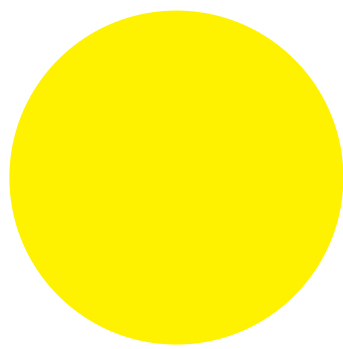


Salehi-Amiri:
Oral history
opens a living
window onto
Iran's heritage



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President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd L) addresses a meeting in Tehran during which he remotely launches projects carried out by village councils and municipalities nationwide on August 29, 2026.
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Qatar pursuing preventive diplomacy to avert a wider crisis

By **Delaram Ahmadi**
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

As the confrontation between Iran and the US remains deadlocked, regional diplomatic and mediation efforts are continuing. In the latest development, Qatar's prime minister traveled to Tehran and held talks with senior Iranian officials. In an interview with Iran Daily, international affairs analyst **Abed Akbari** described



Abed Akbari

Doha's efforts to engage in the matter at this stage as a form of "preventive diplomacy" aimed at preventing the crisis from spiraling out of control. He said the strategic importance of active mediation by Qatar, Oman and Pakistan lies not in laying the groundwork for a compre-

hensive agreement, but in creating a "minimum understanding to prevent a maximum crisis."

IRAN DAILY: Does the Qatari prime minister's visit to Tehran and his meetings with the president, parliament speaker and secretary of the Supreme National Security Council indicate that Qatar is once again seeking to mediate between Iran and the US and reopen the diplomatic channel?

AKBARI: The Qatari prime minister and foreign minister's visit to Tehran and his meetings should be seen as an important sign of the renewed activation of regional diplomacy. The level of these meetings indicates that Doha is not merely carrying a ceremonial message, but is seeking to engage with all the key centers of decision-making in Iran and gain a clear picture of Tehran's capacity and conditions for reducing tensions. In my view, Qatar is once again seeking to play the role of a "fa-

cilitator of dialogue" between Tehran and Washington. However, this activity should not be interpreted as a sign that direct Iran-US negotiations are about to begin.

Under the current circumstances, mediation is aimed less at quickly reaching a comprehensive agreement than at preventing an escalation of the crisis and establishing a minimum level of trust to reopen the diplomatic channel. The simultaneous or successive visits by Qatari, Omani and Pakistani officials to Tehran also indicate that the region has reached the conclusion that allowing the current situation to continue without a political initiative could lead to a larger crisis.

Given that Qatar has also sought in recent months to bring the views of Tehran and Washington closer together, what has prompted Doha to take the initiative again at this point?
Qatar's main motivation is cer-

tainly its concern over the economic and security consequences of the continuation of the crisis. However, the issue is not limited to the Strait of Hormuz. For Qatar, stability in the Persian Gulf is directly linked to its national security and economy. Disruptions to maritime security, rising regional risks and the continuation of a wartime environment could affect energy markets, investment and regional trade. The Strait of Hormuz is particularly important in this regard because restoring security to this waterway is not merely an issue between Iran and the US; it concerns the global economy and the energy security of all countries in the region.

Qatar's efforts to engage in this issue should be viewed as a form of "preventive diplomacy." Doha knows that if the crisis spirals out of control, no country on the Persian Gulf will be immune to its consequences. Recent reports also indicate that reopening maritime routes and easing tensions

around Hormuz have now become key areas of focus for mediation efforts.

Some reports suggest that the US administration is unwilling to return to the Islamabad understanding and continues to emphasize increased economic pressure and sanctions. What objectives is Washington pursuing by maintaining this approach and is it essentially prepared to return to negotiations? What conditions does Tehran consider necessary for resuming talks?

It appears that Washington has, at this stage, replaced or complemented military pressure with economic pressure. The main US objective is probably to increase the cost of maintaining the current situation for Tehran and use economic pressure to force Iran to accept negotiations from a position Washington considers favorable.

The US administration's stated position is also that there is cur-

rently no direct dialogue underway and that economic pressure will continue until Iran shows readiness for "meaningful" negotiations.

However, there is a strategic contradiction here: pressure can bring the other side closer to the negotiating table, but excessive pressure may eliminate the incentive to negotiate. If Washington's objective is to reach an agreement, it needs to make clear to Tehran that negotiations can produce tangible gains. Otherwise, Tehran may conclude that negotiations are merely a prelude to accepting further US demands. On the other hand, Tehran's conditions have largely taken shape around several issues: an end to economic pressure and the economic blockade, the reduction or lifting of sanctions, the release of Iran's resources and assets, and the creation of guarantees to prevent a repeat of the experience of the US unilaterally withdrawing from agreements.

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Leader calls for unity among Muslim states against 'real enemy'

International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei on Sunday urged Muslim states to "recognize their real enemy" and stand united against it.

"The criminal rulers of the United States and Israel are not only the enemies of the Iranian nation but also hostile toward the entire Muslim world," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a message to mark Unity Week, an occasion designated by the late founder of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to promote harmony among Islamic schools of thought. He advised heads of Islamic countries, particularly those in West Asia and the Persian Gulf region, to know their real enemy, as well as recognize its plots and confront them.

"The remedy for the problems of the Muslim world lies in unity of purpose, friendship, and cooperation in the pursuit of goodness and righteousness," Ayatollah Khamenei added.

"The criminal rulers of the United States and the illegitimate Zionist regime are sworn enemies of this unity and friendship.

"They are not merely enemies of the Islamic Republic, the Iranian nation, and the great front of Islamic resistance; they are hostile to the entire Muslim world, including the nations of West Asia and North Africa. In this regard, even the rulers of these states—many of whom are considered their allies—are not exempt," the Leader highlighted.

Ayatollah Khamenei also pointed to the public disrespect shown and offensive language used by the leaders of the arro-

gant powers toward some leaders of Muslim countries.

He further emphasized that the issue of unity among Muslims has a successful example among the people of Iran, where the enemies' conspiracies have not had much effect in undermining it.

"But surely, the ill-wishers are always lying in wait for this great blessing. What gives them hope is the highlighting of differences. Although ideological and religious differences constitute an important part of what the enemies of Islam seek to exploit, and they place great reliance on using them, they will not stop there," he noted.

Provoking division among Muslims

"They seek to turn all kinds of racial, cultural, social, economic, political, and geographical dif-

ferences into pretexts for creating division among Muslim peoples in Iran and in every other Islamic country, so that they can sit back and watch the Muslim world become fragmented, and its strength gradually depleted, and then, at an opportune moment, impose their domination over them."

Meanwhile, the Leader warned against any act that sows discord among Muslims.

"Therefore, anyone, in whatever position, who takes any action that leads to division among Muslims or creates discord within the Muslim community has, knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly, furthered the aims of the enemies of Islam," he said.

"And how, in these times, can anyone attribute such an act to ignorance or negligence, when the tyrants of the world, led by



Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei
IRNA

the criminal US, have now cast aside the deceptive and flimsy masks concealing their ugly colonial aims and their hegemonic and domination-seeking schemes, removed their deceptive velvet gloves, and revealed

their bloodstained claws to the entire world?"

Additionally, Ayatollah Khamenei asserted that it is time for Muslim people to reflect and examine developments more carefully.

Pezeshkian: Return to Islamabad memo to block US-Israeli attempts to cause chaos

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Saturday that implementing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) reached between Iran and the United States in mid-June will prevent Washington and Israel from creating chaos in the West Asian region.

Pezeshkian said the Pakistan-mediated agreement, aimed at paving the way for a permanent end to the war, would help regional nations "pursue stability and development through unity, cooperation and convergence," Press TV reported.

He reiterated that the Islamic Republic does not seek war but will stand firmly against any aggressor, vowing that "no power can force a nation standing with full strength and determination to surrender."

Iran, he said, would never bow to any threat, despite its efforts to pursue diplomacy. "With the support of the people, the efforts of government officials and the dedication of armed forces commanders, we will not bow to any threat, as we have demonstrated time and again in the past," Pezeshkian said.

The president once again called for greater unity and cohesion, saying the country can overcome its challenges through national unity and the implementation of



Masoud Pezeshkian
president.ir

the MoU.

"If we implement the memorandum based on national unity and with the support of all those who care about the country and seek its dignity and prosperity, we can overcome our challenges."

He also called for greater unity and solidarity among Muslim countries to thwart the enemies' schemes, saying that if peace and stability are to take hold in the world, they must emerge from within the West Asia region.

In separate remarks on Friday, the president said Tehran would con-

tinue to honor its commitments under the MoU as long as Washington did the same. "If the other side failed to comply, he added, Iran would no longer remain bound by its commitments either." He also called for stronger diplomatic efforts involving Iran's neighbors and Muslim countries. The MoU, signed on June 17 by US President Donald Trump and Pezeshkian, followed high-level talks between Iranian and American officials hosted by Islamabad. The preliminary agreement was intended to bring an end to US-Israeli aggression against Iran, launched on February 28.

The war has severely disrupted commercial shipping in the Persian Gulf, particularly the transport of oil and gas exports vital to global markets.

The Trump administration, however, failed to fulfill its commitments under the agreement to release frozen Iranian assets, lift sanctions, remove its illegal naval blockade of Iranian ports and press Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

On August 18, the 60-day period set under the MoU expired. Washington showed no interest in extending it, while Trump unleashed what he called a "D-Day" economic pressure campaign against Iran.

Implementation of Iran-Oman deal on Hormuz hinges on US fulfilling commitments: Deputy FM

International Desk

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said that implementation of an agreement reached Between Tehran and Muscat on the Strait of Hormuz hinges on the United States' fulfillment of its commitments under the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

"The Islamic Republic has reached an understanding with Oman concerning arrangements for transit through the Strait of Hormuz. However, this understanding will not automatically enter the implementation phase, as its implementation is conditional upon the fulfillment of commitments by the United States," Gharibabadi told reporters on Saturday, according to IRNA.

"We have explicitly stated that whenever the conditions are met and the obligations incumbent upon the United States are met, the Islamic Republic is likewise prepared to take its own measures regarding the Strait of Hormuz," Gharibabadi added. He rejected the idea that Iran should initiate the process of honoring commitments linked to reopening the waterway.

"It is not for us to take the first step in fulfilling the commitments related to reopening the Strait of Hormuz. Rather, it was the United States that suspended its obligations. Washington must return to fulfilling those commitments, and we have

made entirely clear the steps that must be taken by the United States," he stated.

Iran closed the chokepoint following the launch of the latest bout of unprovoked American-Israeli aggression against the country on February 28.

The Islamic Republic and the United States agreed on a 60-day reopening period as part of a Pakistan-mediated MoU in June, but American violations forced Tehran to re-establish the closure.

Tehran has conditioned reopening of the waterway on the implementation of the Islamabad agreement.

Since the closure of the conduit, Iran and Oman, which sit on either side of the strait, have held several rounds of negotiations to regulate sailing through it. They have now reached an agreement on arrangements for transit through the strait from which a fifth of the world's oil and gas is exported. Gharibabadi reminded that it was the United States, and not Iran that violated the Islamabad memorandum, adding that the Islamic Republic should not be expected to bear the consequences of the US's misconduct.

"The responsibility and obligation now lie with the other party to meet the necessary requirements, so that Iran can take reciprocal action."

The official underlined that Iran was not under pressure to reopen the strait if the US did not take the required action.

Araghchi demands accountability over US use of Japan's airbase to attack Iran



International Desk

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Japanese people should hold their government accountable for their country's "participation in US crimes" after a report revealed that the US military assets

in Japan were used in operations against Iran.

"The peace-loving people of Japan should ask their government to be held accountable for the crimes committed by the United States," Araghchi told Japan's Kyodo News, arguing that Tokyo bears

responsibility for the use of military facilities and capabilities by the US army against Iran.

The top diplomat specifically highlighted reports that US Air Force F-16 fighter jets deployed from Misawa Airbase in Japan's Aomori Prefecture were transferred to the Middle East for strikes on Iran.

The minister said it proves that the US military bases in Japan are not used solely for domestic defense, but rather to support wider "aggressive policies".

During its aggression against Iran that broke out in late February, the US military used its bases in several regional countries to launch attacks against Iran. Several military bases in other countries, including in Europe, were also used for strikes on Iran.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Minister says strategic food reserves grew despite war, sanctions

Economy Desk

Iran has not drawn down its strategic reserves of essential goods since the start of the US-Israeli conflict in late February, and has instead increased those stockpiles while continuing imports to replenish them, the agriculture minister said on Sunday.

Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah said that no withdrawals had been made from the country's strategic reserves since the war began, adding that imports were ongoing to maintain and boost supply, according to ISNA.

His remarks came as Iran faces intensifying external pressure, including a US naval blockade imposed since mid-April aimed at pushing Tehran toward a peace agreement following the 40-day aggression.

Iran has been under Western sanctions for years over its nuclear program, which have raised costs even in humanitarian areas such



Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah
● ISNA

as access to medicines, though food and agricultural goods are formally exempt from sanction regimes.

Referring to the agricultural sector's performance over the past two years, Nouri-Qezeljah said the government took office in August 2024 amid multiple challenges, including drought, war, sanctions,

and the blockade. "Despite all these conditions," he added, "unprecedented measures were taken in the country's agricultural sector, the effects of which we have seen in the supply of goods, support for domestic production and the facilitation of investment conditions." Over the past two years, greenhouse production

rose by 18% and rice output grew by 10%, he added, while the number of knowledge-based agricultural growth centers increased by about 12% and the area of agricultural townships expanded by 20%, he said. The minister did not directly cite overall agricultural production figures, but last week deputy agriculture min-

ister for crop production Majid Anjafi said Iran's agricultural output had surged to 137 million tons over the past year from 130 million tons, despite severe drought, water shortages, sanctions and energy imbalances.

Anjafi said the past year had witnessed one of the most severe drought periods in 50 years, yet farmers and experts managed to increase production through improved methods and technology.

In related remarks reported by ISNA, Gholamreza Golmohammadi, head of the Agricultural Research, Education and Extension Organization, said about \$1 billion had been saved in the agricultural sector over the past year through financial discipline.

He added that 5.5% growth in the sector and a 9-million-ton increase in production during the same period, despite drought and numerous other difficulties, were among the ministry's achievements.

ECONOMIC LENS

Role of BRICS in reshaping global economic order



By Mohammadreza Hosseini Aliabad
Researcher in int'l economics

BRICS is no longer merely the name of a group of emerging economies. It has become one of the most significant symbols of structural dissatisfaction with the existing global economic order. The central question today is not whether BRICS can completely replace the West, but why a large part of the world is seeking to develop mechanisms beyond the traditional orbit of economic power. The answer lies in the widening gap between the realities of the global economy and institutions that still largely reflect the balance of power of past decades.

The post-World War II economic order was built around institutions that played a decisive role in reconstructing the global economy. Yet today's world is no longer the world of the late 1940s. The center of gravity of production, trade, energy, capital, and population is gradually shifting, while emerging economies are demanding a greater role in global affairs. BRICS should be understood as a product of this transformation—a transformation with profound political and geo-economic consequences.

One of the most controversial issues is the role of the US dollar. Many analyses portray BRICS efforts to expand the use of national currencies as the beginning of the end of dollar dominance. Reality, however, is more complex. The dollar's position is supported by extensive financial networks, deep capital markets, global confidence, and the historical strength of the American economy. Speaking of the imminent end of the dollar is more of a political slogan than an economic analysis. Nevertheless, efforts to create alternative payment channels indicate that the world is moving toward greater currency diversification. The issue may not be the elimination of the dollar, but rather the reduction of its monopoly—a subtle distinction that could prove highly consequential.

BRICS faces a major contradiction along this path. Its members share common concerns regarding the concentration of global economic power, yet they differ considerably in terms of national interests, foreign policy priorities, economic structures, and bilateral relations. How can a new economic order be envisioned when its prospective architects have not yet reached full consensus on practical mechanisms of cooperation? This question represents the most significant challenge facing BRICS.

The New Development Bank can be regarded as one of BRICS' most significant efforts to move beyond rhetoric toward institution building. Expanding capacity to finance development projects can strengthen the bargaining power of member states. Yet no new economic order can be created merely by establishing a financial institution. A new order emerges when investor confidence, financial infrastructure, economic transparency, and predictability are developed on a broad and sustainable scale.

If BRICS fails to strengthen these foundations, it may remain more of a forum for expressing dissatisfaction than a genuine force for transformation.

The expansion of BRICS also presents two contrasting dimensions. On the one hand, an increase in membership can enhance the group's demographic, energy, and economic weight while amplifying the voice of the Global South. On the other hand, greater diversity among members may make coordination increasingly difficult. BRICS now faces a fundamental question: does it seek to become a broad but heterogeneous coalition, or a cohesive bloc with clearly defined economic objectives? The answer will determine its real future. Despite all these uncertainties, one fact cannot be ignored: the global economic order is changing. A combination of simultaneous developments—from strategic competition between China and the United States to trade wars, energy crises, economic sanctions, the growth of the digital economy, and the expanding role of the Global South—suggests that the era of unquestioned concentration of global economic power is gradually coming to an end. BRICS may not yet possess the capacity to construct a fully alternative economic order, but it has brought a major question to the center of global debate: should the rules of the international economy continue to be written primarily by the same powers that shaped the world of previous decades, or has the time come for new realities to be reflected more fully in international decision-making?

Perhaps the greatest achievement of BRICS so far has not been the creation of a common currency, the displacement of the dollar, or the establishment of institutions designed to rival Western structures. Rather, its most significant achievement may be challenging the assumption that the existing economic order is immutable. BRICS has reminded the world that economic power is not a fixed reality. As production, trade, technology, population, and energy resources evolve, the rules of the game will inevitably evolve as well.

The central contest of the future may emerge between two competing visions of the global economy. The first seeks to preserve traditional structures of power, while the second calls for a broader distribution of opportunity, representation, and economic decision-making. BRICS is not yet the final answer to this contest, but it is undoubtedly one of its most important arenas.

The fundamental question is whether this group can transform its considerable potential into genuine institutional power or whether it will become entangled in the complexities of its internal differences. The answer will shape not only the future of BRICS, but also an important part of the future global economic order.

Iran holds narrow lead over US in China pistachio market

Economy Desk

Iran narrowly held the lead over the United States in China's pistachio market in the first half of 2026, accounting for 50% of imports compared with 47% for the United States, even as the value of Iranian shipments to China took a tumble, according to trade data reported by IRIBNEWS on Sunday.

Iran exported about 3,935 metric tons of pistachios worth \$32 million to China in the first six months of 2026, down 70% in value from the \$109 million recorded in the same period a year earlier. Despite the sharp decline, Iran



captured 50% of China's \$64 million pistachio import market. The United States came second, with a 47% share of the Chinese market. US pistachio exports to China also fell

during the period, declining 53%. Meanwhile, Iran's pistachio exports to the European Union increased, indicating stronger shipments to Western markets as demand weakened in

East Asia.

Iran's pistachio exports to the European Union climbed 6% in the first half of 2026 to €33.94 million, according to Eurostat data, while overall trade between Iran and the bloc dropped 26% to €952 million.

Iran's pistachio exports to the EU totaled €31.85 million in the first half of 2025. Germany remained the largest European market for Iranian pistachios, importing €24.38 million worth in the first half of 2026, accounting for 70% of Iran's total pistachio exports to the EU. German imports of Iranian pistachios slid 3% year-on-year.

NIOC sees potential for 5b barrels of oil, 227 bcm of gas in southern Fars

Economy Desk

Iran expects ongoing exploration in southern Fars Province to uncover about 5 billion barrels of oil and 8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, as the country continues drilling near a recently discovered gas field, the National Iranian Oil Company's exploration chief said.

Mohieddin Jafari said drilling was underway in the Dehno area southeast of the Takht-e gas field, following the discovery of the field, as Iran seeks to identify additional resources in surrounding areas, ISNA reported.

"In addition, we have plans to search for and explore new resources in the lower Dehram and upper Dehram areas," Jafari added.

Jafari said exploration estimates indicated the potential discovery of about 5 billion barrels of oil and nearly 227 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas, adding that Iran hoped to find the resources using its existing drilling rigs.

The comments follow an announcement earlier in August by Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad that Iran had found a natural gas field in the south of Fars Province containing 212 bcm of gas in place of which 161 bcm are recoverable.

He described the discovery as equivalent to 15 years of production from one phase of South Pars, the world's largest gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar.

Jafari also said last week that the intrinsic value of the newly discovered gas field in Fars had been estimated at \$40 billion, describing it as one of Iran's most significant gas discoveries in the past two decades.

He added that the gas at the Takht-e field is sweet and does not require a sweetening process, allowing it to move through development and processing more quickly than gas from sour fields.

The exploration campaign is part of a broader push stretching from the southern parts of



Fars province into the northern parts of the adjacent Bushehr province. The site is located near the Pazan gas field, where exploration resumed last year after an eight-year pause, resulting in the discovery of an additional 283 bcm of gas in place and 200 million barrels of crude oil.

Iran has relied on domestic investment and expertise to de-

velop its oil and gas fields since 2018, when the United States imposed sweeping sanctions on the country's energy sector.

Iran has proven natural gas reserves of around 34 trillion cubic meters, making it the world's second-largest holder of gas reserves after Russia. The country accounts for about 17% of global proven gas reserves.

Trademark registration in int'l trade law

Mechanisms for protection of trademarks in global markets



By Majid Pasandideh
Legal researcher

**OPINION
EXCLUSIVE**

In the contemporary economic system, brands and trademarks have become some of the most valuable intangible assets of companies and economic actors. Extensive developments in international trade, the growth of communication technologies, the expansion of e-commerce, and increasing competition among companies have demonstrated that the value of a business is no longer measured solely by its production capacity, physical assets, or financial resources. Instead, commercial reputation, brand recognition, consumer trust, and the position of a trademark in the market have become essential elements of economic power. In such circumstances, trademark registration and the establishment of effective legal protection for trademarks are not merely administrative procedures, but rather strategic legal and economic measures designed to ensure the sustainable presence of companies in domestic and international markets. International trade law has increasingly focused on the protection of intellectual property rights, particularly trademarks, because brands play a crucial role in facilitating trade, promoting fair competition, reducing consumer search costs, and strengthening confidence in economic relations. When consumers purchase a product associated with a specific trademark, they are essentially relying on the reputation and quality that the brand has developed over time. Therefore, any unauthorized use, imitation, or infringement of a trademark may not only cause economic losses to the trademark owner but also undermine market competition and consumer protection. A trademark, from a legal perspective, is a sign that distinguishes the goods or services of one individual or legal entity from those of others. Such a sign may include a name, word, image, logo, symbol, specific combination of colors, product design, or other distinctive elements. The primary purpose of trademark protection is to prevent consumer confusion and guarantee the exclusive right of the legitimate owner to use



the trademark. In other words, trademark registration enables the owner to benefit from the economic value and reputation created by the brand and to obtain legal protection against individuals or entities seeking to exploit that reputation. In the field of international trade, the importance of trademark registration becomes more evident due to the cross-border nature of modern economic activities. A company may manufacture products in one country while targeting consumers in multiple international markets. In such circumstances, domestic trademark registration alone cannot provide sufficient protection because intellectual property rights are generally based on the principle of territoriality. According to this principle, legal protection for a trademark is limited to the territory of the country where the trademark has been registered. Therefore, companies seeking to export products, establish foreign branches, or enter international markets must develop appropriate legal strategies for registering and protecting their trademarks in relevant jurisdictions. The principle of territoriality is one of the most significant concepts in international trademark law. Unlike certain areas of law that have relatively universal rules, intellectual property protection remains largely dependent on national legal systems. Each country has specific regulations concerning trademark registration requirements, duration of protection, grounds for refusal, opposition procedures, and remedies for infringement. These differences require international companies to carefully examine the legal status of their

trademarks before entering new foreign markets. One of the most important international mechanisms for trademark protection is the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks, which operates under the supervision of the World Intellectual Property Organization. This system allows trademark owners to seek protection for their trademarks in multiple member countries through a single application procedure. The significance of this mechanism lies in simplifying the international registration process, reducing costs, and creating greater coordination among different legal systems. For companies seeking to expand their export activities, utilizing such international mechanisms can play a vital role in protecting intellectual property rights and reducing commercial risks. In addition to the Madrid System, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement), established within the framework of the World Trade Organization, is one of the most important international instruments concerning trademark protection. This agreement establishes minimum standards for intellectual property protection and requires member states to provide effective legal protection for trademarks. Under this framework, countries are required to ensure the possibility of trademark registration, transfer, licensing, and enforcement of trademark rights. Such obligations contribute significantly to creating legal certainty for participants in international trade. One of the most important effects of international trademark

registration is increasing the economic value and competitive strength of companies in global markets. A registered trademark can be considered a transferable asset and may become the subject of commercial agreements, licensing contracts, franchise arrangements, and economic valuation. Many leading global companies derive a significant portion of their value from their trademarks. This demonstrates that intellectual property is no longer merely a legal concept but has become a fundamental component of the knowledge-based economy and global commerce. Despite the development of international trademark protection systems, several challenges continue to exist in the process of registering and protecting trademarks globally. One major challenge is the practice of bad-faith trademark registration. In some cases, individuals or entities with no genuine connection to a brand register it in a particular country in order to later demand financial compensation from the original owner or prevent the brand from entering that market. This issue is particularly important for companies seeking international expansion and highlights the necessity of early and strategic trademark registration in target markets. Another significant challenge is trademark counterfeiting and infringement. The growth of e-commerce and online marketplaces has created extensive opportunities for brand promotion but has also increased the possibility of unauthorized use of trademarks and the distribution of counterfeit goods. Fake products not only cause financial losses to trademark owners but may also damage the reputation and credibility of legitimate companies. Therefore, governments and international organizations have attempted to strengthen intellectual property laws, improve judicial cooperation, and establish effective monitoring mechanisms to combat trademark infringement. For Iran, trademark registration in international trade has strategic importance. The Iranian economy possesses significant potential in areas such as food industries, agricultural products, handicrafts, carpets, pharmaceuticals, knowledge-based products, technology, and specialized services. Many of these products have the potential to become recognized global brands. How-

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When consumers purchase a product associated with a specific trademark, they are essentially relying on the reputation and quality that the brand has developed over time. Therefore, any unauthorized use, imitation, or infringement of a trademark may not only cause economic losses to the trademark owner but also undermine market competition and consumer protection. Unlike certain areas of law that have relatively universal rules, intellectual property protection remains largely dependent on national legal systems. Despite the development of international trademark protection systems, several challenges continue to exist in the process of registering and protecting trademarks globally.

ever, fully utilizing this potential requires serious attention to intellectual property rights and international trademark registration. Failure to properly register Iranian brands in foreign markets may allow others to exploit the reputation of Iranian products or even obtain ownership of related trademarks in certain jurisdictions.

Under Iran's specific economic conditions, including trade restrictions and international sanctions, effective legal management of trademarks has become even more important. Iranian companies seeking successful participation in global markets must focus not only on product quality but also on legal protection of their brands. Selecting appropriate countries for registration, examining intellectual property laws in target markets, drafting agreements related to technology transfer or representation, and establishing effective dispute resolution mechanisms are among the measures that can protect the economic interests of Iranian businesses.

The role of international trade and intellectual property lawyers is highly significant in this field. International trademark registration is not merely an administrative process; rather, it requires careful legal analysis of target markets, assessment of potential risks, preparation of relevant agreements, and knowledge of different intellectual property systems. A specialized legal advisor can help companies avoid costly mistakes and develop effective strategies for expanding and protecting their brands in international markets.

Furthermore, supporting Iranian brands should be considered an essential component of national foreign trade development policies. Countries that have successfully created powerful global brands have generally paid special attention not only to production development but also to intellectual property protection and international trademark registration. Strong brands can increase export value, create employment opportunities, attract investment, and improve a country's economic position in global markets. Therefore, promoting trademark registration and supporting Iranian companies in accessing international intellectual property systems can significantly contribute to economic development.

Ultimately, trademark registration in international trade law should be regarded as one of the most important instruments for protecting modern economic assets and strengthening the competitive position of companies in global markets. In today's world, a brand is not merely a name or commercial symbol; it represents reputation, trust, and economic value. Effective legal protection of trademarks enables companies to enter international markets with greater confidence and safeguard their investments in brand development.

Accordingly, the development of legal mechanisms for trademark registration and protection, greater harmonization of domestic laws with international standards, increasing awareness among economic actors, and utilizing the expertise of international trade lawyers are essential requirements for strengthening participation in the global economy. For Iran, serious attention to the international registration and protection of national brands can serve as an important step toward increasing exports, protecting economic interests, and improving the country's position in international trade.



Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Daren Tang (4th-R) visits the Premier League headquarters in London, the UK, on May 5, 2026, to meet with the legal enforcement team of the world-renowned football league.

● UK IPO

Trade mark infringement in India's digital marketplace



By Alhan Kayser
Partner at Kayser and
Company IP law firm

ANALYSIS

This is an analysis of trade mark infringement in India's digital marketplace, examining counterfeit listings, keyword advertising, deceptive domain names, social media misuse, passing off, transborder reputation, and the application of established trade mark principles to online commerce.

The rapid expansion of India's digital economy has fundamentally changed the manner in which businesses build, market, and protect their brands. Electronic commerce platforms, online marketplaces, mobile applications, social media channels, and digital advertising have enabled enterprises to reach consumers across the country with unprecedented speed. Digital commerce has removed geographical barriers while creating immense commercial opportunities for businesses of every size.

This transformation has also generated new challenges for trade mark proprietors. Brand misuse is no longer confined to counterfeit products displayed in physical markets. Today, trade mark infringement frequently occurs through online product listings, deceptive domain names, sponsored advertisements, social media profiles, mobile applications, keyword advertising, counterfeit marketplace stores, and misleading digital promotions.

Indian Courts have gradually adapted established trade mark principles to address these evolving commercial realities. Judicial interpretation increasingly recognises digital infringement as capable of causing substantial commercial injury through consumer confusion, dilution of goodwill, and diversion of legitimate business. Understanding trade mark infringement within digital environments therefore requires appreciation of both statutory protection under the Trade Marks Act, 1999 and evolving judicial interpretation developed through landmark decisions of the Supreme Court of India.

Digital marketplace has altered traditional trade mark risks

Conventional trade mark disputes generally involved physical products displayed in retail outlets. Digital commerce presents a substantially different environment. Consumers often purchase products without physically examining goods. Decisions frequently depend upon search results, marketplace rankings, advertisements, product descriptions, and visible branding. Under such circumstances, trade marks perform an even greater commercial function. Consumers rely upon recognised marks to distinguish authentic products from competing alternatives. Any unauthorised use capable of creating confusion may significantly influence purchasing behaviour. Consequently, digital infringement frequently affects commercial goodwill much faster than traditional market disputes.

Trade mark protection extends beyond physical goods

Trade mark law protects commercial

identity rather than merely tangible products. Modern businesses develop valuable goodwill through websites, mobile applications, digital services, online education platforms, software solutions, and electronic commerce operations. Unauthorised digital use of protected marks may therefore constitute infringement where statutory requirements are satisfied. The expansion of commerce into virtual environments has broadened the practical application of trade mark principles without altering their fundamental legal objectives. Consumer protection continues remaining central.

Consumer confusion remains the primary judicial test

Indian Courts consistently evaluate trade mark disputes through the likelihood of consumer confusion. The Supreme Court comprehensively explained relevant principles in *Cadila Health Care Ltd. v. Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd.*, the Court observed that determination of deceptive similarity requires consideration of the nature of marks, degree of resemblance, class of purchasers, surrounding circumstances, mode of purchasing, and nature of goods or services. Although the dispute concerned pharmaceutical products, the principles articulated by the court possess broader application across trade mark jurisprudence, including digital commerce. The judgment remains one of India's leading authorities governing deceptive similarity.

Phonetic similarity continues applying within online commerce

Digital consumers frequently search products through spoken commands, mobile applications, and online search engines. Consequently, phonetic resemblance continues playing an important role within digital trade mark disputes. The Supreme Court in *Amritdhara Pharmacy v. Satya Deo Gupta* recognised that trade marks should be evaluated from the perspective of ordinary consumers possessing imperfect recollection rather than through meticulous comparison. This doctrine has particular significance within electronic commerce where purchasing decisions often occur rapidly and consumers frequently rely upon memory rather than detailed examination. Minor spelling differences may therefore fail to eliminate infringement.

Essential features of registered marks continue receiving protection

Digital marketplaces often involve slight modifications of established trade marks. Sellers occasionally alter spellings, typography, or graphic presentation while retaining overall commercial identity. The Supreme Court addressed this issue in *Kaviraj Pandit Durga Dutt Sharma v. Navaratna Pharmaceuticals Laboratories*, holding that infringement may arise where essential features of a registered trade mark have been appropriated despite minor variations. This principle continues applying within electronic commerce because digital presentation frequently emphasises overall commercial impression rather than technical differences. Substance prevails



over superficial alteration.

Counterfeit listings have become a major commercial concern

Counterfeit goods represent one of the most significant challenges confronting trade mark proprietors within digital marketplaces. Unauthorised sellers frequently reproduce brand names, packaging, logos, and promotional material while offering inferior products through electronic commerce platforms. Consumers may believe such goods originate from legitimate businesses. Counterfeit products frequently damage commercial reputation because consumers associate poor quality with genuine trade mark proprietors. Trade mark law therefore protects both commercial interests and consumer confidence. Judicial intervention frequently becomes necessary where infringement persists.

Keyword advertising raises complex trade mark questions

Search engine advertising has introduced additional trade mark concerns. Businesses occasionally purchase competitors' trade marks as advertising keywords to attract online consumers searching for established brands. Although keyword advertising presents complex legal issues, courts increasingly examine whether such conduct creates confusion regarding commercial origin or unfairly exploits established goodwill. The analysis generally focuses upon marketplace perception rather than technological mechanisms alone. Consumer understanding remains decisive.

Domain names have acquired trade mark significance

Commercial identity increasing-

ly depends upon domain names. Businesses frequently establish consumer recognition through websites corresponding with trade marks. Unauthorised registration of confusingly similar domain names may therefore create significant commercial injury. Although domain names perform technical internet functions, courts increasingly recognise their commercial importance. Misleading domain registrations capable of diverting consumers frequently attract the judicial scrutiny. Brand identity now extends beyond conventional packaging.

Social media has expanded trade mark misuse

Social media platforms permit rapid creation of commercial profiles. Fraudulent accounts may imitate legitimate businesses through unauthorised use of trade marks, logos, promotional images, or business names. Consumers encountering such profiles may mistakenly assume commercial association. Digital impersonation therefore represents another form of trade mark misuse capable of damaging reputation and consumer confidence. Businesses increasingly monitor social media alongside conventional marketplaces. Continuous vigilance has become commercially necessary.

Passing off remains important within digital commerce

Registration strengthens statutory rights. Nevertheless, passing off continues protecting commercial goodwill acquired through use. The Supreme Court reaffirmed these principles in *Laxmikant V. Patel v. Chetanbhai Shah*, observing that no trader possesses entitlement to represent business activities as belonging to another. The judgment emphasised pro-



Digital commerce has removed geographical barriers while creating immense commercial opportunities for businesses of every size. This transformation has also generated new challenges for trade mark proprietors. Brand misuse is no longer confined to counterfeit products displayed in physical markets. Today, trade mark infringement frequently occurs through online product listings, deceptive domain names, sponsored advertisements, social media profiles, mobile applications, keyword advertising, counterfeit marketplace stores, and misleading digital promotions.



The photo shows two drugs made by the similar-sounding Cadila Healthcare Ltd. and Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd., respectively, in India.
● slidesharecdn.com

tection of commercial goodwill against deceptive conduct capable of misleading consumers. These principles remain highly relevant within online commerce where reputation frequently develops through sustained digital presence.

International reputation receives judicial recognition

Digital commerce frequently eliminates geographical limitations. Consumers encounter international brands through online platforms regardless of physical market presence. The Supreme Court acknowledged protection of trans border reputation in *Milmet Oftho Industries v. Allergan Inc.*, recognising that internationally established goodwill may receive protection within India under appropriate circumstances. Electronic commerce has further strengthened practical relevance of this doctrine because information circulates globally without significant territorial restrictions. Commercial reputation increasingly transcends borders.

Well-known trade marks receive broader judicial protection

Indian Courts have recognised enhanced protection available to famous trade marks. The Supreme Court considered these principles in *Toyota Jidosha Kabushiki Kaisha v. Prius Auto Industries Ltd.*, examining transborder reputation and evidentiary requirements concerning goodwill existing within Indian markets.

Although every dispute depends upon its particular facts, the judgment illustrates judicial willingness to examine broader commercial realities surrounding internationally recognised trade marks. Well-known marks frequently require wider protection against dilution and deceptive commercial association.

Importance of professional legal assessment

Digital trade mark disputes frequently involve sophisticated questions concerning marketplace liability, intermediary responsibility, deceptive similarity, passing off, and online commercial conduct. Businesses confronting infringement often consult trade mark infringement lawyers in India to evaluate enforcement strategies, preserve commercial goodwill, and obtain appropriate judicial remedies under applicable intellectual property laws. Professional legal analysis assists businesses in navigating increasingly complex digital trade mark disputes.

The expansion of digital commerce has fundamentally transformed trade mark infringement in India. Counterfeit marketplace listings, deceptive domain names, social media impersonation, keyword advertising, and unauthorised online branding now present challenges extending far beyond traditional retail markets. Indian Courts have responded by applying established trade mark principles to contemporary commercial realities while preserving emphasis upon consumer protection, commercial goodwill, and fair competition. As India's digital economy continues expanding, trade mark protection will remain an indispensable component of commercial strategy. Businesses capable of combining strong intellectual property management with proactive enforcement will be better positioned to preserve brand identity, maintain consumer confidence, and compete successfully within increasingly sophisticated digital marketplaces.

The full article first appeared on SCC Online.



FIVB Volleyball Boys' U17 World Championship:

Iran crowned champion as youth program continues to pay off

Sports Desk

Iran defeated France 3-1 (25-18, 25-15, 22-25, 25-12) in the final on Saturday to lift the trophy at the FIVB Volleyball Boys' U17 World Championship in Doha.

For all the senior national team's struggles to match up with the global powerhouses in the game, the triumph was yet another testament to Iran's successful youth program, as it marked a fifth world title for the country across different age groups since 2017.

The victory rounded out a dominant run for the Iranian boys, who had to deliver a much-improved performance after finishing runners-up at last year's Asian U16 Championship to win the world title, dropping only two sets in six games on their way to the final. Pakistan was the only team other than France to win a set against Iran – in a five-set thriller in the quarterfinals – though head coach Arash Sadeqiani's team still avenged the two setbacks against its Asian foe at the continental event by beating Pakistan twice in Doha, including a straight-set win in the pool phase.

Having missed out on the semifinals at the inaugural edition two years ago, Iran established early momentum in the final, taking the



Iranian players and coaching staff celebrate with the trophy at the FIVB Volleyball Boys' U17 World Championship in Doha, Qatar, on Aug. 29, 2026.
● AMIRMAHDI AKHOUNDI/IRIVF

opening set 25-18 before extending its lead with a 25-15 win in the second. Setter Akam Ebrahimnejad distributed the ball across several attacking options, with Sina Hazrati, Arash Ashrafi and Azhvan Namazi giving France different threats to contain as Iran moved two sets ahead.

That variety in attack was reinforced from the service line. Iran finished with a remarkable 10 aces, including three each from Hazrati and Ashrafi and two from Ebrahimnejad, using their serves to put pressure on France and cre-

ate more opportunities through blocking and defense.

France managed to bounce back in the third set. Antonin Bonnard remained the main attacking option, while Jaden Ebagne Yon and Enzo Savalli helped the French stay in front through the closing stages. Ebagne Yon put away the attack that completed the 25-22 set, cutting Iran's lead to 2-1.

Iran, however, stayed calm and composed in the fourth set. An 8-4 lead grew to 16-8 as Namazi made his presence felt at the net and Iran continued to turn defensive plays

into attacking opportunities. The gap continued to grow through the latter stages, putting Iran in position to close out the championship. Hazrati led Iran with 19 points from 16 attacks and three aces, while Ashrafi finished with 17 from 14 attacks and three aces. Namazi contributed 16 points, including a match-high four blocks, while Amirreza Faramarzi added nine points and Monib Sheikh seven.

France continued to have a reliable source of points in Bonnard, who led all scorers with 22, all in attack.

Ebagne Yon added 12 points and Savalli nine as the silver medalists finished with 43 attack points and seven blocks against an Iranian side that produced 56 points in attack. "We worked very hard for this title, and winning it is the result of everything the team has put into this tournament," Hazrati, who converted the championship point, said after the match. "We prepared very well for France and knew we had to put pressure on them with our serve, block and defense and create opportunities from our digging.

"I am also very thankful to our fans for the energy they gave us and especially to my family. Without their support, I would not be here, so this championship means a lot to all of us," added the 16-year-old captain.

There was further glory for the Iranian talisman, who was named Most Valuable Player of the tournament, while he was joined by two teammates in the Dream Team.

Hazrati also received the Best Opposite award, completing a stand-out campaign in which he was a consistent scoring presence for Iran from the pool stage through the knockout rounds.

"Being named MVP means a lot to me because I worked very hard for it, but volleyball is a team sport and I could not have achieved this alone," Hazrati said. "Every member of the team gave their best, and my teammates helped me throughout the tournament. Even the consistency I had in scoring came from the work we did together, so I see this award as a result for the whole team, not just for me."

Ebrahimnejad, meanwhile, was named Best Setter after directing the offense during Iran's emphatic run, while Sheikh earned one of the two Best Middle Blocker honors.

AVC Women's Continental Championship:

Iran misses out on podium but promises bright future in women's volleyball

Sports Desk

Iran was beaten in straight sets (25-21, 25-16, 26-24) by Japan to miss out on the bronze medal at the AVC Women's Continental Championship in Tianjin, China, as well as a place in next year's FIVB World Cup in the United States and Canada.

Apart from the second set, the Iranian girls, who had already made history by securing a maiden last-four spot in nine appearances in the competition, went neck and neck with No. 6 in the FIVB World Rankings and even took commanding leads at two stages in the third set before falling short by the narrowest margin.

Despite suffering straight-set defeats against two world-class sides in their final two outings, including a semifinal loss to China, which also reached the last four at July's Volleyball Nations League (VNL), the Iranian team will still have every reason to be proud of its six-game run in Tianjin.

Sunday's defeat saw Iran drop one spot to 38th in the World Rankings, though it will still go down as a milestone for a team that was ranked as low as 80th two years ago and only won its maiden international gold medal – since the first national team program was launched in 1963 – by claiming the CAVA Championship, which featured four Central Asian countries, last year before successfully defending its

title at the expanded tournament in May.

Iranian opposite Elaheh Poursaleh, the leading scorer in the tournament prior to the final-day action, delivered yet another impressive performance with 15 points, while outside hitters Fatemeh Khalili and Ayda Valinejad contributed 11 and 10, respectively.



Iranian players celebrate a point during a 3-0 loss to Japan at the AVC Women's Continental Championship in Tianjin, China, on Aug. 30, 2026.
● VOLLEYBALL WORLD

Japanese outside hitter Yuki Wada finished with a game-high 19 points, with middle blocker Haruyo Shimamura (14), captain Mayu Ishikawa (11) and outside hitter Yoshino Sato (10) also reaching double figures for Japan, which found a bit of consolation after a 3-1 loss to Thailand on the preceding day had denied it a shot at the

single Olympic berth up for grabs in the final.

With the VNL's Asian trio of China, Thailand and Japan proving to be in a league of their own on the continental stage, it was always going to be a race between the likes of South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Vietnam and Kazakhstan for the one remaining semifinal spot on offer.

The pinnacle of Iran's campaign was yet to come, as head coach Alireza Toloukian's team again produced a remarkable fightback to defeat Indonesia 3-1 (19-25, 25-16, 25-12, 25-17) – avenging the four-set loss to the Southeast Asian side at the Women's Volleyball Cup – and achieve a historic feat.

The final outcome in Tianjin was a clear indication of the significant progress made by the Iranian women in recent years. They finished 10th at the previous edition of the Asian Championship in 2023, while their best-ever result was seventh place in 2019.

With established stars such as Poursaleh and Khalili, as well as middle-blocker duo Reihaneh and Zahra Karimi, all continuing to flourish, and teen talents such as Valinejad, opposite Setayesh Hosseini and outstanding libero Negar Hashemi entering the fray, the recent campaign could only set the stage for further success for Iran's women's volleyball in the future.

Iran, meanwhile, was fancied by few fans and experts after enduring a below-par campaign at the AVC Women's Volleyball Cup in June, settling for seventh place in the continent's second-tier tournament.

The Iranian girls, however, had other ideas as they got off to a flying start in Pool A, fighting back to beat Chinese

Taipei – runner-up at June's event – 3-1 (16-25, 27-25, 25-19, 25-14) in their opening game.

Iran fell to an expected defeat against China – the most decorated team in the competition with 13 titles – in three sets (25-14, 25-23, 25-14) in its second outing but recovered to crush Iraq 3-0 (25-4, 25-7, 25-5) in a game that lasted just over one hour at Tianjin Olympic Center Gymnasium to secure a runner-up finish in the group.

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World Taekwondo

Women's Open Championships:

Zarrinkamar provides silver lining in Iran's dire run



Iran's Hana Zarrinkamar (blue) is in action against Lauren Williams of Great Britain in the +73kg final at the World Taekwondo Women's Open Championships in Taiyuan, China, on Aug. 28, 2026.
● WORLD TAEKWONDO

Sports Desk

Teenage sensation Hana Zarrinkamar saved Iran's campaign at the World Taekwondo Women's Open Championships in Taiyuan, China, by winning silver in the +73kg class. Zarrinkamar's medal was the sole success in a dire campaign for head coach Mahrouz Saei's squad, which entered the tournament on the back of a medal-laden campaign at last week's WT President's Cup in Lahore, but saw its six other members finish empty-handed in their respective categories.

Reigning two-time world champion Zarrinkamar picked up where she had left off in her gold-winning run in Lahore, conceding just one round in four victories on her way to the final, including a win over former world bronze medalist Zhou Zeqi of China. In the final, however, the 16-year-old prodigy fell short against her high-profile British opponent, Lauren Williams – an Olympic silver medalist at Tokyo 2020 – losing 11-5 and 16-5 in straight rounds. Despite the final setback, Zarrinkamar still collected 24 valuable ranking points at the G4 tournament, boosting her bid to secure a place at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics.

Fatemeh Ahmadi was the other Iranian in the +73kg category, crashing out after a straight-round defeat to Croatian rising star Magdalena Matic in her first bout.

Elsewhere, Olympic silver medalist Nahid Kiani had a campaign to forget in the -57kg class in Taiyuan. An Asian champion in May, Kiani suffered an early exit after losing to American former world champion Makayla Greenwood in her first outing.

Hasti Mohammadi, meanwhile, was also knocked out in the -57kg class, losing in back-to-back rounds to the host's Zhang Chuling.

In -46kg, Saina Karimi suffered a quarterfinal defeat to China's Ye Xiaoting, while Yalda Valinejad's -62kg run ended after a single bout following a 2-0 defeat to Morocco's Nada Laaraj.

Nastaran Valizadeh made up for her compatriot's setback against the Moroccan practitioner, winning in straight rounds before suffering a 2-0 defeat to the host's Wu Shan-shan in the quarterfinals.

Saghar Moradi got off to a winning start in the -67kg event by beating Russia's Daria Maslii but was beaten in successive rounds by China's Xing Jiani.

Dom-e Asb Canyon offers hidden natural escape near Shiraz

Iranica Desk

Fars Province is not limited to famous attractions such as Hafezieh, Persepolis, and Maharloo Lake. A short distance away from the city's busy streets, hidden among mountains and oak forests, lie natural wonders that many travelers may not even have heard of. Dom-e Asb Canyon is one of these hidden gems, where the sound of flowing water, the shade of trees, and the movement of squirrels among oak branches create an unforgettable experience. Located about 50 kilometers south of Shiraz, Dom-e Asb Canyon can be reached through the Kohmareh Sorkhi region, a mountainous, green, and pleasant area near the village of Karreh Bas. The mountains of this region form part of the southern ranges of the Zagros Mountains. The highest peak in the area is Daloo, standing at around 3,200 meters above sea level, which gives the region its cool and pleasant climate.

Story behind the name

At the end of the canyon lies a waterfall whose shape resembles a horse's tail as it falls — narrow, elongated, and flowing, like a white horse's tail hanging from the edge of a cliff. This resemblance has led locals and nature lovers to call the canyon "Dom-e Asb," meaning "Horse Tail." The waterfall is the highlight of the canyon trekking route, where the sound of water and the cool mist rising from the falls refresh visitors after the journey.



● IRNA

Land of tribes and mountains

Kohmareh Sorkhi is not only known for its natural beauty but also for its historical and cultural significance. During the Sassanid period, the area was known as "Ram Divan." The term "Ram" was used at the time to refer to tribes and nomadic groups. The Ram Divan group and other nomadic communities of the region have continued their seasonal migration between summer and winter pastures for generations, forming an important part of Kohmareh Sorkhi's local culture. Visitors may encounter black tents, herds of sheep and goats, and the simple lifestyle of nomadic communities along the route to the canyon or in the surrounding plains — an experience that offers a unique connection with nature.

Karreh Bas Village

Dom-e Asb Canyon is located near Karreh Bas village, which serves as the gateway to this

natural attraction. The village, part of the Kohmareh Sorkhi region, is surrounded by farms, orchards, and rural homes. Local residents are mainly engaged in agriculture, gardening, and livestock farming. Visitors who spend time with villagers can experience local traditions, dialects, traditional foods, and the hospitality of the people of the region.

Natural landscape

A river with the same name flows through Dom-e Asb Canyon. Originating from mountain springs, the river passes through rocks and narrow valleys, creating the lush and refreshing landscape of the canyon. In many parts of the route, the sound of flowing water continues alongside visitors' steps, making the journey more enjoyable. Some sections of the river are shallow enough for walking through the water, while deeper areas require greater caution. The canyon and its surroundings are covered with various trees and plants, including:



Oak trees: The forest oaks are among the main natural features of Kohmareh Sorkhi. Besides adding beauty to the landscape, they provide habitats for many birds and animals, including Iranian squirrels. **Pomegranate trees:** In some areas, pomegranate orchards add a distinctive character to the canyon, especially in autumn when the fruits reach maturity. **Medicinal plants:** Various medicinal plants grow among the shrubs and trees, some of which have traditionally been used in local folk medicine. This vegetation not only creates a scenic environment but also helps maintain humidity, cool the air, and provide habitats for wildlife.

Wildlife

One of the attractions of Dom-e Asb Canyon is its biodiversity. With careful observation, visitors can discover signs of wildlife in the area. Among the most beautiful sights are Iranian squirrels moving among oak branches. These charming animals feed mainly on

seeds and fruits and are often revealed by the sound of leaves rustling in the quiet forest. Watching them can be especially enjoyable for children and wildlife enthusiasts. Visitors are advised not to approach or feed them and to help preserve a calm and safe environment for wildlife.

Birds and other animals

Besides squirrels, the canyon is home to various birds of prey that may be seen flying above the valley. Songbirds whose calls echo through the trees and some reptiles also contribute to the area's biodiversity. This variety has made Dom-e

Asb a suitable destination for birdwatching, nature photography, and wildlife observation.

Best time to visit

Spring: Perhaps the best season to visit Dom-e Asb, with cool weather, abundant water, and green landscapes. **Early summer:** Temperatures remain relatively pleasant, although midday may become warmer. Early morning or late afternoon visits are recommended. **Autumn:** Yellow and orange foliage creates spectacular scenery, while ripe pomegranates and cool weather make hiking enjoyable. **Winter:** Depending on rainfall and temperatures, the route may become slippery and challenging, requiring more preparation and experience.

Trail difficulty

The route through Dom-e Asb Canyon to the waterfall is considered a light-to-moderate canyon trekking experience. Some sections involve simple walking along the river, while others require crossing rocks, walking through shallow water, or climbing short slopes. The trail is manageable for people with average physical fitness, although those with knee, back, or mobility problems should plan more carefully. Visitors to Shiraz often focus on the city's historic attractions, but those with an extra day can experience a completely different side of Fars Province by visiting Dom-e Asb Canyon. For travelers visiting Shiraz, setting aside time for this remarkable canyon can provide a new perspective on the natural beauty of Fars Province.

Esfidan; a scenic destination in North Khorasan Province

Iranica Desk

Esfidan, a tourist village in North Khorasan Province, is renowned for its beautiful natural landscapes and unique stepped architecture, attracting many visitors every year. Due to its terraced structure, the village is often referred to as the "Masouleh of North Khorasan." Located 45 kilometers southeast of Bojnurd, Esfidan is considered one of the most pleasant and scenic villages in the province. The highland village enjoys a mild mountainous climate, and its cool and pleasant summers make it a popular destination for travelers. In early summer, visitors can enjoy the taste of fresh local fruits and the fragrance of orchards that fills the village. Spring and summer are considered the best seasons to visit Esfidan. Thanks to its stepped layout, Esfidan is regarded as one of Iran's outstanding villages in terms of architecture. It is also recog-

nized as a tourism destination in North Khorasan, offering a wide range of attractions, including scenic waterfalls, flowing springs, caves, historic towers, religious sites, fruit orchards, a river with abundant water, and forest-covered mountains with diverse vegetation. The Honarvar Waterfall, Bargah Waterfall, Honarvar Khazaneh Cave, the tomb of Sheikh Mohammad Reza Rab-



bani, known as Haj Akhund, and the shrine of Imamzadeh Mohammad ibn Baqer ibn Musa ibn



● asriran.com

Mohammad ibn Baqer ibn Musa ibn Jafar (PBUH) is an old structure with a low dome that has stood for centuries in the center of the village, attracting visitors and pilgrims. According to local residents, more than 1,000 years have passed since the burial of the Imamzadeh, while experts from the North Khorasan Department of Cultural Heritage believe that the original structure of the shrine dates back to the sixth century AH.

Jafar (PBUH) are among the most notable attractions of this enchanting village. The shrine of Imamzadeh

The sandalwood trees of Esfidan are considered a symbol of the village. These ancient and massive trees have trunks measuring more than 2.60 meters in diameter. To the northwest of Esfidan lies a deep and long valley known as Honarvar, located a short distance from the village. A clear spring of the same name flows from the middle of the valley and provides water for the surrounding orchards. Another valley, known

as Bargah, is located southwest of the village. With several springs and a spectacular waterfall, the valley captivates visitors with its natural beauty. On the surrounding mountains of Esfidan, remains of ancient stone towers can still be seen. Built with stone and Sarooj (a traditional Iranian waterproof mortar), the most famous of these structures is the Kalagh (Crow) Tower northwest of the village, whose founda-

tions have survived. With its unique stepped houses, natural attractions, and historical sites, Esfidan remains one of North Khorasan's notable rural tourism destinations. The stepped architecture of Esfidan is one of the village's most distinctive features. Built on a mountainous slope, the houses follow the natural shape of the land, creating a close connection between the residential areas and the surrounding landscape. This traditional structure has given Esfidan a unique identity among rural settlements in North Khorasan. The people of Esfidan have traditionally relied on agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry. The village's gardens, supplied by local springs, produce various fruits, while the surrounding natural environment has supported other rural activities such as beekeeping. Traditional handicrafts have also contributed to the cultural identity of the village.



Salehi-Amiri: Oral history opens living window onto Iran's heritage

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri on Saturday called for Iran's oral-history archive to be turned into a living platform for scholarship, storytelling and cultural production at a policy council meeting in Tehran. Salehi-Amiri urged officials to move the initiative beyond an archival project and develop its material into books, documentaries, video clips and audio productions that can bring Iran's cultural heritage to contemporary audiences and future generations, CHTN reported. The ministry's Oral History Policy Council reviewed the latest progress on its projects, including 20 books nearing publication, documentary productions, oral histories of tourism and Nowruz travel, historic sites,

the war, and journalists covering cultural heritage. Plans to train oral-history coordinators across all 31 provinces were also discussed. The ministry has so far conducted 132 interview sessions with 57 people under various oral-history projects. Twenty books are at the publication and unveiling stage, while other works are undergoing scholarly review, editing and compilation. Salehi-Amiri pressed the council to set clear timelines for unfinished interviews and projects so that initiatives already under way do not remain unresolved. He also called for oral history to move beyond the book and become a broader cultural product. Some material could be published through the ministry's website, while documentary productions could be distributed through Iran's documentary television network.



Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri speaks at the ministry's Oral History Policy Council in Tehran, Iran, on August 29, 2026.

● CHTN

The tourism project will document how travel has evolved in Iranian society, including changing attitudes toward tourism and its role in everyday life. A separate focus on Nowruz travel was proposed to capture the cultural, social, economic and heritage dimensions of the annual movement of millions of Iranians across the country. The council also advanced an oral-history project on the war, with a proposed plan approved after technical and expert reviews and now ready for a contract. Members stressed the value of preserving first-hand accounts while eyewitness tes-



timony remains accessible. A separate initiative will document the experiences of journalists who have covered

Iran's cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts, including the evolution of media narratives surrounding the sector. Mem-

bers discussed establishing a specialist committee to pursue the project through a rigorous oral-history methodology.

Minister: 'Tolerance' rooted in Islamic civilizational heritage



Social Desk

Iran's Minister of Science, Research and Technology Hossein Simaei Sarraf said Sunday that "pluralism and tolerance" are integral to Islamic civilization, urging societies to embrace cultural and religious differences at the closing ceremony of the 40th International Islamic Unity Conference in Mashhad. Simaei Sarraf criticized violence associated with extremist currents and stressed that cultural and religious differences should not become a pretext for conflict, IRNA reported. "Intellectual maturity" depends on learning how to engage ethically with differences rather than seeking to eliminate them, he said. The minister pointed to the diverse theological and legal traditions that developed throughout Islam-

ic history, including Asharism, as well as the Hanafi and Ja'fari schools of jurisprudence. "Islamic culture, by its very nature, has never been monolithic," Simaei Sarraf said, noting that these traditions evolved under a broad civilizational framework shaped by a history of tolerance. He also cited the Islamic tradition of engagement with followers of Judaism and Christianity. Drawing on the work of German Islamic studies scholar Thomas Bauer, Simaei Sarraf argued that contemporary intolerance and violence are being fueled by the disruptive effects of modernity and the misuse of technologies such as social-media algorithms. He said that diversity among peoples and tribes is intended for mutual recognition and interaction, not confrontation. "A mature culture," he said, "does not mean the absence of disagreement. It means mastering the art of living peacefully despite differences." Contemporary Islamic unity, Simaei Sarraf concluded, requires education in the ethics of engaging with difference and preventing diversity from becoming a trigger for conflict.

Iran streamlines migration management as foreign population falls below 5m

Social Desk

Iran's Interior Ministry said Sunday that the country's foreign population has fallen from an estimated 6.1 million to below 5 million as authorities tighten immigration management and align migrant presence with labor-market needs, IRNA reported, citing Nader Yarahmadi, head of the ministry's Center for Foreign Nationals and Immigrants.

Yarahmadi said nearly 1.8 million undocumented foreign nationals left Iran last year through deportation or voluntary departure. The figures mark a substantial reduction under a government-led effort to bring the country's migration framework into a more structured legal and administrative



system. "The policy is to legalize the presence of foreign nationals with a focus on labor," Yarahmadi said, outlining a new employer-based scheme that allows businesses to apply through provincial offices overseeing foreign workers to meet their staffing needs. He said the number of foreign students

in Iranian schools has also dropped from 600,000 to 320,000, while consumption of essential goods and use of public services have declined.

Yarahmadi said a bill and parliamentary proposal to establish a National Migration Organization had been consolidated and finalized following coordination between the government and parliament. The legislation will proceed through legal and administrative procedures before being sent to the Guardian Council for final review. Authorities have also tightened requirements for renewing legal residency cards, including mandatory insurance, a judicial-services registration code and verified residential addresses. Foreign nationals are barred by law from residing in certain areas, he said.

Iran, Indonesia can join forces against 'new forms of colonialism'

Iranian Cultural attaché Yahya Jahangiri called on Iran and Indonesia to exchange their experiences of independence and resist emerging forms of colonialism during a cultural forum in Jakarta, arguing that sovereignty in the 21st century must extend beyond territory to minds, knowledge, data and technology. Speaking at the "Learning from Iran" forum at Gerak Gerik Cafe & Book Store in Ciputat, South Tangerang, Jahangiri said the experience of both countries could provide a basis for broader intellectual dialogue among Muslim nations. The event marked Indonesia's 81st Independence Day and the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). "Learning from Iran," he stressed, should

not mean copying a particular model. Instead, it should open up a dialogue between national experiences and help develop shared ideas for the future. Drawing on the thought of Imam Khomeini, Jahangiri described independence as encompassing political, economic, intellectual, cultural and spiritual dimensions. A nation, he argued, can be politically independent while remaining dependent on external sources of knowledge, cultural frameworks and technological systems. He warned that contemporary colonialism can take subtler forms, shifting from territorial occupation to control over information, technology and knowledge production. In the age of artificial intelligence, he described "technological

slavery" and "epistemic slavery" as emerging forms of dependency. "If societies become merely consumers of technology, data and knowledge produced and managed by others," he said, "a new form of colonialism will emerge." Jahangiri also underscored the role of public participation, saying national strength rests not only on institutions but also on social solidarity and citizens' sustained engagement in times of peace, hardship and reconstruction. He urged Iranian and Indonesian thinkers to examine what colonialism looks like in the 21st century and develop practical pathways toward "epistemic liberation," scientific self-reliance and technological sovereignty.

Qatar pursuing preventive ...

Iran's recent positions on Hormuz also indicate that Tehran views security, economic and diplomatic issues as interconnected and is unwilling to completely separate them.

Given the economic, security and political costs of the continuing impasse between Iran and the US for both sides, as well as its consequences for regional countries, what could be the most realistic path out of the current situation? Could mediation by regional countries such as Qatar, Oman and Pakistan help

lay the groundwork for a new understanding?

The most realistic way out of the impasse is neither to wait for one side to surrender nor to hope for an immediate comprehensive and major agreement. The experience of Iran-US relations has shown that major agreements usually become possible when a limited path for crisis management has first been established. In my view, a solution could be pursued in three stages. First, the two sides should agree on an immediate reduction in tensions and cri-

sis management, particularly in the area of maritime security and preventing the conflict from spreading. Second, there should be limited, reciprocal confidence-building measures. The US should provide a practical indication of its readiness to ease its pressure policy, while Iran should declare its readiness to enter a defined political process. Third, phased negotiations should begin. Rather than attempting to resolve all disagreements in a single round, such negotiations should initially focus on manageable issues and then move on to more complicat-

ed matters. Within this framework, Qatar, Oman, Pakistan and even Turkey can play an important role. Qatar, because of its close ties with the US and its active channels with Iran; Oman, because of its long and trusted record of mediation; and Pakistan, because of its geopolitical position and ties with different parties, can create a complementary mediation network. However, it must be emphasized that no mediation effort can replace the political will of Tehran and Washington. A mediator can only open the door; walking through it requires a decision by both sides.

In my view, if Washington is genuinely seeking an agreement, it should move away from a policy of "pressure without a political horizon," while Tehran should demonstrate that it views diplomacy not as a sign of weakness, but as one of the instruments of national power. Today, there may not be the best opportunity for a comprehensive agreement, but it is possible to establish a "minimum understanding to prevent a maximum crisis." And it is precisely at this point that active mediation by Qatar, Oman and Pakistan can take on strategic importance.