, and undoubtedly, the Fajr Film Festival is one of these symbols."

He recalled positive events that occurred during the previous rounds of the festi-

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi (C), flanked by the Secretary of the Fajr Film Festival Manuchehr Shahsavari (L) and Head of the Cinema Organization of Iran Raed Faridzadeh, attends a meeting on Fajr Film Festival in Tehran on January 17, 2026.

● IRNA

val, referring specifically to last year's efforts to reconcile cineasts with the Fajr Film Festival again, which he said was achieved in a short time.

"This year, Fajr Film Festival has gained thematic and formal diversity in order to develop into an event that will be the prelude to future improvements, which the ministry will certainly support," Salehi said.

Salehi also referred to the change in the media system and the need to perceive this change in events like the Fajr Film Festival. According to the minister, media activity is typically limited to the days of holding the festival, but to have a persistent path, the "continuous communication system" must take a different approach.

He stressed that "we should show that not only have not our motivations wavered, but our determination has doubled to not send a signal of weakness to the enemy and to prevent them from taking more hostile actions against our country."

The Fajr Film Festival is one of the events



that can send important signals, as the world is looking at this event.

The minister expressed hope that the Fajr Film Festival would be held more magnificently than ever.

Raed Faridzadeh, the head of the Cinema Organization of Iran, and Manuchehr Shahsavari, the secretary of the Fajr Film Festival, were also present.

## Over 6,000 artists submitted works to Fajr Int'l Theater Festival

The number of works submitted to the 44th edition of the Fajr International Theater Festival secretariat has been very impressive, with over 6,000 theater artists from across the country participating in the festival so far, the minister

said in a visit to Kerman Province a day earlier.

The festival has reached a point where more attention needs to be paid to talent scouting and investing on young theater groups, Salehi added.

The festival officially opened in Kerman Province and will continue in the capital Tehran.

## Hamedan's tourists rate posts 9% growth in as many months



● IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

The number of tourists who visited the museums and historical sites in Iran's western province of Hamedan registered 9% increase and reached 609,548, during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar to December 21, compared to the same period last year, the provincial head of museums and his-

torical sites announced.

The 45-day closure related to the 12-day war in June was also taken into account, Amir-Hossein Fariba said, IRNA reported.

Fariba announced the Avicenna tomb of the province as the top attraction with 238,132 visitors.

This year, 200,595 visits were recorded for Tomb of Babataher, 115,877 for Heg-

mataneh Museum, and 19,190 visits for the Alaviyan Dome.

He added that the province saw 7,472 visits to the History and Culture Museum of Malayer, 3,936 to the Noshan Castle, 9,040 to Samen underground city, 2,929 to the Haji Agha Torab Nahavand Bathhouse Museum.

Also, 4,508 tourists visited the History and Culture Museum of Toyserkan, 5,456 the Tomb of Mir Razyeddin Artimani, and 2,413 the History and Culture Museum of Asadabad.

The province houses 21 museums, among which eight are directly supervised by provincial cultural heritage department and 13 are being managed collaboratively throughout the province. He added that Hamedan boasts 1,900 historical, cultural, and natural attractions, which has made it a special and important destination in the tourism industry. Out of the figure, 1,400 have been registered on the National Heritage List.

The provincial tourism official reminded that last year, a total of 593,214 visitors paid a visit to museums and historical sites, with Avicenna Tomb recording the highest number with 222,664 visitors.

## Iran celebrates Prophet's Mission Day

Social Desk

Iran on January 17 celebrated the religious occasion of Mab'ath, marking the day Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was appointed by God to invite people to the Islamic faith.

On this day, various programs were held in different provinces, mostly at holy sites such as mosques and shrines. Most of these ceremonies included speeches by religious scholars and clerics and eulogy related to Prophet Muhammad. In some cities, motorcades and vehicle rallies were organized. Stalls were also set up across some cities, providing cultural and religious services. The distribution of sweets, drinks, and



tea, holding competitions and awarding prizes, special children and youth programs, religious Q&A sessions, and more were part of the plans of these stalls which hosted the public.

Honoring religious rituals and condemning desecration of holy sites during recent unrests in the country were also key topics in speeches on this day.

In the week leading up to this celebration, following public protests over economic issues, unrests erupted in the country, which turned violent in certain cases. During these disturbances, several holy sites and mosques were attacked and damaged. These insults were condemned by clerical society and various organizations.

## Schools return to normal as weather improves, unrest subsides



Social Desk

The Ministry of Education in Iran announced that all schools in the country will be open for all educational levels on Sunday, January 18, except for provinces where provincial governors have ordered a closure due to cold weather or air pollution, IRNA reported.

Last week, many schools in various provinces moved online due to air pollution and heavy snowfall, as well as riots in country

that in some cases escalated to violence and left several casualties.

As conditions improved, schools are ordered to return to normal operation. Majid Parsa, Director General of Tehran's Education Department, said with the improvement in conditions, all schools will resume in-person activities from Sunday.

Regarding the possibility of closure due to cold, he said that the Tehran Governor's Office will make the decision, but noted

that Tehran schools are currently in good condition regarding the supply of energy.

He added that during the recent riots, only a few schools in Tehran suffered damage (broken windows and damage to the façade), which have since been repaired.

However, some provinces, have also implemented closures due to weather conditions. Mashhad's Education Department announced that all primary schools in the city will be closed for both morning and afternoon

shifts on January 18. A similar decision has been made in the province of Kermanshah, where schools will operate remotely on Sunday.

Many cities in Iran saw protests in late December over economic problems, including the hike in foreign currency rates and rising prices of goods. However, protests turned violent in some instances and were exploited by terrorist groups. The unrest has been declining since last Sunday.