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Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi attends the BRICS foreign ministers' meeting at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, India on May 14 2026.

REUTERS



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Resonance of Iran's epic tradition at BRICS

Reimagining a world beyond coercion

By Omid Babelian
Senior Analyst on Sub-continental Affairs

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Set against the commemoration of Persian poet Ferdowsi (May 15), New Delhi became a stage where the discourse of a resilient Iran came into focus—a discourse that draws on Iran's epic tradition to revisit the relationship between reason and power, and within the BRICS sphere, sets out a horizon for justice, multilateralism, and the redefinition of global order. The visit of Abbas Araghchi, Iran's Foreign Minister, to New Delhi should be seen as going well beyond a routine diplomatic presence at the BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting. It unfolded at a sensitive juncture in international developments—a moment when the global system is caught in the midst of profound transformations, the gradual erosion of traditional power structures, and the emergence of new balancing patterns. In such conditions, the role of emerging mechanisms like BRICS in shaping the future of global governance has come to the fore more than ever. The Islamic Republic of Iran views this mechanism as a strategic platform to strengthen multilateralism, amplify the voice of the Global South, and push toward a more balanced and equitable order. Within this framework, the presence of Araghchi in New Delhi was not confined to formal participation in the meeting. It was accompanied by a series of intensive bilateral and multilateral consultations with high-ranking officials, including talks with India's Prime Minister, the country's National Security Adviser, and the foreign

ministers of influential BRICS members. Together, these engagements painted a clear picture of an active and initiative-driven Iranian diplomacy—one that, from a position of stability and strategic confidence, seeks to translate the experience of resistance into a constructive agenda for shaping new arrangements in security, economics, and regional cooperation. The significance of this visit becomes clearer when examined in light of the Iranian Foreign Minister's strategic positions at BRICS. His remarks on the need for the "reconstruction of the global order" and the revival of multilateralism were not merely a critique of the status quo; they amounted to the articulation of a theoretical framework for moving beyond an order no longer capable of responding to the complex realities of the twenty-first century. Araghchi's emphasis on a structural crisis of trust in the international system—and his assertion that many existing mechanisms have effectively ended up serving a form of institutionalized unilateralism—reflects a demand now voiced across much of the developing world. From this perspective, his explicit criticism of the instrumental use of international law, unilateral sanctions, and double standards was not simply a political stance, but a principled defense of justice in global governance. In this context, the firm insistence of the Iranian Foreign Minister that regional and international issues cannot be resolved through threats or military instruments sent a clear signal to both the region and the wider world: sustainable security can only be achieved through dialogue, mutual respect, and endogenous regional arrangements. This position echoes a dis-

tinctly Iranian strategic rationality—one that defines power not through domination, but through restraint, prudence, and responsibility. One of the most prominent themes of this visit was the emphasis on the need to establish independent financial and economic mechanisms within the BRICS framework. Criticism of unilateral sanctions as a structural tool of pressure against independent nations, alongside calls to strengthen chains of economic cooperation, showed that Iran's approach to BRICS goes beyond mere political balancing. Rather, it is geared toward designing a new architecture for economic independence and collective resilience. On the sidelines of the meeting, the Foreign Minister's bilateral consultations with his counterparts also pointed to the consolidated position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in regional equations. What stood out in these discussions was the acknowledgment by many countries of Iran's decisive role in regional developments and the need to recalibrate security and political calculations in line with new realities. This shift signals the region's entry into a new phase of redefining strategic balances. Iran's explicit response to certain positions raised on the margins of BRICS was grounded in a clear logic: regional security is not an imported concept, and reliance on external interventions not only fails to produce stability but itself becomes one of the main sources of instability. The emphasis that the future of regional security must be built on cooperation among regional states was among the most important strategic messages to come out of New Delhi.

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مزایده صادراتی بیلت آلیاژی ریخته گری مداوم

شرکت فولاد آلیاژی ایران

شماره مرجع مزایده: IASCO-EXPT1405-02 مورخ: ۱۴۰۵/۰۲/۲۴

شرکت فولاد آلیاژی ایران (IASCO) در نظر دارد نسبت به فروش بیلت آلیاژی صادراتی، از طریق مزایده عمومی اقدام نماید. خاطر نشان می سازد که عرضه در گرید منتخب و به شرح جزئیات ذیل انجام می پذیرد. از علاقمندان به شرکت در مزایده مزبور دعوت به عمل می آید که از تاریخ ۱۴۰۵/۰۲/۲۴ لغایت ۱۴۰۵/۰۲/۲۹ برای دریافت اطلاعات مزایده و راهنمایی های لازم با واحد صادرات به شماره تماس های ۰۲۱-۸۸۳۲۲۶۲۱ و ۰۲۱-۸۸۳۲۲۶۲۱ و نشانی ایمیل Salesexp@iasco.net در ارتباط باشند. مهلت ارائه پیشنهاد قیمت مزایده یادشده حداکثر ساعت ۱۵:۰۰ روز سه شنبه مورخ ۱۴۰۵/۰۲/۲۹ می باشد.

Iran Alloy Steel Company
Tender Announcement for Export of CC-Alloy Steel Billet
Tender Ref. No.: IASCO-EXPT1405-02 Date: 14/05/2026

Please be informed that **Iran Alloy Steel Company (IASCO)** intends to launch a general Tender for the export of **CC-Alloy Steel Billet** under the following terms and conditions:

- Product Specifications and Commercial terms:**

Main Tender Grades & Quality	Acc. to attached specification No.
94031	C07KU9403140411A042

* Other Grades may also be considered By Customer Request with related premium price. (Please clearly specify the desired grade, analysis and etc.)

 - Size & Dimensions: (130*130) * 12,000 mm.
 - Quantity: 25.000 MT (±10%).
 - Delivery Time: approximately 30 days after receipt of advance payment.
 - Delivery Term: FOB Bandar Abbas.

Note: Other delivery ports including BIK, Parsian and Chabahar may be considered upon buyer's request, subject to amended delivery time and mutual agreement.
- Tender General Conditions:**
 - The offer must remain valid for at least **seven (7) Iranian working days** from the submission deadline.
 - Vague, conditional or incomplete offers will not be considered.
 - The buyer's company must be legally registered outside the Islamic Republic of IRAN.
 - IASCO reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers at its sole discretion.
 - All payments shall be deemed valid only upon the Seller's receipt of official bank confirmation.
 - Submission of offer implies full acceptance of all tender terms and conditions.
 - Offer Submission:**

For instructions and further information, kindly contact the Export Department using the following details:
Tel: +9835-31222675 & +9821-88322621.
Email: Salesexp@iasco.net (For registration only, not to send any offer).
 - Closing Date:**

Deadline for Offer Submission: Tuesday, May 19, 2026- by 3:00 p.m. (Tehran Local Time)

Araghchi says Iran interested in talks if US is 'serious'

Trump open to 20-year pause on uranium enrichment

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday that Tehran has "no trust" in the United States and is interested in negotiating with Washington only if it is serious as talks on ending the war remained on hold.

"Contradictory messages" have made us reluctant about the real intention of the Americans on negotiations, Araghchi told reporters on the sidelines of a meeting of the BRICS bloc of nations in India's capital, New Delhi.

The minister said that he had "received messages" from the US saying it is willing to continue talks.

His remarks came as efforts are underway to end the ongoing tensions in the region, which have been caused by a weeks-long US-Israeli aggression against Iran that began on February 28.

On April 11-12, Iran and the US held the first round of negotiations brokered by Pakistan, days after Islamabad mediated a ceasefire to halt the aggression on Iran. However, it failed to produce an agreement due to the US excessive demands.

Araghchi said Iran is trying to keep the ceasefire to give diplomacy a chance but is also prepared to go back to fighting.

Efforts to bring back the sides to the nego-

tiating table also failed after Iran refused to take part in the second round due to the US violation of the ceasefire.

However, the two countries have been exchanging proposals through mediator Pakistan to find a way out of the crisis which has also disrupted global economy.

The latest proposal by Iran submitted to the US on Sunday was rejected by US President Donald Trump as "totally unacceptable".

Trump backs 20-year enrichment halt

Trump, who was returning to the US from a two-day summit in China on Friday, said he agreed in talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping that Tehran must reopen the Strait of Hormuz which has been closed in response to the US-Israeli aggression.

However, he said a 20-year moratorium on Iran's nuclear program would be enough for him to strike a deal and end the war.

The allowance for Iran to enrich uranium at any point in the future — even decades out — marks a shift for the president, who has repeatedly insisted that the country never be allowed to do so.

Even as reports proliferated that the US was negotiating some kind of timeline behind the scenes, the Trump administration denied that they'd accept anything

less than a full surrender and a permanent end to Iran's nuclear ambitions.

But Trump, speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, appeared to move the goalposts.

"Twenty years is enough but the level of guarantee from them is not enough," he said about Tehran's latest offer. "In other words, it's got to be a real 20 years."

Call for fundamental reforms to UN

Iranian foreign minister also addressed the BRICS foreign ministers' meeting on Friday, during which he urged fundamental reforms to the United Nations and international governance structures.

Araghchi said that the world is experiencing "a period of structural instability and a deep crisis of trust."

"The structures governing the international order, designed in the post-World War II era, no longer have the capacity to respond to the realities of the 21st century," he told fellow foreign ministers.

"The gap between emerging powers and traditional decision-making structures not only threatens global stability but has fueled widespread injustice in the distribution of power, wealth, and development opportunities."

The minister criticized what he described



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaks during a press conference held on the sidelines of a meeting of the BRICS bloc of nations in India's capital, New Delhi on May 15, 2026.

IRNA

as multilateralism in name only.

"What we witness today in some international institutions is not 'multilateralism,' but rather an attempt to preserve 'unilateralism' under the guise of international law," Araghchi said.

The top diplomat called for fundamental reforms to international organizations, particularly the UN Security Council, describing the current body as "a clear symbol of inefficiency and imbalance."

He cited the Security Council's silence regarding the US-Israeli aggression against

Iran as a stark example of its failure.

Araghchi also highlighted attacks on Iran's critical infrastructure, including refineries, petrochemical complexes, bridges, railways, stadiums, cultural and historical centers, energy transmission lines, and major industrial facilities.

"These infrastructures are not just technical or economic facilities; they are the backbone of people's daily lives," he said. The foreign minister warned that silence in the face of such aggression sets a dangerous precedent.

Iran raps UAE for active complicity in war



International Desk

Iranian officials blasted the United Arab Emirates for "direct involvement" in the US-Israeli aggression against their country after it was revealed that UAE warplanes had carried out attacks on Iran.

"The UAE representative speaks about international law, but please tell me which part of international law allows you to support an unjustified and unprovoked act of aggression?" Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said after his UAE counterpart Khalifa bin Shaheen Al Marar accused Iran of attacking his country and labelled Tehran as an aggressor during a meeting of BRICS foreign ministers on Thursday.

"Yesterday it was revealed that UAE fighter jets have participated in attacks against us and have even taken direct action against us. Therefore, the UAE is an active partner in this aggression," Araghchi told the same meeting held in India's capital, New Delhi.

"I didn't name the UAE in my [BRICS] statement for the sake of unity. But the truth is that the UAE was directly involved in the aggression against my country. When the attacks started, they didn't even issue a condemnation," Araghchi said. The top diplomat argued that neither US bases nor an alliance with Israel provided the UAE with security and that it should reconsider its policy towards Iran. "We must live side by side in peace, and this requires peaceful relations and complete understanding between the two countries," Araghchi added.

The spat also came a day after the UAE denied a statement by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he visited the Persian Gulf country during the war on Iran,

to which Araghchi also reacted by saying that "those colluding with Israel to sow division will be held to account."

Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi also said on Thursday the UAE could not hide its aggressive nature and role behind false claims and fabricated narratives. Gharibabadi added that Iran could not remain passive while its people and infrastructure were targeted.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei, issued a veiled warning on Friday, accusing the UAE of hidden betrayal. "He who betrays in secret will be openly disgraced," Baqaei wrote in Arabic on the social media platform X without naming the Arab country. After the unprovoked war of aggression by a US-Israeli military coalition launched on February 28, Iran responded in self-defense with countless missile and drone attacks against American and Israeli interests in the region, particularly those in the Persian Gulf states, including the UAE.

Pezeshkian calls for strategic cooperation after new Iraqi PM takes office

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Friday congratulated new Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi for securing parliamentary confidence after he was sworn in a day earlier, expressing hope the two nations would witness a new chapter of strategic cooperation.

"I hope that in this new phase, and drawing on the deep ties between our two peoples, we will witness a new chapter of strategic cooperation," Pezeshkian said in a post on X.

He added that Tehran would "remain by Iraq's side on the path of development and the consolidation of security".

Iraq's parliament on Thursday voted to approve the government program and part of the cabinet lineup of Zaidi but hit an impasse over some of the ministerial appointments.

The 270 lawmakers in attendance voted to confirm 14 ministers in the 23-member cabinet. Most were newcomers to the government, but foreign minister Fuad Hussein retained his post.

Nominees for three posts — interior minister, higher education minister and planning minister — failed to win parliamentary approval. Voting on other positions — including the defense, labor, housing



Iraqi lawmakers attend a session to approve the new government in Baghdad, Iraq, on May 15, 2026.

AP

and reconstruction and education ministers — was postponed to a later stage, with no date set.

Under a power-sharing arrangement among the political factions, the dominant parliamentary bloc — the Coordination Framework, a coalition of Shia parties — picks 12 ministers, while Sunni parties choose six, Kurdish parties four and religious minorities one.

The government program approved by the MPs includes priorities related to improving public services, addressing the electricity crisis, and supporting economic stability, in addition to combating corruption, reforming public administration, and strengthening the rule of law.

The program also includes provisions related to restricting weapons to the state, which may be difficult to implement in practice.

Resonance of Iran's ...

Amid these developments, talks held with Indian officials carried particular weight. The mutual

emphasis by Tehran and New Delhi on expanding cooperation across political, economic, transit, and energy sectors demonstrated that the two countries share a common understanding of the deep interlinkage between security and development. This convergence is rooted in a shared strategic rationality—one that is based on independence in decision-making, avoidance of dependency, and a preference for engagement over confrontation.

The coincidence of this visit with the commemoration of Ferdowsi carried symbolic and civilizational meaning. In the "Shahnameh" (Book of Kings), he redefines the relationship between reason and power through an enduring epic: "Wisdom is the eye of the soul, when you look aright;

Without that eye, you cannot pass through the world in joy." The Shahnameh, alongside India's "Ramayana" and "Mahabharata", stands

among the most distinguished civilizational epics of the world. While in the Indian intellectual tradition, the concept of "dharma" underscores responsibility and moral order, in the Iranian tradition, Ferdowsi's wisdom rests on the principle that power finds meaning only in conjunction with reason and justice. This is the very notion of "responsible power" that has gained renewed relevance in today's international relations landscape.

The Iranian Foreign Minister's remarks at BRICS were grounded precisely in this foundation. His emphasis on moving from crisis management to structural reform, strengthening independent mechanisms of cooperation, and the need for a fair redistribution of power in the international system showed that Iran's vision for BRICS is aimed at shaping a new model of global cooperation—one in which justice replaces domination and participation replaces exclusivity.

From this vantage point, the Foreign Minister's visit to New Delhi was not merely a diplomatic engagement; it

was the manifestation of a dialogue between two great civilizational traditions about the future of the world. Iran and India, as two ancient civilizations, carry a form of historical rationality that today's turbulent world needs more than ever—a rationality grounded in prudence, balance, dialogue, and responsibility.

In this visit, New Delhi was not just a diplomatic destination; it emerged as a stage for affirming a central message: that the future of Asia and the Global South will take shape not in the shadow of worn-out arrangements and imposed alliances, but through cooperation among independent powers, endogenous security, sustainable development, and civilizational dialogue. And this is the very message that Ferdowsi conveyed centuries ago in the language of epic—and which now, from the BRICS platform and in the voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has once again rung out: a world freed from the logic of coercion will be rebuilt only through wisdom, justice, and responsible resistance.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Iran urges SCO to establish 'joint deterrence' system against security threats

Bagheri Kani: US-Israeli war aimed at 'attack on Global South'

Economy Desk

The deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said on Thursday that the Islamic Republic supports moves to set up "joint deterrence mechanisms" within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to combat security threats against the member states and the world.

Speaking at the 21st meeting of the secretaries of SCO member states in Kyrgyzstan's Bishkek, Ali Bagheri Kani said one of the organization's founding goals was to identify and address challenges emerging in the 21st century.

"Today, it can be said with certainty that the greatest problem of the 21st century is the emergence of the pathological theory of 'peace through strength,' which effectively means capitulation instead of agreement," Bagheri Kani said.

He underlined that such an approach leads to the continued use of war as a primary tool for managing international relations, threatening both regional and global security while undermining national and multilateral economic development plans.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the design, coordination and strengthening of joint deterrence mechanisms within the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization so that member states are prepared for a new era of international security."

Bagheri Kani said the solution lay in preserving cohesion within the SCO and increasing resistance against what he described as "pressures for submission." He added that the organization should address modern and hybrid threats alongside traditional security challenges and strengthen cooperation among members in line with the SCO Charter. Iran also supports Russia's proposal to establish a "rapid response mechanism to international challenges," and an initiative to create strategic resource reserves within the frameworks of the SCO and BRICS, Bagheri Kani said, adding that establishing financial settlement systems would be a vital infrastructure for enhancing cooperation.

Iran war aimed at eroding Asian convergence

Pointing to the US-Israeli "40 days of uninterrupted aggression" against Iran, Bagheri Kani accused unnamed adversaries of carrying out attacks on military officials, civilian infrastructure, industrial and educational facilities, and peaceful nuclear installations, while also supporting separatist and militant groups around Iran's borders.

"Before the conflict, Iran's foreign policy had focused on neighborhood diplomacy and maximizing engagement with neighboring and aligned countries," Bagheri Kani said. "The war against Iran was intended to undermine Asian convergence and was the beginning of an attack on the Global South."

"This war, although it began with Iran, is not limited to Iran," he said. "Any weak response is an invitation to more war."

Bagheri Kani also censured Israel's expansionism and said its efforts to occupy and annex surrounding territories and spread violence across the region had become the main source of insecurity in West Asia.

He said lasting peace and stability in the West Asian region could only be achieved through a comprehensive and just resolution to the Palestinian issue, based on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

During his visit to Bishkek, the deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council also met and held talks with Adyl Orozbekov, the secretary of the Security Council of Kyrgyzstan.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on issues of mutual interest as well as ongoing regional and international develop-



Ali Bagheri Kani, deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, addresses the 21st meeting of the secretaries of SCO member states in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on May 14, 2026. MEHR

ments.

They also reviewed the current state and prospects for cooperation in several areas of interest to both countries.

The meeting underscored the importance of Kyrgyzstan's role as the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and emphasized the need to further strengthen multilateral cooperation within the framework of the organization.

Founded in 2001 by China, Russia, and several Central Asian republics to address regional security concerns, the SCO has since expanded to include India, Pakistan, Iran, and Belarus. An additional 16 nations hold observer or dialogue partner status.

The organization engages in joint counter-terrorism drills, coordinates on security matters, and fosters collaboration in trade, energy, and education.

Iran crude tops \$104 per barrel amid smoldering Hormuz tensions



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Economy Desk

Prices for Iranian crude oil traded above \$104 per barrel in global markets, with benchmark oil prices climbing on concerns over tensions involving Iran and uncertainty surrounding shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

According to the latest data published by OilPrice, Iranian crude grades posted mixed prices across regional markets despite a daily decline of 1.31%.

Iranian Light crude for delivery to northwest Europe was priced at \$103.25 per barrel, while Iranian Heavy and Forozan Blend traded at \$101.35 and \$101.60, respectively. In the Mediterranean market, Iranian Light crude stood at \$102.60 per barrel, while Iranian Heavy and Forozan Blend were priced at \$100.45 and \$100.70, respectively.

The highest recorded price for Iranian crude was at Egypt's Sidi Kerir terminal, where Iranian Light reached \$104.50 per barrel. Iranian Heavy traded

there at \$102.35 per barrel, while Forozan Blend was priced at \$102.60.

Global oil benchmarks also rose sharply. Brent crude futures climbed \$1.27, or 1.2%, to \$106.99 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude gained \$1.42, or 1.4%, to \$102.59 a barrel.

Brent prices have risen nearly 6% over the past week, while US crude has gained more than 7%, amid uncertainty surrounding a fragile ceasefire linked to the conflict involving Iran and persistent concerns over maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz, a critical artery for global oil shipments.

The gains followed comments by US President Donald Trump, who said in an interview broadcast by Fox News on Thursday night that he would not "be much more patient" with Iran and urged Tehran to sign an agreement.

Despite statements from Tehran that around 30 vessels had recently passed through the Strait of Hormuz, concerns

about attacks and ship seizures in the region continued to weigh on markets.

Jamieson Greer told Bloomberg on Friday that China was taking a "very pragmatic" approach toward engagement with Iran and that keeping the Strait of Hormuz open remained critically important for Beijing.

Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping were expected to meet on Friday to conclude a two-day state visit marked by ceremonial events and trade discussions.

Analysts said the Beijing summit failed to produce significant progress on Iran, prompting markets to refocus on the ongoing impasse and risks surrounding the Strait of Hormuz, including the possibility of renewed military escalation.

Among the market expectations from the summit were signals of stronger energy cooperation between Washington and Beijing. Trump said China had expressed willingness to purchase oil from the United States.

NIGC: 75 firms agree to join nationwide gas-saving push

Economy Desk

The head of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) announced on Thursday that 75 operator companies had signed agreements with provincial gas firms as part of a nationwide drive to optimize natural gas consumption and improve energy efficiency.

Saeid Tavakoli made the remarks during the 5th meeting on natural gas consumption optimization programs, held via videoconference with senior managers from provincial gas companies, refineries and operational regions, according to the company.

Tavakoli said Iran would continue implementing gas consumption management programs, describing targeted optimization projects as a central pillar of the country's energy strategy. He said current measures were progressing favorably.

Iran, which holds some of the world's largest natural gas reserves, has struggled in recent years with rising domestic demand, seasonal shortages and inefficiencies in consumption, particularly during winter months when residential heating demand surges. Authorities have increasingly focused on efficiency measures to reduce pres-

sure on the national grid and maintain stable supplies to industries and power plants.

Tavakoli said ongoing projects included boiler room optimization, replacement of high-consumption heaters and energy management initiatives in greenhouses, poultry farms and other high-use facilities.

"These measures have played an effective role in controlling gas consumption and improving the efficient use of the country's energy resources," he said.

He added that consumption reduction targets had been established across sectors including agriculture, industry, power generation, poultry farms and greenhouse operations, with optimization projects being pursued in each area.

According to Tavakoli, 75 operator companies from 29 provinces have signed agreements with provincial gas firms, with the number of contracts continuing to grow as more companies seek participation.

He said expanding cooperation with operator companies and increasing private-sector participation were among the NIGC's key approaches to implementing consumption optimization policies.



Iran relies heavily on natural gas for domestic energy use, electricity generation and industrial production. However, international sanctions, aging infrastructure and rapid consumption growth have complicated efforts to modernize the sector and improve efficiency.

Tavakoli said the continued rollout of the optimization programs was expected to generate significant gas savings nationwide.

He also stressed the importance of monitoring projects and evaluating completed measures, saying stronger coordination among provincial gas companies, refineries and operational regions — alongside the sharing of successful experiences — would help achieve Iran's broader energy management and supply stability goals.

Second Announcement


N.I.S.O.C
 NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
 AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0340014

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir. Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity
01	CASING, NON API, GRADE P-110SS, SEAMLESS, "N.VAM", THD OR EQUIVALENT, RANGE 3 (MAX LENGTH: 40.5 FT), AS PER API 5CT / ISO 11960 NACE MR0175, MARKING: STENCIL PRINTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT MAX. H.R.C:29, H2S (PPM): 21600, CO2 (PPM): 49000, TEMPERATURE: 225 F, SIZE, WEIGHT, DRIFT AS SPECIFIED; REF. NISOC/ NIOC APPROVED STANDARD MANU COLLAPSE PRESSURE: 8530 PSI BURST PRESSURE: 11220 PSI, 7 IN., 29 PPF, DRIFT: 6.125 IN.	4,000 LE
02	COUPLING CASING, NON API GRADE, SMI, AS PER API 5CT/ ISO 11960 NACE MR0175 TO BE ELECTRO PLATED MARKING: STENCIL PRINTING IN ACCORDANCE CASING SIZE, GRADE, THREAD AS SPECIFIED REF. NISOC/ NIOC APPROVED STANDARD MANU NON-API GRADE P-110SS, 7 IN., NEW VAM OR EQUIVALENT	200 NO

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 48,935/29 EURO or 78,385,328,896 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS CFR, BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.A.D INCLUDING 25% ADVANCE PAYMENT, SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
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Gargash, strategic rationality, and security dilemma in Persian Gulf



Kamran Yeganegi
Political analyst

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash, diplomatic adviser to the president of the United Arab Emirates, is widely regarded as one of the leading intellectual and political figures of the Arab world in the fields of political science and international relations. Throughout his academic and diplomatic career, much of his discourse has revolved around concepts such as political pragmatism, regional stability, geo-economics, multilateralism, development, and the necessity of moving beyond costly confrontations in the Persian Gulf region.

It is precisely for this reason that Dr. Gargash's recent remarks, published on his official X account on March 29, 2026, in the aftermath of the latest regional escalation involving Iran and several Persian Gulf states, deserve careful analytical reflection. In that statement, Dr. Gargash argued that any political solution should include guarantees preventing future Iranian attacks on Persian Gulf states, as well as compensation for damages caused to civilian and vital infrastructure. He further described Iran as representing "the primary threat" to Persian Gulf security. While such concerns may be understandable within the context of heightened regional tensions, the broader framing of these remarks appears somewhat difficult to reconcile with the strategic pragmatism and geo-economic moderation that Dr. Gargash himself has consistently advocated over the years in both academic and diplomatic discourse. Naturally, political positioning



during periods of instability is not unusual. However, what is generally expected from a scholar of political science and a theorist of regional security is a commitment to analytical restraint, legal precision, and strategic balance rather than rhetoric shaped primarily by escalation and securitization. This expectation becomes even more important considering that Dr. Gargash has repeatedly emphasized that the future of this region should be defined not through perpetual confrontation, but through economic integration, connectivity, trade, and pragmatic cooperation. Within this framework, focusing exclusively on compensation, threats, and deterrence, without simultaneously addressing the deeper structural roots of insecurity, risks oversimplifying a far more complex regional reality. A region aspiring to become a global center for logistics, trade, fi-

nance, tourism, and investment cannot simultaneously remain trapped within cycles of militarization and geopolitical confrontation. From the perspective of international law, recent developments also require a broader and more nuanced understanding. Under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, states retain the inherent right of self-defense against direct threats to their national security. Likewise, under the legal framework governing armed conflicts, military infrastructures and operational facilities used in hostile actions against another state may acquire the status of legitimate military objectives. Accordingly, when American military bases or security infrastructure linked to Israel operate from the territory of regional states — including the UAE — within broader security arrangements directed

ers has not produced sustainable stability for the region; rather, it has frequently contributed to deeper mistrust and recurring instability. Iran and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, regardless of political disagreements, share an interconnected historical, geographical, and strategic environment. More than ever, this region requires the establishment of a collective security framework grounded in regional dialogue, mutual respect, non-interference, and the reduction of destabilizing external rivalries. Confrontational rhetoric may provide temporary political utility, but in the long run, it risks undermining the same development-oriented and pragmatic principles that Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash himself has long defended in both academic and strategic discourse. Today, the Persian Gulf region needs diplomatic rationality more than ever — a rationality that seeks security not through mutual threats and escalating tensions, but through balanced engagement, dialogue, and recognition of geopolitical realities. Perhaps the time has come for Dr. Gargash — who has long been regarded as a theorist of strategic pragmatism and collective regional wisdom — to once again become a leading voice for restoring the very discourse of moderation, dialogue, and balanced regional engagement that he himself has advocated for years.



Within this framework, focusing exclusively on compensation, threats, and deterrence, without simultaneously addressing the deeper structural roots of insecurity, risks oversimplifying a far more complex regional reality. A region aspiring to become a global center for logistics, trade, finance, tourism, and investment cannot simultaneously remain trapped within cycles of militarization and geopolitical confrontation.

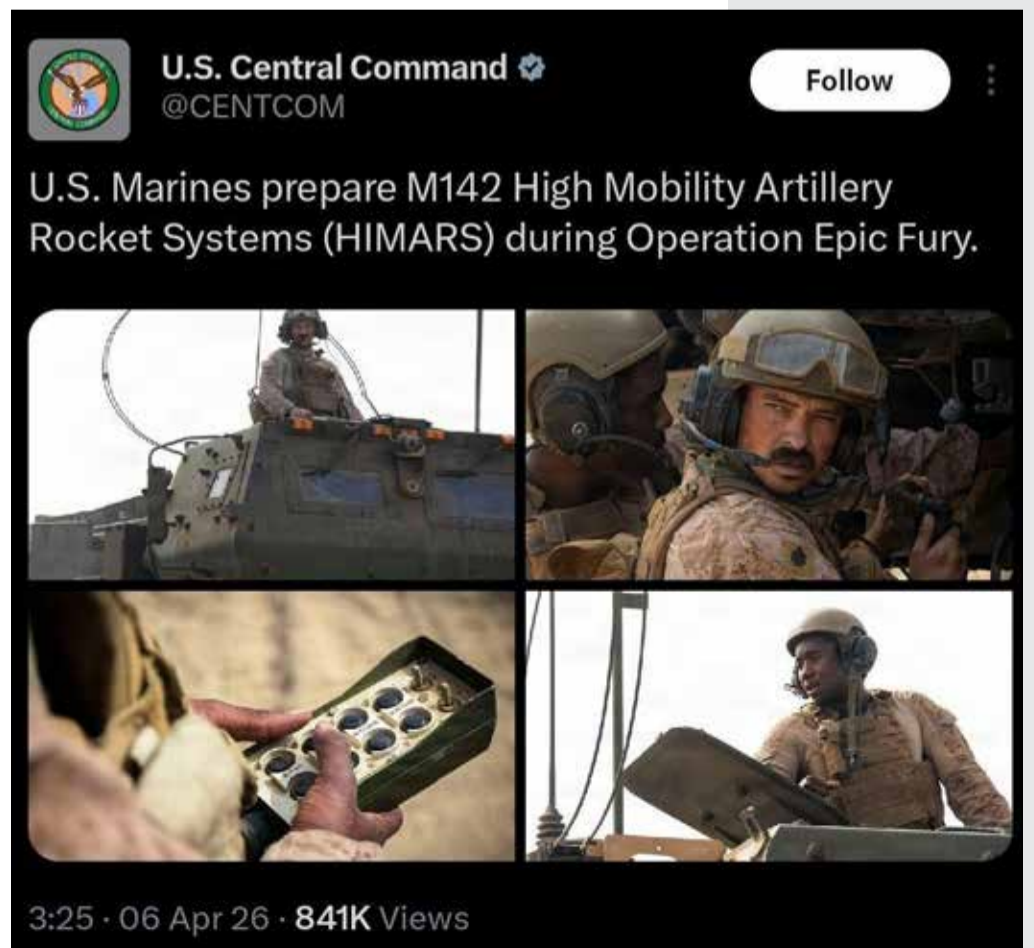
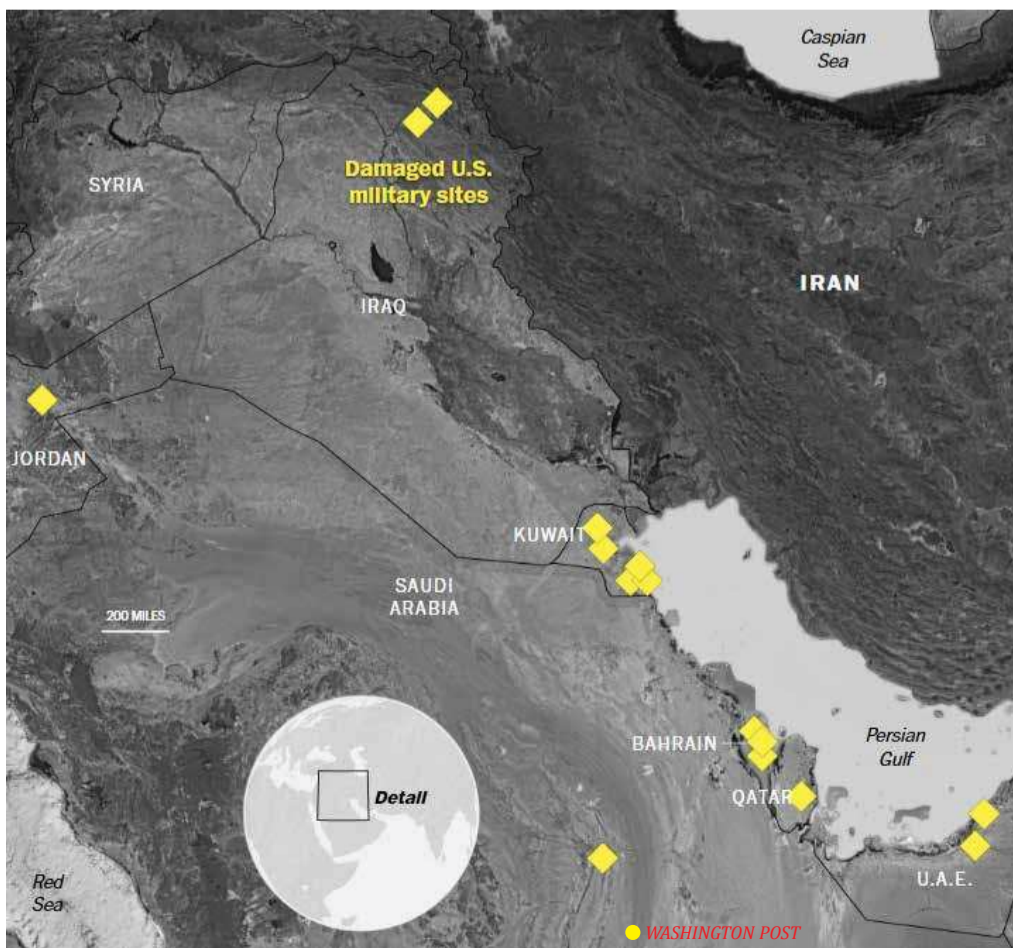


Anwar Mohammed Gargash, former foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates
securityconference.org

against Iran, it is natural that Iran's security perception of such facilities fundamentally changes. This is not merely a political argument; rather, it derives from internationally recognized principles of deterrence and the lawful exercise of self-defense. One critical reality often overlooked in regional discourse is that security in the Persian Gulf is indivisible. No state can simultaneously participate in external military-security architectures targeting neighboring countries while expecting complete immunity from the strategic consequences of such alignments. The experience of recent decades has repeatedly demonstrated that excessive reliance on extra-regional pow-



A post on X by the US Central Command (CENTCOM) dated April 6, 2026, shows American servicemen preparing M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) in a desert area, presumably within the Arabian Peninsula, to fire at Iran.
X



Expert: UAE's Iran approach 'strategic miscalculation,' not cunningness

INTERVIEW

During the past 47 years, the rapport between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the nations situated upon the southern littoral of the Persian Gulf, in addition to the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), has been contingent upon various circumstances and characterized by numerous ups and downs. The nature of engagement with each of these polities has been delineated proportionally to their respective capacities; for instance, the relationship with Saudi Arabia has consistently been predicated upon political foundations for Iran, whereas that with the United Arab Emirates has possessed an economic basis. Nevertheless, the 40-day imposed war against Iran has induced tangible alterations within these relationships and shall exert an influence upon them in the future. Certain states along the Persian Gulf's periphery granted permission to the United States military to utilize their territories against the Islamic Republic of Iran, a proposition that shall remain immutable and incapable of being ameliorated under any circumstances. Nonetheless, Tehran has understood the conditions of these nations, whether antecedent to the war or during the current cease-fire period, and it is for this reason that Iranian authorities have repeatedly emphasized that no military action has been defined against these countries, but rather a reasonable measure in the service of self-defense has been articulated, which has targeted American bases situated upon the soil of those nations. The circumstances that have emerged in the region, however, have yielded disparate interpretations among the members of the GCC, and disagreements have arisen amongst them concerning the appropriate approach toward this situation. As it presently appears, indications of a bifurcation have become manifest among these states, with the United Arab Emirates in the process of dissociating its trajectory from that of its more senior brethren, particularly Saudi Arabia. The divergence in perspective that Abu Dhabi had developed with Riyadh regarding dossiers such as Yemen and Sudan has now reached its apogee concerning Iran, and the Emirates has elected a novel yet exceedingly perilous path. Concomitantly with the erosion of Abu Dhabi's Islamic affiliations with the region, its novel linkages with the Israeli regime are rapidly coalescing, and the rulers of Dubai believe that these connections, fostered by American encouragement and backing, could sculpt a disparate future for this southern Persian Gulf emirate. In this interim, the formation and consolidation of these new bonds necessitate a rupture with neighboring countries and even enmity toward the adversary of the new ally, and the Emirates' reactions during the 40-day war and its aftermath can be analyzed through such a lens. Concurrently with the escalation of tensions, Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued the following warning in a communiqué: "The Islamic Republic of Iran, adopting a responsible approach and in deference to the collective welfare of the region and the Islamic Ummah, has exercised maximum restraint." An examination of the UAE's pernicious role-playing necessitates an apprehension of the motivations upon which Abu Dhabi has relied in recent years to initiate the present trajectory, which it appears likely to continue. To scrutinize these motivations, an interview was conducted with Hadi Borhani, a professor at the University of Tehran and an analyst of regional affairs, the translated transcript of which you shall read below.

Hadi Borhani



Among the states on the Persian Gulf's periphery that were, in some manner, arrayed against Iran during the recent conflict, the United Arab Emirates exhibits a harsher hostile demeanor. As an initial inquiry, in assessing this comparatively different perspective of that country's authorities toward Iran, which influential components can be explored?

BORHANI: Between Iran and the Emirates, owing to the territorial dispute over the three islands, there exist serious bilateral problems specifically. However, the Emirates' conduct in the region and its negative interaction with Iran possess more substantial roots. Within the competition between two rival political ideologies — namely Islamism and Arabism (Arab nationalism) — in the Arab world, the Emirates has selected nationalism and, from this angle, adopts a negative stance toward the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iranian Islamism. The Emirates can be considered the most formidable adversary of Islamism in the region, second only to Israel. Wherever Islamism manifests in the region, the Emirates wages war against it, and in this domain, emboldened by Israeli and American support, it acts with extreme recklessness. The Emirates' wealth likely constitutes the largest capital funding the campaign against Islamism in the region, and this deviates from the practice of other GCC states.

The other Council states either operate in accordance with Islamism, as Qatar does, or are, at minimum, not its enemies. From this perspective, the Emirates has foundational disputes with Iran. That is to say, it opposes Iran's Islamism and its Islamist allies, such as Hezbollah and Ansarullah (Houthis), and it operates strategically in this field, in coordination with Israel's regional strategies.

Can it be asserted that this comparatively divergent approach of Abu Dhabi represents an inception for the definition of a new role for the Emirates, both in the region and globally — a role wherein the Emirates is defined less as a member of the GCC and more as a partner to the United States and Israel?

Another component of the Emirates' regional maneuvering is its selection of a desirable regional



An Emirati walks toward a mural presenting UAE and Israel friendship as that of "Cousins" at an exhibition commemorating the Jewish Holocaust in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on May 26, 2021. **KAMRAN JEBREILI/AP**

order. On the main battleground of the Middle East — that is, the rivalry and hostility between the Israeli order and the indigenous regional order — the Emirates, contrary to all regional states, has positioned itself entirely alongside the Israeli order and has thus, in effect, seceded from the region. Consequently, the Emirates has distanced itself from the Cooperation Council, OPEC, the Arab League, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation while, on the other flank, it has drawn closer to the United States and Israel.

Operating under a fallacious and opportunistic interpretation, the Emirates believes it has aligned with the victorious party. It appears that the Emirati reading of the past several decades of Middle Eastern developments is that Israel is ultimately the winning side, and that having Israel beside them is superior and more profitable than belonging to the family of Arab and Islamic nations. Under this same interpretation, the Emirates has, in effect, abandoned its family in the Arab and Islamic worlds and has adopted stances coordinated with Israel.

In this connection, it has ceased its support for Palestine and has turned to active collaboration with Israel, and within this framework, it cooperates with Israel to weaken the Arab and Islamic worlds. Probably the most significant component of this cooperation is the Emirates' backing of secessionism and discord among Islamic nations. In this

regard, the Emirates supports secessionism in Yemen, Sudan, Libya, and Somalia, and this corresponds precisely with Israel's regional blueprint.

The Emirates' calculus is separate from that of other Islamic, Arab, and Cooperation Council nations. None of the Middle Eastern countries, not even Egypt or Jordan — which have made peace with Israel — exhibit such cooperation and coordination with Israel. Egypt, for example, which was the first nation to recognize Israel, in fact, resists Israel's regional scheme through soft means because it correctly understands that this scheme contravenes the interests of the region, including Egypt itself. The Emirates, however, does not hold such a perspective and has entirely distanced itself from the region.

The other Cooperation Council members, excluding Bahrain, maintain no relationship with Israel; rather, they rank among the most significant opponents of normalizing relations with Israel. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Oman all adopt a firm stance against relations with Israel compared to other Arab and Islamic nations, and they constitute, in effect, the most important barrier to normalization between Israel and Islamic countries; the Emirates, however, plays a discordant tune within the Cooperation Council.

The evidence available to us thus far suggests that other regional nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, show no desire, at least outwardly, for the perpetuation of conflict; the Emirates, however, desires it. Abu Dhabi, relying upon American and Israeli assistance, can stand against Iran. What consequences shall this standing have for them?

Within the competition between two rival political ideologies — namely Islamism and Arabism (Arab nationalism) — in the Arab world, the Emirates has selected nationalism and, from this angle, adopts a negative stance toward the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iranian Islamism. The Emirates can be reckoned as the most formidable adversary of Islamism in the region, second only to Israel. Wherever Islamism manifests in the region, the Emirates wages war against it, and in this domain, emboldened by Israeli and American support, it acts with extreme recklessness.

In the narrative of an American and Israeli attack upon Iran, the Emirates' position diverges from that of other regional states and aligns with the American and Israeli position. Accordingly, it adopts harsher public stances against Iran, and more significant than the public stances is the Emirates' genuine will and strategic decisions, which, given the aforementioned contexts, guide the Emirates toward coordination with Israel and the United States and toward antagonism with Iran.

The Emirates, in its own estimation, acts cunningly; in reality, however, it has committed a strategic miscalculation. The Emirates is far too small to compete with major regional nations, such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Emirates' economic progress and its immense wealth have deceived its leaders. This wealth cannot compete with Iran's genuine power.

The Emirates' subsequent error is its poor choice between Israel and the region, and, in effect, between a stranger and its family. The Emirates and the Emirati nation belong to the region and to the Arab and Islamic worlds. Forfeiting one's family to have an aggressive stranger, however powerful, beside you is not judicious.

Protesters demonstrate against the UAE's militaristic adventurism in Sudan in front of the country's embassy in London, the UK, on June 22, 2024. **X**



Although not all Emirati leaders can be painted with the same brush. In the Emirates, there exist moderate leaders who oppose this approach and adopt a better stance toward Iran. Dr. Al Qasimi, the Emir of Sharjah, is one such individual. It is hoped that the role-playing of these leaders can restore the Emirates to the family of Islamic nations and secure the satisfaction of Islamic countries, particularly Iran and Saudi Arabia. Otherwise, the Emirates' future is ambiguous, and amidst the current tempest of events, the Emirates shall suffer the greatest harm, and regional nations will have no genuine incentive to assist it.

American and Israeli assistance is naught but a mirage. They will, in any event, prioritize their own interests over those of Muslims. Ultimately, regardless of the extent of its sycophantic service, the Emirates cannot purge itself of Islam and Arabism, and Israel remains, in the final analysis, the enemy of Muslim and Arab nations.

How ought Iran's behavior to be toward this southern neighbor, and, given the strong turn that Abu Dhabi has adopted against Iran, can a positive outlook for the future of relations be envisioned?

Iran should endeavor, through cooperation with other regional countries — especially Qatar, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia — to restore the Emirates to the family of Islamic nations. In the event of the Emirates' opposition and insistence upon rejecting this invitation, the responsibility for its isolation and downfall will rest with its ruling administration. The Emirates and Dubai, with their burgeoning economy, could serve as a preeminent economic capital in the Islamic world, as a "London of the Islamic world," and through this role-playing, benefit the Islamic world while also profiting themselves. Islamic nations and Iran will benefit from such Emirati role-playing and should facilitate such a trajectory. Conversely, alignment with Israel and cooperation with its most nefarious regional schemes shall transform the Emirates into a target of regional resentment and the enmity of Muslim nations.

The interview first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

AVC Men's Champions League:

Foolad routs Garuda Jaya to progress to last four

Sports Desk

Iran's Foolad Sirjan advanced to the AVC Men's Champions League semifinals in emphatic fashion, hammering Jakarta Garuda Jaya 3-0 (25-14, 25-12, 25-12) in Pontianak, Indonesia, on Thursday.

Pouria Hosseinkhazadeh contributed a game-high 19 points, including six aces, while Bulgarian outside hitter Aleksandar Nikolov — who joined the club on a short-term contract for the showpiece — added 13 for former Iran coach Behrouz Ataei's side.

Dawuda Alahimassalam topped the scoring for the Indonesian outfit with 12 points.

Chasing a third title in six editions, the Iranian top-flight champion will take on JTEKT Stings Aichi of Japan in today's last-four showdown at the Terpadu Gymnasium.

French opposite Stephen Boyer contributed 20 points, with American outside hitter Torey DeFalco (13) and Brazilian star Ricardo Lucarelli (11) also finishing in double figures, as the star-studded Aichi defeated Thailand's Men Korat in straight sets (25-20, 25-14, 25-18) earlier on Thursday.

Foolad will be looking to make



Foolad Sirjan players celebrate a point during a 3-0 victory over Jakarta Garuda Jaya at the AVC Men's Champions League in Pontianak, Indonesia, on May 14, 2026.
● FIVB

stunned Al Rayyan of Qatar 3-1 (25-20, 25-20, 21-25, 25-21) in the other quarterfinal clash on Wednesday.

South Korean international Heo Soo-bong spearheaded the Skywalkers' scoring with 16 points, followed by Chinese opposite Chuan Jiang (15) and Hong Dongseon (14).

Egyptian outside hitter Abdelrahman Ahmed Azab had 22 points to his name, while Russia's Ivan Polianskii and Maksim Bahatka had 13 and 12, respectively, though their contributions proved not enough as Al Rayyan suffered an early exit in its bid for a second successive continental crown.

The winner of the tournament will earn a spot at the FIVB Club World Championship later this year.

Foolad made it to the last four at the global showpiece in 2024, before ultimately settling for bronze thanks to a victory over Volley Lube in the third-place playoff in Uberlândia, Brazil.

amends for last year's setbacks against Japanese opposition, after Ataei's men fell to a four-set defeat against Osaka Bluteon in the semifinals in Kyoto, and then were beaten by Suntory Sunbirds Osaka in three sets to miss

out on the bronze medal. Jakarta Bhayangkara Presisi and South Korea's Hyundai Capital Skywalkers will square off in the other semifinal today. Boosted by the world-class additions of Slovenia's Rok Mozič,

Cuba's Robertlandy Simon, and Mali's Noumory Keita, Bhayangkara Presisi defeated Kazakhstan's Zhaiyk 3-1 (25-19, 25-27, 25-19, 25-21) to advance. Keita stole the show with 28 points, while Mozič and Simon

added 15 and 11 points, respectively. Iranian outside hitter Amirhossein Esfandiari delivered a 19-point performance but could not keep the Kazakh champions from crashing out. The Skywalkers, meanwhile,

Iran confirms gymnastics squad for Asian Championships

Sports Desk

Iran has named its five-man squad for the upcoming AGU Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships, which will kick off on June 18 in Zunyi, China.

Mahdi Olfati — winner of a historic Asian gold last year — will headline the Iranian roster in Zunyi. He will be joined by Mahdi Ahmadkohani, Hooman Jafari, Amirabbas Mojahed, and Mohammad Khosrownejad, who secured their spots through trials in the national team camp, to represent the country in six categories.

A finalist at the Paris 2024 Olympics, Olfati scored 14.500 points in the men's vault final in Jecheon, South Korea, to claim the country's first gold in 12 editions of the competition — a feat recognized as "one of the sport's 10 biggest stories" of 2025 by the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG). Ahmadkohani, meanwhile, will be looking for a strong return to the international stage after serving a 24-month suspension imposed by the International Testing Agency (ITA). The ban, which expired on February 21, was imposed after the

Iranian — a two-time rings silver medalist in the 2023 FIG World Cup series — accrued three whereabouts failures within a 12-month period. He has ruled out any wrongdoing, insisting he "had not entered the necessary information on the anti-doping website regarding my residence and training location, which led to my suspension." The showpiece in Zunyi will also serve as the qualification path for the gymnastics event at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games in September. "Previously, all countries could participate in the Asian Games

without restrictions. However, a decision by the Asian Gymnastics Union means only the top 10 teams on the continent will earn berths for the multi-sport event — a change that has doubled the significance of precise planning and preparation for the Asian Championships," Iran's men's head coach Reza Kheirkhah told IRNA in April.



Asian vault champion Mahdi Olfati will be part of the Iranian squad at the AGU Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships.
● ALI SHARIFZADEH/IRNA



Asian U15 & U17 Boxing Championships: Pischevar wins boys' U15 gold

Sports Desk

Abolfazl Pischevar got Iran off the mark at the Asian U15 & U17 Boxing Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, by grabbing gold in the boys' U15 con-

tests on Thursday. The young Iranian, who had beaten Kyrgyzstan's Umar Asanbaev in the semifinals, out-muscled Kazakhstan's Zhaksylyk Yermekuly via a unanimous 5-0 points decision (30:27, 30:27, 29:28,

30:27, 30:27) to claim the top prize in the 35kg weight class. In a touching and symbolic gesture, Pischevar entered the ring with a school bag slung over his shoulder — a tribute to the memory of the 168 victims, including 120 schoolchildren, who were killed by a U.S.-Israeli airstrike on the Shajareh Tayyebbeh Elementary School in Minab, southern Iran, on February 28. Coached by Sina Belansh, the Iranian squad features six boxers apiece in the under-15 and under-17 boys' categories, as well as two female U15 boxers at the competition.



Iranian gold medalist Abolfazl Pischevar poses with a school bag as a tribute to the schoolchildren killed by a U.S.-Israeli airstrike on an elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, at the Asian U15 & U17 Boxing Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on May 14, 2026.
● IRNA



Iranian goalkeeper Barkhordari joins Torrelavega in Spanish handball league

Sports Desk

Iranian men's national handball team captain Saeid Barkhordari has joined Balonmano Torrelavega in the Spanish top flight, Liga ASOBAL, on a one-

year contract. The move brings an end to the goalkeeper's four-year spell with Spanish club Ademar León. "After four years at Ademar León, I decided it was time for

a change. I received offers from other countries, including Hungary, Denmark, and France, and my performances in the European League opened doors. In the end, I decided to continue my career in Spain and join Torrelavega," the 37-year-old Iranian told IRNA.

"Torrelavega is regarded as one of the powerhouses of Spanish handball. Apart from Barcelona, four teams constantly battle for second place, and Torrelavega is one of them," Barkhordari said of his new team, which currently sits fifth in the league table with 39 points — level on points with fourth-place BM Granollers and two behind Ciudad de Logroño in second, in a tight race for the three places in next season's European League.

Barkhordari has previously played for Spanish clubs Guadalajara and Santonia.



● saeidbarkhordari.com

Urgent restoration underway for war-damaged monuments

Iranica Desk

A member of the Strategic Council for Cultural Heritage has outlined the process of restoring historical monuments damaged during the recent war, explaining the reasons behind the urgent restoration efforts and discussing unemployment among conservators during and after the conflict.

In an interview with ISNA, Zohreh Bozorgmehri spoke about the Ministry of Cultural Heritage's decision to begin emergency restoration work on damaged sites and the meetings held by the Strategic Council on the matter.

"I attend these meetings every two weeks," she said. "The sessions are held in the presence of the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and address a wide range of issues concerning cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism. Even before the war officially began, we felt that difficult conditions were approaching. Tourism was expected to suffer severe losses — and it did — because naturally, in wartime, tourism comes to a halt. Nevertheless, the decision was made that, at the very least, we must save the historical monuments, and that in itself was extremely important."

She added that one of the council's recent meetings was held at the Sa'dabad Complex, one of the sites affected by the at-

tacks, so that officials could directly inspect the destruction and assess conditions on the ground. According to her, the minister subsequently ordered the launch of emergency restoration operations.

preserved so they can later be returned to their original place. This is the first and most fundamental stage of restoration." She stressed that the process is highly meticulous. "This is not a matter of coming in with shov-

will be required. Emergency restoration essentially means preventing further destruction, including installing protective panels to shield the structures from additional damage." Responding to questions about

— the plaster fragments, the numbering, the measurements — the entire process is transparent. We are acting in accordance with international principles and regulations, so there is no cause for concern."

to receive salaries, and they are fully involved in current operations, including collection, documentation and efforts to prevent further deterioration," she said. "In fact, when I visited Sa'dabad, I saw much more activity than before. The work is extremely detailed — photographing every section, preparing records, drawing plans and registering all details. So not only are they not unemployed, but their workload has multiplied several times."

However, she noted that conservators working outside the formal structure of the Cultural Heritage Organization face different circumstances. "These are individuals who usually collaborated with universities or worked on a contractual basis. Previously, they carried out restoration projects under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, but under current conditions, because of the danger involved, even they are reluctant to enter project sites," she said.

"Until full documentation is completed, projects cannot realistically be handed over to outside teams. The conditions are genuinely dangerous. Even when I went for inspections, they insisted that I wear a safety helmet because fragments could suddenly fall from the ceilings — and that risk was very real. Many beams and structural elements have been damaged and remain unstable."



● jamejamonline.ir

Addressing the nature of emergency restoration and whether immediate intervention is necessary, Bozorgmehri said, "Emergency restoration is absolutely essential. Let me give an example. In sections containing mirrorwork, stucco decorations, ceiling paintings and other ornamental elements that have collapsed because of the damage, the first urgent step is to carefully separate and catalogue every fragment. Wherever possible, intact pieces must be

els and simply clearing away debris because things are broken. That approach does not exist at all," she said. Bozorgmehri explained that restoration work at Sa'dabad is being carried out with extreme precision. "Small fragments are individually numbered and collected. They are then categorized and examined. Only at that stage does it become clear what type of mortar, glass or painting techniques were originally used and what restoration methods

requests made to UNESCO and other international bodies for reports and legal follow-up, and whether restoration should begin before international inspection teams arrive, she said, "We are carrying out preliminary measures regardless of whether they come or not. These include categorization, numbering and documentation. International regulations are not such that an institution like UNESCO would object to these actions. When everything is fully documented

Bozorgmehri also referred to a recent statement issued by the Iranian conservators' community announcing readiness to participate in emergency restoration efforts. The statement additionally highlighted unemployment among some conservators during the war. She explained that conservators employed directly by the Cultural Heritage Organization have largely remained active because of the administrative nature of their positions. "They continue

South Khorasan's intangible heritage faces challenge of change

Iranica Desk

In the hustle and bustle of the modern world, where towering skyscrapers and virtual realities have cast shadows over long-standing traditions, a heartbeat still echoes across the desert expanse of South Khorasan. This heartbeat belongs to intangible heritage — a legacy rooted not in bricks and mortar, but in collective memory, in the tangy taste of local bread, and in the whispered prayers of an elderly woman at Ashura mourning gatherings.



● chtn.ir



● IRNA

Fariba Kaheni, senior anthropologist and head of Intangible Heritage Registration Office at the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of South Khorasan Province, believed that heritage does not die; it merely changes its "clothes," even if some words gradually fade away. Kaheni began with a realistic assessment of the province's

rituals, arguing that, contrary to popular belief, no traditions had been fully lost or buried, according to chtn.ir.

"We do not have rituals or customs that are completely at risk or forgotten. Culture is a living organism and it evolves over time. Some rituals may have changed, but their essence still flows through society," she said.

To illustrate her point, she referred to the Haft-Manbar ritual, one of the mourning ceremonies in Birjand. Haft-Manbar, held on the evening of Tasua and the night of Ashura, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and his companions, dates back more than 150 years. In the past, it was exclusively a women's ritual, where women with vows would silently visit seven religious sites and light candles. Today, however, due to urban expansion and mobility challenges, men accompany their families, turning it into a family ceremony. This is a transformation, not extinction. She stressed that such changes are not necessarily negative. "While some of that old intimacy may have been lost, the presence of young people, tourists, and journalists has helped introduce

and preserve the ritual. Heritage that is not seen will disappear, and today Haft-Manbar is more visible than ever," she said. She explained that registering intangible heritage is a long and complex process. "Every year we prepare numerous dossiers, ranging from religious rituals to local breads, sweets, traditional foods, and handicrafts. So far, 97 items from this cultural treasury have been registered. This year, we have submitted 10 new dossiers, including the Birjandi dialect and several local rituals, to Tehran after approval at the provincial council." However, she lamented an unexpected delay in the process. "Unfortunately, due to regional conditions and the recent war, opportunities were not provided to hold review sessions in Tehran. Registering an intangible

heritage item requires in-person defense. We must prepare 20-30 minute documentary films covering every stage of a ritual or food preparation and defend them before ethnology experts at the Research Institute for Cultural Heritage. These sessions cannot be held virtually, as physical and visual details are crucial."

Among all elements of intangible heritage, one stood out as particularly fragile and concerning — language. Kaheni said, "The only thing that truly worries me is the Birjandi dialect. Unfortunately, the younger generation is becoming unfamiliar with it. Sometimes when I speak to a young person in our native dialect, they do not understand, and I have to translate into formal Persian."

She noted that efforts were underway to preserve it. "This year we have prioritized registering the Birjandi dialect as intangible heritage. We plan to document it with the help of university professors and researchers. But registration is only half the journey — the other half happens at home. People must consciously use the dialect during celebrations such as Yalda Night, Nowruz, and even naming ceremonies for newborns, and involve their children in these cultural spaces."

Much of South Khorasan Province's intangible heritage lies in simple rural kitchens and traditional meals. "Bread in our culture is not just food; it is sacred," she added.

She also highlighted the importance of traditional games, say-

ing, "These games were not just entertainment. With minimal resources, they taught children essential life lessons — cooperation, leadership, and acceptance of defeat. Today, however, computer games are isolating children and reducing children's physical activity."

Kaheni also announced a new agreement. "We recently signed a memorandum with the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults to introduce these traditions through art and painting. For example, children are asked to draw Nowruz or Yalda rituals. This helps them focus on cultural details and reconstruct traditions in their minds."

One of the major challenges in preserving intangible heritage, she said, was the expectation that the government alone should protect it. "The Cultural Heritage Organization is responsible for registration and promotion, but these traditions belong to the people. Without public participation, we cannot revive any heritage. Unfortunately, the involvement of municipalities and local administrations is still insufficient. They should organize festivals for local breads or traditional games. The main investors in this field are the people themselves."

Kaheni referred to her book, Treasures of Intangible Heritage of South Khorasan, the result of years of traveling to remote villages and speaking with elderly men and women who are the true guardians of this land.

On Ferdowsi commemoration day

Leader hails Persian as 'greatest capacity' for promoting Iran's civilization

Arts & Culture Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei on Friday described the Persian language as one of the "greatest capacities" for promoting Iran's rich Islamic civilization worldwide, urging writers and artists to preserve the nation's cultural identity through literature and art as Iran marked the national day honoring epic poet Abolqasem Ferdowsi. In a message issued for the National Persian Language Preservation Day and commemorating the Persian poet Ferdowsi (May 15), the Leader said Persian was more than a means of communication and served as "the framework of cognition" and a defining thread of Iranian identity.

"Persian language and literature represent one of the greatest capacities for promoting the rich culture and civilization of Islamic Iran across the global arena," he said, while calling on cultural figures to "rise like Ferdowsi" and immortalize the nation's contemporary ep-

ics through artistic expression. Referring to what he described as Iran's "third sacred defense," the Leader said the Iranian nation had once again demonstrated the heroic spirit embodied in Ferdowsi's 'Shahnameh,' the millennium-old Persian epic widely regarded as a cornerstone of Iranian literature and identity. He said the concepts of courage, justice and resistance embedded in the 'Shahnameh' continued to unite Iranians across ethnic and social backgrounds in safeguarding the country's independence and cultural authenticity. President Masoud Pezeshkian also paid tribute to Ferdowsi in a separate message, describing the 'Shahnameh' as the "historical and cultural identity card" of the Iranian nation and portraying the poet of Tus as a guardian of both Persian language and Iranian civilization.

Heroism rooted in justice, wisdom

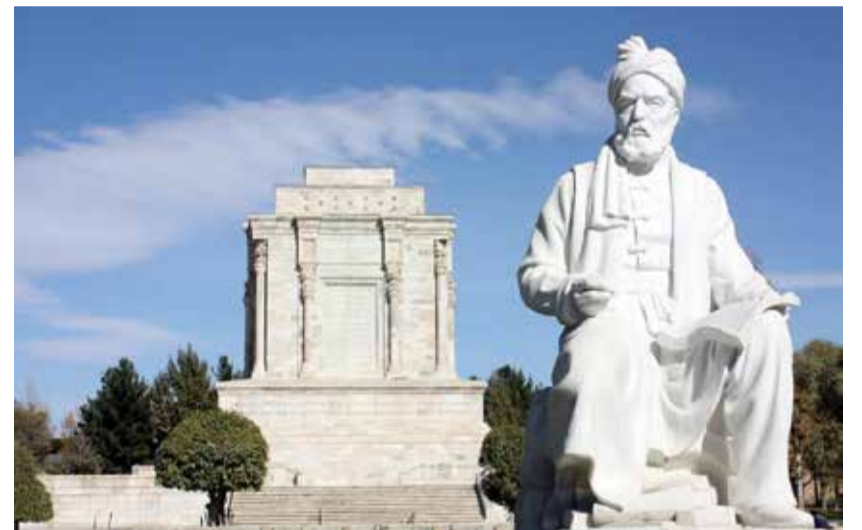
Pezeshkian said Ferdowsi's heroes were

not merely warriors but symbols of wisdom, loyalty and moral virtue, adding that the poet forged a lasting connection between Iran's national epics and Islamic values.

"In Iranian and Shia culture, heroism finds meaning through justice, loyalty and defense of truth," the president said. He added that contemporary Iran was still home to "humble heroes" who protected the nation's dignity and security through sacrifice and wisdom, drawing parallels between modern-day defenders of the country and the legendary champions celebrated in the 'Shahnameh'.

At a ceremony hosted online by the Society for the Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries on May 12, prominent literary scholars described the 'Shahnameh' as a "fortress of words" that preserved Iranian identity through centuries of upheaval.

Renowned Persian literature scholar Mir Jaleddin Kazzazi said Ferdowsi had defended Iran "with an army of words,"



while other speakers highlighted the epic's universal themes of wisdom, justice and human dignity.

Academics at the gathering said the 'Shahnameh' remained one of the

world's most influential epic works and continued to resonate with Persian-speaking communities and international audiences alike through its enduring moral and cultural themes.

Harmony rises from war-scarred Tehran synagogue

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's cultural authorities pledged to restore a Tehran synagogue damaged during last year's Israeli and US airstrikes on the capital, as officials, Jewish community figures and peace researchers convened at the site on Thursday for the cultural event 'Harmony at Tehran's Wounded Synagogue.' Held at the Rafi-Nia Synagogue in central Tehran, the gathering brought together Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri, Iranian Peace Studies Association head Nematollah Fazeli, Jewish-Iranian cultural figure Shalmo Aghalian and members of Iran's Jewish academic community. Salehi-Amiri said the synagogue, damaged during the closing days of the last Iranian calendar year's conflict, would be rebuilt "in a manner worthy" of Iran's Jewish community and formally documented as a nationally registered historical event.

"We will submit its documents to international bodies so the world can see what the Iranian nation endured," he told reporters on the sidelines of the ceremony.



Musicians performed amidst the rubble of the damaged Rafi-Nia Synagogue in Tehran during the 'Harmony at Tehran's Wounded Synagogue' cultural event held on May 14, 2026. ● IRNA

The minister described Iran's Jewish community as an "esteemed" and longstanding part of the country's social fabric, saying Iranian Jews had "stood beside the nation in difficult times." He also proposed converting part of the restored synagogue into a museum and archival space preserving testimonies and documents related to the wartime damage.

The event showed Iran's emphasis on interfaith coexistence and cultural continuity, with organizers framing the synagogue's restoration as both a heritage project and a symbol of national solidarity. Iran is home to one of the Middle East's oldest Jewish communities, with active synagogues in Tehran, Isfahan and several other cities.

'Les Misérables'

When literature goes beyond human rights

By Amir Bi Parva
International law researcher,
human rights activist

OPINION

From mid-January 2026, for the third time in my life, I began reading Victor Hugo's novel 'Les Misérables' with great attention, and I completed it in mid-April 2026. This time, however, my focus was placed on its human dimensions, and I found it striking how prominently human rights themes are reflected in this historical novel.

Some literary works are merely narratives of individual lives, while others rise to a higher level, becoming something akin to an "ethical manifesto on humanity." Victor Hugo's 'Les Misérables' is one such work. It not only tells the story of Jean Valjean, a former prisoner in nineteenth-century France, but also engages with fundamental questions that today lie at the heart of modern human rights systems: What is justice? How is human dignity preserved? And is a person forever bound to their past?

At the center of this narrative lies the issue of poverty. Jean Valjean is imprisoned for stealing a loaf of bread to feed starving children, and as a result, he is socially excluded and trapped within the penal system for years. This raises a fundamental question: Should punishment be determined solely by the "act," or should the broader "human and social context" also be taken into account? In contemporary human rights discourse, the principles of proportionality in punishment

and consideration of individual and social circumstances are essential elements of criminal justice. Yet Hugo, a century before the development of modern human rights instruments, raises this issue in a deeply literary and philosophical way.

In 'Les Misérables,' poverty is not merely an economic condition; it is a mechanism for the deprivation of human dignity. The character Fantine represents a deeply moving example of a human being gradually stripped of all her rights due to structural poverty. She is not punished for a crime, but rather excluded and humiliated because of her social condition. This image directly corresponds to the concept of "economic and social rights" in modern human rights discourse, rights based on the principle that a human being can only be free if they enjoy a minimum standard of living and dignity.

Another important dimension of 'Les Misérables' is the issue of children's rights, a concept that was not yet formally articulated in legal instruments at the time of the novel's writing, yet is clearly depicted by Hugo. Children in this novel are often silent victims of poverty and injustice. Fantine's daughter, Cosette, is a powerful example of a child deprived of her most basic rights, including the right to care, security, education, and dignity. She is subjected to forced labor and lives in humiliating conditions. From a modern human rights perspective, this situation stands in clear contradiction to the fundamental principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, such as

protection from exploitation, the right to grow up in a safe environment, and the right to family care or appropriate alternatives. Through Cosette's suffering, Hugo anticipates a critique of a society that treats childhood not as a protected stage of life, but as a source of labor and survival.

One of the most significant human rights dimensions of the novel is its critique of a rigid and inflexible penal system. Inspector Javert represents a legal order that is blindly loyal to the letter of the law, even when it results in injustice. In contrast, Jean Valjean represents moral transformation, a human being who, through suffering, develops ethical awareness and social responsibility. This tension reflects a continuing debate in modern criminal law between retributive justice and rehabilitative justice.

A turning point in the story occurs when the Bishop forgives Jean Valjean instead of punishing him. This act of forgiveness is not merely moral; it marks the beginning of a profound human transformation.

From a human rights perspective, it symbolizes one of the core principles of modern justice: punishment should aim not at revenge, but at rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Following this experience, Jean Valjean not only changes his own life but also becomes someone who dedicates himself to helping others. The novel also highlights the vulnerability of women in society. Fantine, as a poor and abandoned woman, becomes a victim of social and economic structures. Her story illustrates

how social vulnerability can lead to the gradual exclusion of individuals from their fundamental rights. This issue is now widely discussed in human rights literature under concepts such as the "feminization of poverty" and gender-based vulnerability.

Perhaps the most important question raised by the novel is the tension between law and morality. Is a law that punishes individuals for their circumstances truly just? Can strict adherence to law, without regard for humanity, achieve real justice? Hugo does not provide a direct answer, but through his narrative he shows that law without morality can become an instrument of oppression.

Ultimately, 'Les Misérables' can be seen not only as a novel, but also as a moral blueprint for modern human rights. Concepts such as inherent human dignity, the right to reintegration into society, criticism of structural poverty, and opposition to inhumane punishment are all present in this work long before they were formally codified in international human rights instruments.

The enduring relevance of Jean Valjean lies in this very idea: he is not a mythical hero, but a symbol of the possibility of human transformation. A human being who, even after being cast out, can regain meaning and dignity. In a world still facing poverty, injustice, and social exclusion, 'Les Misérables' is not merely a story, it is a reminder: a human being is, before anything else, a human being.

'Les Misérables' will be read as long as humanity exists.