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The photo shows the newly-built building of Iran's Cancer Institute which was inaugurated in Tehran on June 2, 2026. defapress.ir

Trump's intervention signals Lebanon's importance to fate of Iran-US negotiations

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

In response to Israel's advance in Lebanon and threats to strike Beirut, Iran warned it would not only halt negotiations with the United States but would also stand firmly against those actions. Shortly afterward, US President Donald Trump claimed he had spoken with Israeli and Hezbollah leaders and urged them to stop attacking one another. In an interview with Iran Daily, Mohsen Farkhani, an international affairs analyst, argued that Trump's intervention in the manner of Israel's confrontation with Hezbollah underscores the importance of this region in determining the future of US-Iran negotiations.



Mohsen Farkhani

IRAN DAILY: What combination of factors pushed the United States and President Trump toward more direct involvement in the Lebanon crisis?

FARKHANI: Because of its geographic vulnerabilities and its deep geopolit-

ical, technological and economic dependence on US support, Israel does not undertake major military or security actions without direct coordination with Washington. As was seen during previous US administrations, when American presidents declined to align themselves with Netanyahu's regional policies, Israel largely limited itself to assassinating Iranian scientists. Trump's intervention in the way Israel confronts Hezbollah, as well as the regime's intention to launch attacks on Beirut's southern suburbs, reflects both the importance of this region in shaping the outcome of US-Iran negotiations and Israel's lack of independence in making major security and military decisions that affect regional dynamics. Despite entering the war with declared objectives that included military action against Iran and the need for Iran's unconditional surrender, Trump has failed to achieve those goals and has instead suffered a severe setback as a result of Iran's asymmetric response across the geopolitical, economic, energy and hegemonic discourse spheres. Heavy political and public pressure inside the United States, the approaching midterm elections, the World Cup,

and the damage inflicted on America's global credibility are among the factors that have pushed Trump into a position of weakness and a pressing need to find a way out of the confrontation with Iran. Exiting this conflict through the signing of an agreement that commits Iran to a number of low-cost conditions represents the least expensive option available to the US administration for slowing Iran's transformation into the world's fourth major power. Consequently, during the ceasefire period, after testing various alternatives, Trump has devoted all his efforts to securing an honorable exit from the conflict and avoiding a withdrawal without an agreement with Iran. **Some reports point to a tense conversation between Trump and Netanyahu. How should this tension be interpreted? Is it a temporary tactical disagreement over Lebanon and Iran, or signs of a deeper divergence in the strategic priorities and calculations of Washington and Tel Aviv?** Netanyahu's effort to place Trump before a fait accompli and prevent the emergence of any agreement with Iran is an action that, if successful, would severely damage Trump's political future and presidency.

For this reason, exchanges of views and discussions between Trump and Netanyahu—whether tense or cordial—should be assessed within the framework of the special strategic partnership between the United States and Israel. Since tactical disagreements are a natural feature of military and security policymaking, tension in a telephone conversation between the two leaders should not be interpreted as evidence of a strategic rift. Nor does the tone of such contacts fundamentally affect US-Israel relations. On the contrary, such tensions reflect the seriousness with which the United States and Israel are pursuing the containment, control and even elimination of Iran's sphere of influence in the region, as well as Iran's ability thus far to disrupt their calculations. Accordingly, the leaking of reports about a tense phone call between Trump and Netanyahu can, at best, be viewed as an attempt to portray Trump as blameless in the recent war and to project a false image of him as a peacemaker. **If Israel expands the scope of its operations in Lebanon, what scenarios lie ahead for the region? How would the United States respond?** Given Iran's intelligence and military

understanding of US and Israeli behavior, as well as its upper hand in humiliating the United States and imposing new regional realities—including Washington's inability to restore the previous order in the Strait of Hormuz—Iran has succeeded in imposing its will on the US, Israel and their regional allies. From this perspective, several scenarios can be envisioned. The first and most likely scenario is the emergence of a temporary but fragile ceasefire under US supervision, accompanied by controlled tensions. Such an arrangement would leave room for Netanyahu to assess the extent to which military and security objectives have advanced. This would be Netanyahu's preferred option, since it would allow a return to the battlefield at any moment while also shielding him from legal threats inside Israel. The second scenario involves the continuation of targeted Israeli attacks in southern Lebanon without extending operations into Beirut, coupled with Hezbollah responses. This would preserve a war of attrition against Hezbollah, both psychologically and logistically, while denying the group the opportunity to fully recover and rebuild a high level of operational readiness.

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Hezbollah says will not accept 'partial ceasefire' with Israel

Iran threatens to freeze US talks if Israeli strikes in Lebanon persist

International Desk

Hezbollah will not accept a "partial ceasefire" with Israel, a senior official from the Lebanese resistance group said Tuesday, refusing to halt retaliatory attacks against northern occupied territories in exchange for Israel sparing Beirut's southern suburbs.

"We will not accept a partial ceasefire," Mahmud Qomati told AFP in a written statement, adding, "The Zionist enemy should know that any aggression against the suburbs could lead to a deeper and stronger response" from the group.

On Monday, US President Donald Trump announced a deal which Lebanese officials later said involved Israel refraining from attacking Beirut's southern suburbs in return for Hezbollah not attacking Israeli positions. Following the development, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf on Tuesday warned that if Israel's attacks continue in Lebanon, the Islamic Republic will not only suspend peace talks with the United States but will also stand against the Israeli regime. Qalibaf made the remarks in a phone conversation with his Lebanese counterpart Nabih Berri amid Israel's deepest incursion into Lebanon in 26 years.

Qalibaf described the bond between Iran and Lebanon as unbreakable, stressing that any ceasefire agreement between Teh-

ran and Washington must include a halt to Israeli attacks on all fronts, particularly Lebanon.

"Over the past 48 hours, we have seriously pursued a halt to Israeli attacks. If the crimes continue, we will not only suspend the talks but also stand against the Zionist regime," he warned.

Berri, for his part, thanked the Islamic Republic for its efforts to stop Israeli atrocities. A halt to Israel's attacks on Lebanon has been one of Iran's key conditions in the ceasefire deal between Iran and the US, which has been in place since early April to give a chance to diplomacy to end a US-Israeli aggression against Iran, which began on February 28.

The Israeli regime not only failed to stop its aggression against Lebanon but it intensified its attacks and occupied more Lebanon's territories during its recent incursion. In recent weeks, the Israeli regime has launched deadly strikes on civilian areas and issued evacuation orders targeting southern Lebanese communities. Israel's acts of aggression have caused significant civilian casualties and widespread destruction of infrastructure in Lebanon.

The conflict between Israel and Lebanon's resistance group Hezbollah began in March after the Lebanese group launched military operations against the regime in response to its aggression against Iran. A truce to halt

the fighting began on April 17, but has never been observed.

The Lebanese Health Ministry says Israeli attacks have killed more than 3,370 people since early March.

Israel's aggression

Qalibaf's warning came after the Israeli regime escalated its strikes on Lebanon in recent days, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying that he ordered the military to strike the Dahiyeh area, a Shia-majority area in Beirut's southern suburbs, and issued sweeping evacuation orders covering the entire district. In response, Iran's central military command issued a warning that if Israel carried out its threat to bomb southern Beirut, Iranian forces would retaliate against northern occupied territories. Shortly after Iran's warning, US President Donald Trump said Israel and Hezbollah resistance movement in Lebanon agreed to dial back fighting. "I had a very productive conversation, and there will be no soldiers arriving in Beirut, and any soldier who was on the way has already turned back," Trump wrote following a call with Netanyahu.

Reciprocal halt in attacks

The Lebanese Embassy in Washington also announced that Hezbollah has agreed to an American proposal calling for a reciprocal halt in attacks with Israel, marking



People ride a motorbike past a destroyed building in an Israeli airstrike at a neighborhood in Beirut's southern suburbs on June 2, 2026.

ANWAR AMRO/AFP

a potential step toward reducing tensions in the region. According to the embassy, the development followed discussions between Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio as part of ongoing diplomatic efforts aimed at preventing a broader regional escalation. Under the US-backed proposal, Israel would suspend strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs, a key Hezbollah stronghold, while

Hezbollah would halt its attacks against Israel. Lebanese officials said the arrangement is intended to serve as the foundation for a wider ceasefire that could eventually be expanded across all of Lebanon. Despite efforts to end Israel's attacks on Lebanon, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency on Tuesday reported the death of eight more people in Israel's drone strikes on southern country.

Deputy FM: Trump's Lebanon intervention claim exposes US role in Israeli crimes

A senior Iranian diplomat questioned the United States' claims of preventing a major Israeli attack on the Lebanese capital Beirut, saying the statement exposes Washington's direct role in managing Israeli military atrocities across the region.

Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi made the remarks on his X account on Tuesday, hours after US President Don-

ald Trump claimed that he had persuaded Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to cancel a large-scale attack on Beirut, Press TV reported. Gharibabadi said recent developments in Lebanon, Syria, and occupied Al-Quds demonstrate that instability in the region is not the result of isolated tensions but rather Israel's actions and the impunity it enjoys.

Gharibabadi said Trump's remarks were

less a sign of Washington's commitment to peace but evidence of its role in Israeli military decisions.

"In this context, the US president's claim that he dissuaded Netanyahu from launching a major attack on Beirut is more than a sign of Washington's desire for peace and a confirmation of the United States' direct role in managing the aggressions of the Zionist regime," the senior Iranian diplomat wrote.

Gharibabadi then posed the central question arising from Trump's statement, asking, "If the decision to attack the capital of an independent country can be changed with a single phone call, the main question is why months of ceasefire violations, aggression against Lebanon, the displacement of people, and threats against the country's sovereignty continued with Western political and military support."

Trump's intervention signals ...

The third scenario would involve a large-scale attack on the outskirts of Beirut, followed by a direct response from Iran and Hezbollah and an expansion of the conflict to the Bab el-Mandeb front. Such a development would bring US-Iran negotiations to a complete halt and lead Iran to launch extensive strikes against US interests both within and beyond the region.

If this scenario materializes, Trump

would likely leave the region without an agreement, while Israel would face an extremely difficult situation.

Should the third scenario unfold, the US, after entering an intense conflict lasting several days, would eventually seek to end the war following new and severe asymmetric Iranian responses and mounting pressure on both global and domestic energy markets. In order to avoid a broader confrontation with global

geopolitical challenges, Washington would likely conclude the conflict by promoting a narrative of victory while providing certain international guarantees for Israel's protection. Given the highly fluid nature of the situation and the tactical disagreements between the United States and Israel regarding how to deal with Iran's power and regional influence, any of these scenarios—or an intermediate outcome between them—remains possible.

IRGC targets US-Israeli shipping in tit-for-tat attack on Iranian vessel

International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy struck the giant cargo ship MSC Sariska, affiliated with the "American-Zionist enemy", with a cruise missile in a reciprocal operation after a US attack on an Iranian commercial vessel in the Sea of Oman.

The IRGC Navy's public relations department announced on Tuesday that the strike was a direct response to the "aggressive and treacherous attack" by the US military on the Iranian bulk carrier Lian Star.

The MSC Sariska, a Panamanian-flagged vessel, was targeted near Iraqi waters and sustained a major explosion.

The IRGC Navy warned that any further aggression by the US army in the region will be met with a decisive response.

A Swiss-based company said on Tuesday that two projectiles hit the container vessel in the Persian Gulf as it was leaving a port in Iraq.

Both the company MSC, based in Geneva, and the British maritime security agency UKMTO reported no injuries to crew members in the Monday's incident.



The UKMTO said the vessel was 40 nautical miles off the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr when the initial explosion occurred on Monday.

In a statement, MSC claimed that it "is a neutral commercial carrier with no affiliation to the United States or Israel."

On Friday, a US aircraft fired an AGM-114 Hellfire missile at the engine room of the bulk carrier Lian Star, disabling the vessel.

The Lian Star is a commercial vessel that was operating in international waters when it was targeted.

Iran has accused the United States of an act of state-sponsored maritime terrorism.

The exchange comes amid heightened tensions in the strategic waters of the Sea of Oman and the Persian Gulf.

AUCTION SJSCO. PF140501

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 25,000 tons **Pellet Fine** under FCA delivery terms at the Sirjan Jahan Steel Company warehouse (Cross of Gol Gohar Mining & Industrial Co. Shiraz Road 50Km, Sirjan, IRAN) according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section.

Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KOODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN

All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**.

For more information, please contact us at:

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Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON

FEEL

FEEL

24 more vessels traverse Hormuz under IRGC supervision

Economy Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy said on Tuesday that 24 commercial vessels had transited the Strait of Hormuz over the past 24 hours after obtaining permission and receiving security coordination from the force.

The announcement, carried by Iran's Tasnim news agency, comes as Tehran continues to assert control over the strategic waterway amid heightened military tensions with the United States and Israel.

"Smart control of the Strait of Hormuz is being carried out with authority, and malevolent foreigners will have no place in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz," the IRGC Navy said in a statement. The Islamic Republic has tightened

oversight of shipping through the strait – a vital chokepoint for global oil flows – since the outbreak of armed conflict on February 28. Iran's southern ports also remain under a US naval blockade, which President Donald Trump imposed in mid-April, aiming to pressure Tehran into a peace agreement after the 40-day conflict.

Iranian authorities require commercial vessels to obtain permits and coordinate with the IRGC before transiting, often routing them through a northern corridor inside Iranian territorial waters.

Iran has defined a supervisory management zone over the Strait of Hormuz, requiring coordination and permits for passage. The zone was described as "the line connecting Mount Mubarak in Iran and southern Fujairah in the

United Arab Emirates, on the eastern side of the strait, extending to the line connecting the end of Qeshm Island in Iran and Umm Al Quwain in the United Arab Emirates, on the western side of the strait."

The 24 ships were among dozens of vessels that transited the strait under Iranian permission since last month, though total crossings in April 2026 reached just 191 vessels — roughly 5% of the pre-war monthly average of around 3,600 transits.

Shipping traffic has collapsed compared with pre-conflict levels. According to maritime intelligence firm Windward, the strait historically handled approximately 120 transits per day in both directions before the war. As of late May, that figure has fallen to roughly seven transits per day – a decline of about



94%. A drone view shows vessels anchored at the Strait of Hormuz, as seen from Musandam, Oman, on May 30, 2026.

Solar project for 12,000 schools kicks off amid renewables push

Economy Desk

The operational work to equip 12,000 schools across the country with solar power systems began on Tuesday, state news agency Tasnim reported.

The launch coincided with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) and the Organization for Development, Renovation and Equipping Schools.

Under the first phase of the plan, 12,000 public schools will each be fitted with a 5-kilowatt grid-connected solar system.

The initiative is designed both to boost distributed power generation and to create an educational opportunity for students to learn about the design, construction, and operation of solar plants – a factor that could help shape their vocational skills and future careers, according to the report.

Revenue from electricity generated by the school-based solar plants could also help strengthen educational infrastructure.

SATBA will provide main solar system components – including panels, inverters, and mounting structures – to the



The Mikael solar power plant is inaugurated on June 2, 2026, on the roof of Chamran Technical School in Tehran, in memory of the students from Shajareh Tayyebeh School in Minab who lost their lives in the US attacks on February 28.

IRNA

school renovation and development organization.

Mohsen Tarzatabab, head of SATBA, said on Tuesday that all necessary equipment for the 60-megawatt solar project across these schools has been secured, and shipments to provinces will begin next week.

The launch ceremony for the installation of solar power plants at 12,000 schools was held at Shahid Chamran Technical School in Tehran, with deputy ministers of energy and education in attendance, according to the Mehr news agency.

The deputy energy minister added that of the 100,000 public schools nationwide, 60 to 70 percent have the potential to host solar panels. "This movement has begun, and we are fully prepared – if infrastructure is provid-

ed – to continue this path toward maximum equipping of schools," he said. Tarzatabab has recently said the ministry was pursuing the consolidation of clean energy projects to raise Iran's renewable energy capacity to around 7,000 megawatts by late June, with the aim of reducing fossil fuel consumption, particularly natural gas and diesel.

The expansion comes as President Masoud Pezeshkian's government aims to install 30,000 MW of renewable energy capacity over the next two years amid an expected power shortfall this year.

According to the ministry, electricity demand is expected to rise "by more than 5% this year," after Iran's peak electricity consumption hovered around 79,000 megawatts last summer.

Postal services to nine countries resumed as air restrictions ease



Economy Desk

Iran's National Post Company has resumed accepting and sending parcels to nine countries following the lifting of flight restrictions imposed during recent months of conflict, a senior postal official said.

Mehdi Maqsoodi, director of the Office of Communications and International

Affairs at Iran's National Post Company, told IRNA that with the resolution of flight limitations caused by "the special circumstances of recent months" due to the American-Israeli war that began in late February, the acceptance of outgoing international parcels has resumed for Afghanistan, Oman, Turkey, China, Pakistan, Russia, India, Iraq,

and Thailand. The service is now active and available for all postal units and branches through the country's integrated postal acceptance software.

"Despite all the restrictions and pressures imposed on the postal network, extensive efforts were made to reopen these routes so that the disruption in the flow of international parcels could be resolved," Maqsoodi said.

He added that efforts continue to reopen other routes and send parcels to all countries with which postal exchanges had previously been established, stressing that "the maximum quality required by customers in sending international parcels will be ensured."

Iran-Kazakhstan agricultural trade jumps 56% as ties deepen

Economy Desk

Agricultural trade between Kazakhstan and Iran surged by 55.8% year-on-year to \$342 million, now accounting for 79% of total two-way commerce, officials said following a meeting in early June.

Kazakh Agriculture Minister Aidarbek Saparov and Iran's Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Mohammad Atabak met on June 1 to discuss expanding agricultural cooperation, boosting trade flows, and strengthening investment ties, according to a readout from Kazakhstan's Agriculture Ministry cited by local media.

Kazakh agricultural exports to Iran nearly doubled, jumping 97% to \$238.5 million. Grain exports more than doubled to 1.1 million metric tons, valued at \$225.3 million, according to The Astana Times.

During the talks, the ministers focused on further



Economy Desk

increasing grain shipments as well as exports of beef and lamb that meet international veterinary and halal standards. They also highlighted opportunities to expand supplies of vegetable oils and other food products to the Iranian market.

Atabak reaffirmed Tehran's interest in deepening economic ties with Astana. "Kazakhstan is an important partner for Iran in the region," he said. "We are interested in increasing bilateral trade, expanding agricultural supplies, develop-

ing logistics routes, and implementing joint projects in processing and agro-industrial cooperation." Saparov invited Iranian investors to take part in projects focused on agricultural production and value-added processing, particularly in the grain and oilseed sectors.

Saparov invited Iranian investors to take part in projects focused on agricultural production and value-added processing, particularly in the grain and oilseed sectors.



AUCTION SJSCO. B140503

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 10,000 tons **STEEL BILLET** (Size 150 x 150 mm), with the possibility of increasing the contract amount to 30,000 tons on basis of FOB Bandar Abbas according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section. Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KOODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN. All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**.

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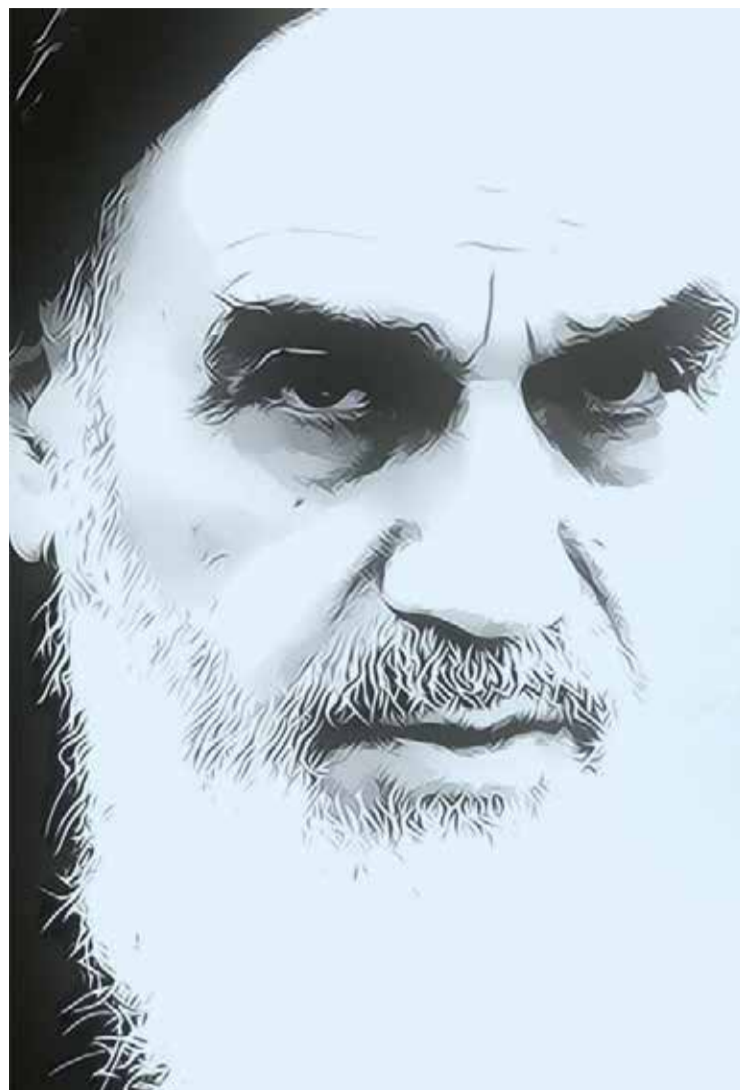


AUCTION SJSCO. D140503

Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 25,000 tons **DIRECT REDUCTED IRON (DRI)**, on basis of FAS at the Buyer's warehouse in Bandar Abbas, IRAN according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section. Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KOODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN. All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**.

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Imam Khomeini; unrivaled architect of change

SNN

Hajja Almerah Tahir
Mamalampac
Columnist

OPINION

"In the world, there is no democracy better than our democracy. Such a thing has never before been seen."

— Imam Khomeini

There is an old saying that says that one thing that is permanent in this world is change. Indeed, the saying holds true as one reads history in depth. For countless millennia, humanity had been subject to so many changes in the world around it. It is possible to discern changes in lifestyles, economics, technologies, politics, governance, ideologies, as well as morality and spirituality. Right now, the world is changing at a much faster pace than ever before, so fast that only those who are observant can actually take notice. What might have been around, or what has been a fact yesterday, may be obsolete tomorrow. What used to be done by hand yesterday will be done at the push of a button or a switch the next day.

However, not all change is good. As one observes the world around him, it can be safely said that the world has taken a turn for the worse. Capitalists and imperialist powers have dominated the world economy, at the expense of the poorer countries who are exploited and left poor in spite of the more developed nations' prosperity. Corruption and graft are more of the norm today than the exception. Racism and prejudice have barred millions of oppressed peoples from realizing their full potentials as legitimate human beings. Materialism and its dregs have placed humanity at the forefront, and human greed has had many people wanting more and more; and in their quest for getting more, they resort to even the most devious means. Millions of innocents have been killed in wars. Morals have been disappointedly loosened, and it has been difficult to shield the young from the harsh realities of adult life.

As for the Muslim world, it is sad to admit that the present situation is not very pleasant. Discriminated because of misunderstandings regarding Islam, subjected to suspicion and charges of being terrorists and supporters of terrorist acts, and even hatred among each other have taken the Muslim Ummah farther and farther away from what the Blessed Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) had hoped for his fellow Muslims. The 9/11 attacks of 2001 and their repercussions in the Muslim world in the years after have further made clear that Muslims are in need of an honest evaluation of themselves as followers of Islam. Perhaps, they may have to think more deeply of their place in the world order and more importantly, of Islam's role in the world of constant change. What is Islam's role then? And what kind of change does it want to foster? It must be recalled that during the Middle Ages in history, while the world moved blindly in ignorance, it was Islam and Muslims who made many advances in science, technology, medicine, the arts, and many other spheres. It was the Muslim scholars who preserved and kept alive the works of the ancient philosophers and other great minds. Muslim leaders made conquests that built up a great Islamic empire. Islam had spread to so many lands, and its influence was felt. Indeed, Islamic civilization had flourished at the time when the rest of the former civilized world was suffering from the Dark Ages. It is very sad to think that while other countries in the world have advanced using what the Islamic world gave them as a springboard, Muslims themselves, at present, are at odds with each other, are mired in poverty, are discriminated against, and have the world pitted against them.

So, how would Islam fit in the scheme of things? The great Ayatollah Imam Ruhollah Khomeini perhaps has the answer. From the time he awakened to the terrible realities that were happening in his beloved Iran and the rest of the world, he made it a mission to speak out

“

Imam Khomeini saw that the world has been subject to a great deal of detrimental influences, not only to Muslims but also to the whole of humanity. He recognized the achievements of the other powers of the world in many fields, but made it clear that he did not condone their ills.

and fight against all the oppression, all the strife, all the evils that a materialistic, capitalist, imperialist, immoral, unscrupulous, greedy world order was inflicting on humanity. He had lived through two World Wars, the Cold War.

Imam Khomeini successfully fulfilled his plans for Iran through the glorious Islamic Revolution of 1979 and showed the world that his country could stand by itself without reckoning with the world powers. He decried the fact that countries with a Muslim majority were veering away from Islam in their rush to adopt the ways of their Western neighbors. He, as a Muslim leader, knew that Islam has a destiny to fulfill, a major role to play in the world's affairs, both at present and in the future. It saddened him that Muslims have for the most part, forgotten that they have a responsibility, a jihad for Allah Almighty that they are obliged to fulfill. He said:

"Islam's jihad is a struggle against idolatry, sexual devi-

ations, plunder, repression, and cruelty. The war waged by [non-Muslim] conquerors, however, aims at promoting lust and animalistic pleasures. They care not if whole countries are wiped out and many families left homeless. But those who study jihad will understand why Islam wants to conquer the whole world. All the countries conquered by Islam or to be conquered in the future will be marked for everlasting salvation. For they shall live under [God's law]."

By this, Imam Khomeini saw that the world has been subject to a great deal of detrimental influences, not only to Muslims but also to the whole of humanity. He recognized the achievements of the other powers of the world in many fields, but made it clear that he did not condone their ills. He has also said:

"We accept the advancements of the Western world but not the Western corruption of which they themselves complain." Given all these, Imam Khomeini envisioned change for a better world. This, of course, will be in line with Islamic tenets and based on justice and fairness. Although his detractors, past and present, would object to his idea of a new World Order and change in the future based on Islam, he has nevertheless said: "...our aim is none other than the great aim of Islam — to prevent oppression, arbitrary rule, and the violation of the law, to preserve the rights of Islam and the nation, and to establish social justice."

This great man was able to affect a great and sweeping change in his beloved country for which he was so genuinely concerned, way back in 1979 under tremendously hard circumstances. Decades later, his countrymen are to remember him for setting them back into the path of Islam and for having them believe in themselves and not be blind followers of the tyranny that is often inflicted by capitalism, Westernization, and imperialism. Therefore, if Islam was able to pave the way for real change in a country like Iran and propel it to become a frightening force that other countries healthily respect, then why not the entire Muslim Ummah and the entire world?

The great Imam Khomeini envisioned a greater role for Islam in the future. Not just as a religious force to be reckoned with, but as a moralizing force in the sea of

a confused humanity. His was a prophetic word for a perplexed world. Islam and its tenets can do so much to prepare a troubled world for a brighter future and change it for the better. It is Islam's role to direct humanity to what is good and right and to make it resistant to evil and immorality. It calls upon people to deal with each other fairly, and to respect others. However, unless people make his cause theirs, this vision will not come true nor will Islam realize its full potential to unite all peoples of the world. This is indeed a great challenge for all, not just Muslims but also for others who have been oppressed and victimized by the powers that be. Imam Khomeini has this to say of those who recognize the challenge:

"I kiss the hands and arms of all the dear people who, all over the world, are shouldering the weight of the challenge and are determined to crusade in the path of God and enhance the honor of Islam, and I present my sincere greetings to all the blossoms of liberty and excellence." Imam Khomeini therefore implies that a great task is upon the Muslims of today. Ideas do not blossom and bloom unless there are people who believe in them and make these their cause and actively pursue the fulfillment of them. It is therefore high time for Muslims to act now and help fulfill Islam's potentials in this world and in the future. Islam must have a greater niche in the world's affairs. It is imperative that Muslims believe that the current vicious cycle of greed, immorality, deceit, oppression, and corruption must be stopped, or else all that the great Imam Khomeini built will be in vain. They owe it to him that they continue the struggle so that Islam will flourish and be an agent for continuous, beneficial, and just change in the world. In the future, change will always be inevitable, but as creatures of God, humanity must make sure that the change will be beneficial and not detrimental. Only through Islam and Imam Khomeini's ideas will there be any positive change. For those who recognize this and have taken part in the struggle, may Almighty Allah reward them with Paradise in the Hereafter.

The article was first published in Persian by the Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works.



Demonstrators hold up a poster of exiled Muslim leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini during an anti-Shah demonstration in Tehran, Iran, on December 10, 1978.

AP

How Arab Persian Gulf states view emerging Iran deal

By **Mona Yacoubian**
Director of the Middle East Program at CSIS

By **Will Todman**
Senior fellow of the Middle East Program at CSIS

OPINION

As details of an anticipated memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the United States and Iran emerge, Arab Persian Gulf states are likely to meet the deal with a mix of relief and trepidation. If signed, the MOU and accompanying 60-day cease-fire will begin to sharpen the focus of the contours of an emerging order in the Middle East. In this next phase, Persian Gulf actors will accelerate efforts to protect their equities and ensure that any deal with Iran is sustainable for them.

Relief: averting catastrophe

In a brief trip to Qatar last week, the authors found a region traumatized by nearly three months of conflict. No Qatari nationals have been killed in the war, but the traumatic impact of a country coming under sustained missile and drone attacks for weeks was notable. While not captured in media headlines, many stories of anxiety and, at times, panic while Doha came under attack were shared. Even measures adopted to protect civilians, such as a mobile phone app designed to warn residents of incoming fire, sparked fear. All told, government efforts to mitigate the worst impacts of the conflict have facilitated a broader national resilience, but higher prices and shortages of some goods still exist. Qatar's experience is shared with other Arab Persian Gulf states, especially smaller countries such as Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where Iranian strikes have affected a broad swath of the population.

Beyond the human trauma, most Persian Gulf states also face existential economic stakes with the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and direct attacks on their energy infrastructure. Every Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) country has had some element of its energy infrastructure — whether storage, transport, refinery, or production — hit by Iranian strikes. Qatar has faced among the most dramatic impacts. Iranian strikes on Ras Laffan destroyed nearly 20 percent of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) production. Ras Laffan is Qatar's main LNG production and export facility, the largest in the world, and responsible for one-fifth of global supply. For the first time in history, Qatar has had to freeze production, declaring force majeure on its contracts.

Had the Trump administration opted to undertake strikes against Iran's energy and civilian infrastructure, as the president often threatened, the next phase of conflict could have been catastrophic for the Persian Gulf. Already, their energy production — the lifeblood of their economies — has been up-



Pakistan's PM Shehbaz Sharif (center) greets Iran's parliamentary speaker and head of the negotiation team Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf on April 11, 2026, prior to the US-Iran talks in Islamabad, Pakistan.
● PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

ended, not to mention their ambitious economic diversification plans, grounded in a vision of vibrant Persian Gulf economies fortified not just by the region's vast energy wealth, but also by a growing role for tourism and technology, especially AI. With the resumption of conflict, prospects for foreign direct investment would dry up. As one interlocutor lamented, "no one in their right mind" would invest in the region should the conflict return.

Throughout the conflict, Iran has adopted an approach of responding to escalation with escalation, hitting the same types of targets as those that are struck by US and Israeli strikes in Iran. Tehran has threatened to do the same if military conflict resumes. Facing existential stakes, the principal powers among the GCC — Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar —

A retaliatory Iranian attack on Qatar's Ras Laffan Industrial City, which houses the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility, has erupted fire and disrupted activities on late March 2026.
● DEFEA PRESS



have lobbied President Trump to avoid another round of conflict with Iran and instead pursue diplomacy.

Trepidation: living with Iran

Persian Gulf countries undoubtedly are relieved that conflict with Iran has not resumed. Yet, that relief is tempered by a large dose of trepidation. The prospective deal leaves in place an emboldened, hardline regime in Tehran that is claiming victory. The region must now contend with an Iran that maintains the ability to disrupt the strait at any time by virtue of retaining its missile and drone capabilities. Uncertainty about the Strait of Hormuz is particularly worrying to Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait, given their full dependence on the strait for exports and imports. Arab Persian Gulf states are also wary that Iran maintains ties to armed groups and partners across the Middle East, however weakened some may be.

GCC states' main demand is to return the strait to the status quo ante, but that does not seem probable under the reported terms of the MOU. As one Qatari official said, "this could leave us hostage to the Iranians." Persian Gulf states see no other option than to resume their pragmatic engagement with Iran. However, a huge trust deficit remains.

GCC states will demand that the strait be fully open to their maritime traffic as a precondition to discussions about providing Iran with economic incentives to refrain from future attacks.

Outlook

As the Persian Gulf continues to absorb the enormity of all that has changed since February 28 and the war with Iran, it will now deepen its efforts to manage the "new normal". GCC countries will not respond uniformly; each will develop its own strategy depending on its priorities, strengths and weaknesses, and outlook. But certain through-lines across the different Persian Gulf states will be discernible. Faced with an Iran that can still pose a threat to the region and questions about the United States' reliability as a security guarantor, the Persian Gulf likely will focus on steps that build domestic defense capabilities, strengthen intra-Persian Gulf security cooperation, and diversify partners to supplement US ties and manage Iran.

For many Persian Gulf countries, strengthening domestic defenses via diversified partnerships will be key. Persian Gulf states are likely to forge new defense agreements with European and East Asian states. Two weeks ago, the UAE signed a defense cooperation agreement with



Whatever trust may have existed is utterly shattered and yet, as nearly every interlocutor in Qatar told the authors, "Iran is here to stay." For Qatar and others in the Persian Gulf, forging ties of economic interdependence between Iran and the Persian Gulf is likely the best form of deterrence. In this view, integrating Iran into an economic model that depends on regional stability may be the best hope for deterring its disruptive behavior going forward.

France, while Qatar signed an MoU with Canada on increasing cooperation in security and defense. One Persian Gulf analyst anticipated that Persian Gulf states' investment will shift away from AI technology toward the military-industrial complex. A Qatari interlocutor expressed an interest in learning from the experience of other small countries that had successfully defended themselves, including Singapore.

Despite widely broadcast differences between some GCC countries, particularly between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, strong levels of intra-GCC cooperation on intelligence-sharing, security, and military cooperation have continued if not deepened, according to some Persian Gulf officials. This cooperation will undoubtedly deepen over the coming months and years and will likely entail more maritime security measures, including mine-clearing capabilities to facilitate navigational freedom, as well as strengthened anti-drone defenses, likely via investment in Ukrainian anti-drone technologies. Qatar is likely to play a lead role in working to balance intra-Persian Gulf differences, seeking to bridge Oman on one end of the spectrum and the UAE on the other.

Persian Gulf states will also attempt to shore up their defense ties with the United States. As well as seeking to upgrade the legal status of their partnerships, even aiming to secure a treaty-level pact with the United States, they will also try to make existing mutual defense mechanisms more robust.

Finally, as part of this "new normal," the Persian Gulf will need to manage Iran. Whatever trust may have existed is utterly shattered and yet, as nearly every interlocutor in Qatar told the authors, "Iran is here to stay." For Qatar and others in the Persian Gulf, forging ties of economic interdependence between Iran and the Persian Gulf is likely the best form of deterrence. In this view, integrating Iran into an economic model that depends on regional stability may be the best hope for deterring its disruptive behavior going forward. It's not the first time the principle of economic integration as a salve for conflict has been raised. US secretary of State Cordell Hull noted just after World War II, "If goods do not cross borders, armies will," a driving motivation behind the Marshall Plan. During the authors' trip, Qatari analysts highlighted the concept of a "golden bridge" for Iran — perhaps more apt given that the Islamic regime is still in power. Borrowed from the Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu, author of *The Art of War*, this precept argues for providing adversaries with a graceful exit from conflict anchored in a mutually beneficial resolution. Almost three months of war have revealed the ineffectiveness of classic military deterrence with Iran. Persian Gulf states know that they must pursue a new strategy.

The article was first published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Iran banking on experience in bid for historic World Cup breakthrough

Sports Desk

Iran will head to the 2026 FIFA World Cup – starting June 11 in North America, betting on experience rather than youth as it seeks to reach the knockout stage for the first time in its seventh appearance at the global showpiece. The 26-man squad, unveiled by head coach Amir Qalenoeei on Monday, has an average age of 29.9 years, making it the oldest Iranian team ever assembled for a World Cup. According to figures released for the 48 participating nations, the average age ranks among the highest in the competition, behind only Panama (30.4) and Colombia (30.1). While the numbers underline the team's experience, they have also reignited debate over the national side's limited generational renewal in recent years. Several young prospects, including Mohammad Khalifeh, Amirhossein Mahmoudi and Kasra Taheri, who had been part of the provisional squad, were omitted from the final roster, leaving just three players under the age of 25 in the group. In contrast, 15 members of the team are aged 30 or older, with



● MOHSEN DAVOUDI/FFIRI

many expected to form the core of the starting lineup. Alireza Jahanbakhsh is perhaps the most controversial name in the squad after the 32-year-old winger – set for his fourth World Cup appearance – endured a below-par season with Dender EH in the Belgian top flight, recording a single goal and two assists in 23 outings across all competition – only 11 of

which were in the starting XI. The contrast with previous Iranian World Cup squads is striking. Iran's youngest-ever World Cup team was the one that represented the country in its debut campaign at Argentina 1978, boasting an average age of just 25.15 years. More recently, the team that qualified for the 2018 World Cup under Portuguese

coach Carlos Queiroz carried an average age of 26.7, as the Portuguese tactician oversaw a significant generational transition. Eight years later, many of those players remain central figures. No fewer than eight members of Iran's 2018 squad have retained their places for the 2026 tournament, most of them expected to play key roles once again. The

figure is unprecedented in Iranian football history and highlights the continuity that has defined the national team over the past decade.

Historical comparisons illustrate the scale of that continuity.

At the 2006 World Cup, only two players from Iran's 1998 squad – Ali Daei and Mahdi Mahdavi – remained in the team. In 2014, four players from the squad that had represented Iran eight years earlier were still present. By the time of the 2022 World Cup, only three members of the 2014 team – Karim Ansarifard, Ehsan Hajsafi and Jahanbakhsh – remained in the national setup.

The presence of eight survivors from the 2018 campaign marks the highest level of squad continuity Iran has ever taken into a World Cup and reflects the coaching staff's faith in a battle-tested core.

That trend was already evident four years ago. Iran's squad for the 2022 World Cup, with an average age of 28.9, was at the time the oldest in the country's World Cup history, largely because it remained loyal to the backbone of the successful 2018 team.

The 2026 squad has pushed that record even further.

Questions remain over whether an aging roster can cope with the physical demands of the highest level of international football, particularly against younger and faster opponents. Yet supporters of the approach argue that experience could prove decisive as Iran attempts to clear a barrier that has frustrated generations of players. Despite qualifying for six previous World Cups, Iran has never advanced beyond the group stage. The national team came closest in 2018, when it remained in contention until the final minutes of its last group match against Portugal.

Now, with one of the most experienced squads in the tournament and a veteran core that has accumulated years of international football together, Iran hopes that continuity and experience can finally deliver the breakthrough that has eluded the nation for nearly half a century. For a team still chasing its first appearance in the knockout rounds, the 2026 World Cup may represent the ultimate test of whether experience can succeed where youth and transition previously fell short.

Iran eyes Greco-Roman glory at U17 Worlds after dominant Asian campaign

Sports Desk

On the heels of a commanding performance at the Asian Championships, Iran's U17 Greco-Roman wrestling team is setting its sights on a much tougher prize: Defending its title at the U17 World Championships, which begin on July 27 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Despite a turbulent buildup marked by canceled competitions and the lingering shadow of regional conflict, the Iranian squad was in a class of its own at the Asian Championships in Da Nang, Vietnam, this week, collecting eight medals across 10 weight classes. The haul included six gold medals on the opening day of competition.

Armin Esmail (45kg), Ali Esmaili (48kg), Vahid Ashiri (55kg), Amirreza Tahmasbpour (60kg), Amirreza Mehri (92kg), and Ali-Akbar Akoo (110kg) captured gold for Iran. Esmail Zaherdoust claimed silver in the 71kg category, while Mahdi Gholamian took bronze at 80kg.

Iran topped the team standings with 205 points, finishing 44 points ahead of runner-up Kyrgyzstan to secure a fifth consecutive Asian title.

Speaking to Mehr News Agency, Iran head coach Mohsen Sourian outlined the obstacles his young wrestlers have overcome and the challenges that lie ahead.

"Our situation was very unusual," Sourian said. "Due to the wartime situation in the country, we missed a preparatory tournament in Türkiye, while the domestic Rahim Aliabadi Cup was canceled."

Sourian added that even Iran's participation in the Asian Championships remained uncertain until shortly before the event. "Even up to the last minute, our participation in the Asian Championships was uncertain. But thanks to the efforts and follow-up of the federation, the team was ultimately able to attend."

With no prior international competition to gauge the team's readiness, the gamble paid off.

Still, Sourian believes the medal tally could have been even greater.

"We could have won two or three more gold medals, but some controversial refereeing decisions took that opportunity away from us," he said.

Nevertheless, the coach expressed satisfaction with the overall performance and the insights gained from the tournament.

"We identified the wrestlers' strengths and weaknesses, and now we look forward to the World Championships later this summer."

The upcoming global event, however, presents a significantly tougher challenge, and Sourian is under no illusions about the task facing his team.

"Our entire effort is focused on defending last year's world title, although we have a very difficult challenge ahead," he said. "In recent years, Azerbaijan has been one of our closest rivals, and now they will enjoy home advantage at the World Champi-



● Iranian wrestler Ali Esmaili (red) is seen in action during his superiority victory over Kyrgyzstan's Umarali Berdaliev in the Greco-Roman 48kg semifinals at the U17 Asian Championships in Na Dang, Vietnam, on May 28, 2026.

onships. That will make our job considerably harder."

Adding to the challenge is the return of Russian wrestlers to international competition, further strengthening an already formidable field.

With little time to spare, Sourian outlined a streamlined selection process. The Asian Championship

served as the primary – and, in most weight classes, the only – qualifying event for the World Championships.

"The technical committee decided before the Asian Championships that, given the events of the past year and the impact of the war on the country, our only qualifying competition would

be the Asian Championships," he explained.

The plan is to retain the wrestlers who won medals in Da Nang, provided they remain within their weight categories – a significant consideration at the youth level, where athletes can experience rapid physical development. In weight classes where Iran failed to secure a medal, internal trials will determine the final roster.

The national team's training camps will begin on June 15 and be held in four phases. The first camp will take place in Mazandaran, a northern province renowned for producing wrestling talent. The location of the second camp has yet to be determined, though it is expected to host key selection bouts. The final two camps will be held at Tehran's Wrestling House before the team departs for Azerbaijan.

"We hope to achieve the best possible result," Sourian said. "The work ahead is very difficult, but we are ready."

Safarzadeh inspired by top Iranian honor to vie for Asian, Paralympic golds

Sports Desk

Iranian para-athletics star Hajar Safarzadeh says being voted the country's Female Paralympian of the Year has strengthened her determination to pursue gold medals at October's Asian Para Games as well as the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics.

The 26-year-old sprinter received the honor after bagging an impressive 400m silver medal in the T12 class at last September's World Championships in New Delhi, adding to the Paralympic silver she won in the same category at Paris 2024.

"I am thrilled and honored to have been chosen by the people," Safarzadeh said. "I hope

I am worthy of this precious recognition and can repay the support of the Iranian people by winning the best medals in future competitions."

Safarzadeh revealed that her immediate focus is the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games, where she hopes to improve her performances and add more gold medals to her collection.

The sprinter currently trains twice a day under coach Mahdi Mousavi as she prepares for the event. At the previous Asian Para Games, she won gold in the 200m event but was disqualified from the 400m following a technical infringement.

Her program for the upcoming event has yet to be finalized, although she is expected to

compete in the 200m and 400m events and could also enter the 100m, depending on her coach's decision.

The road to preparation has not been straightforward. Safarzadeh said the closure of sports facilities amid the wartime situation in the country forced her to adapt her training schedule, often working in public parks when conditions allowed.

"There were days when I could only focus on technical exercises rather than running," she said. "It was a very stressful period, and missiles struck near my training area several times. But I tried not to stay away from training because I want to be in the best condition possible for Nagoya and

raise Iran's flag." Looking further ahead, Safarzadeh has set her sights on an even bigger target: Paralympic gold in Los Angeles in 2028.

The departure of her legendary Cuban rival, Omara Durand, who retired after winning an 11th Paralympic gold in Paris, has opened a new chapter in the event.

"My main goal is to win Paralympic gold," Safarzadeh said. "I am focused on my training and achieving the best possible result in Los Angeles." While the public recognition has increased expectations, Safarzadeh believes it can serve as the inspiration she needs to reach the pinnacle of para-athletics over the next four years.



● IPC

New discoveries shed light on ancient sanctuary at Vigol site

Iranica Desk

Archaeological excavations at the historic site of Vigol, Isfahan Province, have led to the discovery of a new hall and the bases of offering tables, according to a local cultural heritage official. Speaking to IRNA, Seyyed Rouhollah Seyyedolagari, Deputy Director-General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization of Isfahan Province, announced that the third season of excavations at the Vigol archaeological site has yielded significant findings, including the identification of a previously unknown hall. He said that the Vigol archaeological site is one of Iran's most important historical locations. Field studies indicate that religious activities at the sanctuary discovered there continued for up to two centuries after the advent of Islam in Iran. Highlighting the site's impor-



● IRNA

tance, Seyyedolagari noted that, based on the findings so far, the sanctuary is considered one of the best-preserved

examples discovered in the country. Its architectural spaces and structural features have remained remarkably intact.

Providing details about the third excavation season, which began approximately two months ago under the direc-

tion of Mohsen Javeri and in cooperation with the University of Kashan, Seyyedolagari said that researchers have identified a new hall within the sanctuary complex. The hall contains bases believed to have supported offering tables. In addition, two other architectural structures have been uncovered adjacent to the hall, and specialized studies are underway to determine their precise function.

Addressing concerns among cultural heritage lovers regarding a proposed road project that would pass through the protected area of the historic site, Seyyedolagari stressed that the plan has not yet been approved by the provincial Cultural Heritage Organization and that no final decision has been made. He added that existing concerns will remain under consideration until detailed expert assessments are completed.

The first season of archaeological excavations at Vigol was conducted in 2010, focusing on the central fire temple area and building on surface evidence and exploratory surveys carried out by an archaeological team from the University of Tehran between 2006 and 2008.

Those excavations led to the discovery of the fire temple's central architectural plan and a distinctive 38-spoked fire altar shaped like an inverted palm tree.

The second season of excavations began in May 2021, concentrating on the area surrounding the temple's central circumambulation hall. This phase resulted in the discovery of plaster structures buried in adjacent spaces.

The Vigol archaeological site is located in Aran and Bidgol, approximately 215 kilometers north of Isfahan and 10 kilometers from Kashan.

UNESCO nomination process for Bonab Kebab moves forward

Iranica Desk

Ahmad Hamzehzadeh, Director-General of the East Azarbaijan Province Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, has highlighted the significance of Bonab Kebab in the cultural identity and tourism appeal of Bonab and the wider region, stating that its inscription on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List could play a key role in promoting the tourism potential of both Bonab and the province. Hamzehzadeh noted that Bonab Kebab has already been registered on Iran's National Heritage

List and is among more than 70 Iranian culinary traditions under consideration for international recognition, according to chn.ir. He said that, following special efforts by the Governor-General of East Azarbaijan Province and a directive from the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the process of preparing the nomination dossier has entered the implementation stage. In this regard, a contract has been signed with the national consultant responsible for preparing UNESCO nomination dossiers. Referring to Iran's ongoing UN-

ESCO nomination dossier for historic mosques, Hamzehzadeh said that the historic Mehrabad Mosque of Bonab has also been included among the proposed sites. He added that the inclusion of the mosque could further showcase the city's rich historical heritage. Hamzehzadeh also commented on the latest developments concerning the Qareh Qoshun Tourism Zone, describing it as one of the country's designated tourism development areas approved by the government. He said a memorandum of understanding has been signed between the pro-

vincial Cultural Heritage Department and Bonab Municipality to advance the project.

According to the official, the zone's master plan has been completed and finalized, while the Investment Commission of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has issued the required preliminary approval.

An investor has now been introduced by the municipality, and executive agencies are expected to expedite administrative procedures to facilitate the launch of the tourism development project.



● IRNA

Lake Urmia's remarkable revival brings new hope to northwest Iran

Iranica Desk

At a time when drought continues to cast a shadow over many regions of the world, Lake Urmia, the iconic blue jewel of northwestern Iran, is telling a different story — one of revival, resilience, and renewed hope. Following years of environmental decline, one of the world's largest saltwater lakes is showing signs of recovery, offering a powerful example of nature's capacity for renewal when supported by favorable conditions and sustained efforts.

From roads now surrounded by water to boats gliding across its surface, from the towering Urmia Causeway to families once again gathering along the shoreline, the lake's transformation is visible across the landscape. Each scene reflects a new chapter in the ongoing recovery of one of Iran's most important natural treasures, according to IRNA.

Blue waters return

Nestled among the mountains of West Azarbaijan Province, where cool winds mingle with the scent of rain and salt, Lake Urmia has once again expanded across the landscape. Once regarded as a symbol of environmental crisis, the lake has been

enriched significantly from recent precipitation, leading to a substantial increase in water levels. According to the latest figures, the lake's water level has reached 1,270.70 meters above sea level. The increase of 120 centimeters since the beginning of the current water year marks one of the most significant improvements recorded in recent years and has raised hopes for the lake's continued recovery.



The volume of water stored in the lake now stands at approximately 2.89 billion cubic meters, the highest level recorded in the past five years. Fresh images from the region show blue waters stretching toward the horizon, reflecting the sky above. Flamingos have returned to parts of the

lake, while gentle winds ripple across the surface, reviving scenes that had become increasingly rare during years of decline.

For many residents and visitors, the revival of Lake Urmia is evident not only in official statistics but also in the renewed vitality of the landscape. Along the shoreline, people once again gather to witness the lake's expanding waters



and to contemplate a brighter future for the region.

A road through water

One of the most striking symbols of the lake's recovery is a narrow roadway that now cuts through expanses of water. Vehicles move steadily along the route, with water visible on

both sides, creating a scene that only a few years ago would have seemed unlikely.

Surrounded by distant mountains, the roadway has become a visible reminder of the changing fortunes of the lake. For many observers, it symbolizes the renewed relationship between people and the natural environment after years of ecological stress. Every kilometer along the route offers further



● IRNA

evidence that Lake Urmia is gradually reclaiming its place in the region's landscape.

Tourism returns to shore

The lake's recovery is also breathing new life into tourism activities. Boats once again navigate parts of the lake, carrying visitors across waters

that had previously receded. In one scene, a yellow boat moves across the calm blue surface as passengers take in views of the surrounding mountains and open water.

Elsewhere, colorful pedal boats line the shallow shoreline, signaling the gradual return of recreational activities. Green, orange, and red boats stand ready for visitors eager to experience the lake firsthand. The



growing presence of tourists reflects increasing confidence in the future of the region and the renewed appeal of one of Iran's most famous natural attractions.

Local residents say the return of visitors has helped restore a sense of optimism. Beyond recreation, tourism is increas-

ingly viewed as an important component of broader efforts to reconnect communities with the lake and support local economic activity.

Causeway as a symbol of renewal

The Urmia Causeway, one of the region's most recognizable landmarks, has emerged as another symbol of the lake's revival. For years, the structure overlooked large stretches of exposed lakebed and salt flats. Today, however, its foundations are once again surrounded by water, underscoring the scale of the recent recovery.

Vehicles continue to cross the causeway while water flows beneath it, creating a striking contrast between engineering infrastructure and the natural environment. The structure now stands as a reminder not only of the challenges Lake Urmia has faced but also of the determination to preserve and restore it.

Visitors gathering along the shoreline further illustrate the changing atmosphere. Families picnic near the water, travelers stop to admire the scenery, and residents enjoy views of the lake against a backdrop of mountains that still bear memories of years of drought.

Middle East's largest cancer hospital opened in Tehran

Social Desk

Iran inaugurated the new Iran Cancer Institute hospital in Tehran on Tuesday, unveiling what officials described as the Middle East's largest specialized cancer treatment center, a \$685mn project designed to expand access to advanced oncology care and serve up to 200,000 patients annually. The 18-storey facility, located within Tehran's Imam Khomeini Hospital Complex, has more than 610 beds, 19 operating theatres and 60,000 square meters of floor space. Construction cost around IRR12tn tomans, equivalent to roughly \$685mn, and was completed in less than six years despite the COVID-19 pandemic, economic pressures and other operational challenges, IRNA reported. Health Minister Mohammadreza Zafarghandi hailed the opening as a major

national achievement, saying Iran's healthcare workforce had remained committed to serving patients under all circumstances. "The health team does not break. We remain ready to serve the people and fulfil the commitment we have made to God and to society," Zafarghandi said at the inauguration ceremony. He described the institute as a highly advanced referral center equipped with the full spectrum of modern cancer therapies, including surgery, chemotherapy, advanced radiotherapy, cell therapy and gene therapy. "When all other doors close because of the complexity of a disease, this center becomes a patient's final refuge and source of hope," he said. Reza Raiskarami, Chancellor of Tehran University of Medical Sciences, said the hospital would provide diagnostic and treatment services for a broad

range of cancers, including pediatric malignancies, blood cancers, bone marrow disorders, head and neck cancers and other complex conditions. Recruitment of medical personnel has already begun, while additional departments will gradually enter service as staffing and operational capacity expand, he said. Raiskarami added that the institute's mission extends beyond clinical care to education and research. Plans include the establishment of a National Cancer Laboratory and the development of integrated research infrastructure linking prevention, diagnosis, treatment and advanced scientific studies. Abdolrahman Rostamian, head of Imam Khomeini Hospital Complex, said the expansion would shorten waiting times and improve patient access to specialized services, including



Iran's Health Minister Mohammadreza Zafarghandi (c) cuts the ribbon to inaugurate the new Iran Cancer Institute in Tehran, Iran, June 2, 2026. ● DEAPRESS

surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy and transplantation. He added that new programs in cell therapy and home-based care were also being developed to strengthen long-term support for cancer patients.

Minister: Ghadir celebrations poised to strengthen national unity

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi said on Tuesday that this year's Ghadir celebrations could open a new chapter in social unity, building on the spirit of solidarity and resilience that has emerged across the country in recent months. Speaking to Mehr News Agency in Tehran, Salehi said religious observances have long served as a powerful expression of public unity, bringing communities together around shared values and collective identity. Ghadir, one of the most significant occasions in the Islamic calendar,

commemorates the event at Ghadir Khumm where Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is believed by Shia Muslims to have designated Imam Ali (PBUH) as his successor. Salehi said last year's Ghadir ceremonies demonstrated the strength of national solidarity, with people continuing to take part in religious gatherings despite security threats and challenging circumstances. He noted that the atmosphere of steadfastness and national resolve that has shaped public life in recent months could once again be reflected in widespread participation in Ghadir events.

Such ceremonies, he said, embody the same spirit of commitment and collective purpose that has characterized the nation's resilience. The minister described strengthened national unity as one of the most important outcomes of the recent period, saying it had helped bridge social and political divides and underscored the common interests shared by Iranians. Salehi expressed hope that the sense of solidarity forged during recent challenges would endure, adding that religious ceremonies such as Ghadir could further reinforce the country's social capital and collective cohesion.

Indian distributor acquires Farhadi's Cannes competition film

Arts & Culture Desk

Indian distributor Impact Films has acquired the theatrical rights to Asghar Farhadi's 'Parallel Tales,' expanding its Cannes 2026 slate with one of the festival's most closely watched competition titles. The film, Farhadi's 10th feature, premiered in competition at the 2026 Cannes Film Festival and is currently screening in cinemas across France. Produced by France, the United

States, Belgium and Italy, 'Parallel Tales' follows a novelist in Paris whose observations of her neighbors inspire a story that gradually blurs the boundary between fiction and reality, ILNA reported. The acquisition brings Farhadi's latest work to Indian audiences alongside several other Cannes selections secured by Impact Films, including films by Japanese directors Ryusuke Hamaguchi and Hirokazu Kore-eda. The drama features an ensemble cast

drawn from several generations of French cinema, including Isabelle Huppert, Vincent Cassel, Virginie Efira, Pierre Niney, Adam Bessa, India Hair and Catherine Deneuve. One of the film's notable creative partnerships is Farhadi's collaboration with acclaimed Polish composer Zbigniew Preisner, renowned for his work on Krzysztof Kieslowski's celebrated films 'Three Colours: Blue, White and Red,' as well as 'The Double Life of Véronique'.

Tehran logs 63 clean-air days in best five-year start

Social Desk

Tehran has recorded 63 clean-air days since March 21, 2026, the highest figure for the same period in five years, while ozone pollution has risen more slowly than in previous years, the Tehran Air Quality Control Company said on June 2. The capital registered 63 clean-air days and 10 days with acceptable air quality through June 1, marking its strongest start to a year since 2021, according to data from the city's air-monitoring network, ILNA reported. The figures point to a notably cleaner opening to the year for Tehran, where ground-level ozone typically becomes the dominant pollutant during the warmer



months. Monitoring data show that the seasonal increase in ozone concentrations has started later and progressed more gradually than in recent years. A comparison of hourly ozone levels during the first 10 days of June found lower concentrations than those recorded over the same period in 2025. No ozone-related air-quality readings exceeded acceptable limits in either year, though daytime levels were generally higher last year.

The company said more favorable weather conditions, including milder temperatures and increased atmospheric instability, may have contributed to the slower build-up of ozone, alongside a possible reduction in ozone-forming pollutants. Ground-level ozone is formed when pollutants from traffic and urban activities react under strong sunlight and high temperatures. Unlike the protective ozone layer in the upper atmosphere, it can pose risks to respiratory health, particularly during hot, sunny and low-wind conditions. Officials cautioned that ozone concentrations could increase in the coming weeks as summer temperatures rise and solar radiation intensifies across the Iranian capital.

Notice of tender for export
sale No. Z/1405/05
Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company

Analysis %	
%Fe Ave	68.00
%FeO	Min 24 Max 28
%P Max	0.035
%S Ave	0.5
%SiO2 Max	2.2
%Al2O3 Max	0.6
%CaO Max	0.7
%MgO Max	2.2
%Moisture Max	7.0
Blaine (cm2/gr) Ave	1100
Size ave	80%<0.15 mm

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.

Notice of tender for export
sale No. Z/1405/06
Golgohar Mining and Industrial Company

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70,000 metric tons of Pellet (%Fe:65.50) on basis of F.O.B at Barco Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: www.geg.ir. All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 09:00A.M. on 16. June.2026 to Golgohar complex in Sirjan (50 km in shiraz road). Bidders are invited to the transactions commission department of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative Tender. results shall be announced at 09:00 A.M. on 16. June.2026 at the office of the Seller.

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.

Notice of tender for export
sale No. Z/1405/06
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Analysis %		
%Fe	65.50	Min
%FeO	1.0	Ave
%P	0.035	Max
%S	0.01	Max
%SiO2	3.0	Max
%Al2O3	0.7	Max
%CaO	0.7	Max
%MgO	2.5	Max
CCS (kg/p)	Ave 250	
8-16 mm%	Min 90	
-6 mm%	Ave 5	
A.I%	Max 3.5	
T.I%	Min 95	
Prosity%	19-24	
Reducibility%	Min 90	

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