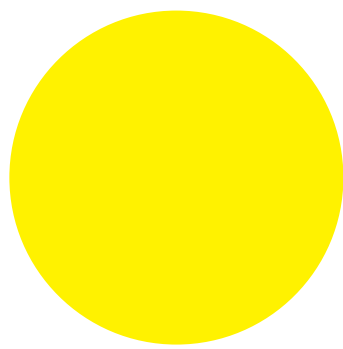


India, Iran look to traditional medicine for new health cooperation

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Iran offers US new seven-day proposal to end war

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Once Upon a Time in the Middle East

Finding humanity amid ruins of war

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW



IRAN DAILY

War has long been a common genre in world cinema, with hundreds of films exploring the subject from different perspectives. The Middle East, having experienced prolonged periods of turmoil, has frequently served as a backdrop for such films. Yet many movies set against the region's conflicts have primarily told their stories through the eyes of American soldiers or military forces.

"Once Upon a Time in the Middle East", however, takes a different approach. The Chinese film avoids viewing the conflict from the perspective of any of the warring sides, instead telling the story through the eyes of ordinary people who suffer its consequences. Directed by Wen Muye, the film grossed ¥2.12 billion (\$296 million) at the box office in just 32 days and has received an 8.3 rating on IMDb.

The film tells the story of Xu Fu, a cook from north-eastern China who leaves home to settle a mountain of family debt.

In a Middle Eastern city engulfed by conflict, he opens the "Dragon Restaurant" with floor manager Ma Junsheng, serving steaming bowls of authentic Chinese food to soldiers, traders and wanderers from all sides of the divide.

For a while, the small eatery becomes a rare pocket of warmth in a fractured world. But eventually, the war reaches its doorstep. As the city descends into chaos, the man who only wanted to survive finds his kitchen transformed into a sanctuary for orphaned children and frightened civilians.

From simply trying to stay alive to protecting others, an ordinary cook undergoes a quiet but extraordinary transformation amid the smoke and destruction, showing how a single stove can preserve more humanity than a battle-field can destroy.

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Pezeshkian: It is up to US to choose if it wants to end war

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President Masoud Pezeshkian meets world leaders on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting in New York as shown in these photos President of the European Council António Costa (Top L), Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (Top R), Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten (Down L), and Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam (Down R).
president.ir



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Pezeshkian: It is up to US to choose if it wants to end war



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during an interview with Fox News' "Special Report with Bret Baier" show, which was aired on September 24, 2026.

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said it was up to the United States to choose when the Iran war will end, blaming Washington for the nearly seven-month war in the Middle

East and accusing it of blocking diplomacy.

He made the remarks in an interview aired on Thursday on Fox News' "Special Report with Bret Baier" show.

"We do not seek to kill Americans, as shown by actions, de-

monstrable actions. America has sought to kill Iranians," Pezeshkian said. "What we know is that if we're attacked, we must defend ourselves."

"We never started a war, but if they wish to keep fighting with us, we will respond strongly and

resolutely," Pezeshkian added. Addressing US military strikes and increasing secondary sanctions, Pezeshkian said Iran would continue resisting Washington's campaign.

"This is something that has been the doing of the United States," he said. "We will keep resisting. We will find ways, and the life of our country will continue. We will remain."

The Iranian president said that he believes that humans should not cause the death of another human. But with the instigations conducted by Israel, they have imposed this war on us.

"But we do not wish to continue. It's America that must choose whether it wants to end this or not," president Pezeshkian said.

He was referring to the US-Israeli aggression against Iran, which began on February 28 and has continued till now.

Pezeshkian also pointed to the failed Pakistani-mediated memorandum of understanding signed by him and US President Donald Trump in June intended to halt hostilities and establish a framework for a broader US-Iran agreement.

"We have no problems. We did reach an agreement with your president," Pezeshkian said of Trump, who signed the agreement.

"That agreement was signed, and, based on that, we are willing and still wish to move forward."

Pezeshkian then criticized Washington for the subsequent breakdown in diplomacy but insisted Tehran remains prepared to reach an agreement.

"The problem is that America, instead of conducting dialogue, they descend into the arena by bombing us first, by blocking every pathway. We are ready," he said.

"This is not the way to conduct yourself on the world stage."

The Iranian president who has traveled to New York to attend the 81st United Nations General Assembly, also held separate meetings with several foreign officials on the sidelines of the UN gathering.

During his meeting with Netherlands' Prime Minister Rob Jetten, the president outlined the latest developments and consequences of the attacks by the United States and the Israeli

regime against Iran and reaffirmed Iran's position on dialogue and diplomacy.

"We have always been, and remain, open to dialogue. However, if there is any advice to be given, it should be conveyed to the American side, because on various occasions, after negotiations have taken place, the process of dialogue has been disrupted by the United States, and ultimately we have witnessed the outbreak of war. The Islamic Republic of Iran has also defended itself against these actions."

Pezeshkian also held a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

During the meeting, Sharif voiced concern over the continuation of conflicts and rising tensions in the region, stressing the need to reduce tensions and strengthen diplomatic channels to achieve lasting peace and stability.

He also highlighted the importance of the Islamabad memorandum of understanding, expressing Pakistan's readiness to continue playing a "constructive and sincere role" in supporting regional peace and stability.

Iran offers US new seven-day proposal to end war

International Desk

Iran has submitted a proposal to the United States to end their war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz within seven days, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told media outlets in New York.

"If certain conditions are met, the strait will be open within seven days and talks will start," Abbas Araghchi, who is in the US for the UN General Assembly, told media outlets including the New York Times and The Guardian.

Japanese news agency Kyodo was the first to report the proposal, citing a senior Iranian official on Tuesday.

Araghchi said Tehran was "not in a hurry" to secure an agreement based on its new proposal. "I think it would be much better if it is done before the midterm election, but it depends on the US administration to decide. We don't care about the timing." "But the plan is very clear," he added. "The moment they accept this plan, from the next day, this timetable can start, and after seven days, the strait will be open."

According to Araghchi, as quoted by the New York Times, the latest plan calls for a cessation of all hostilities in the Middle East for seven days, including in Lebanon.

It also calls for the release of frozen Iranian assets estimated to be worth at least \$12 billion, as well as the lifting of sanctions on Iranian oil and an end to the US naval blockade of Iran.

On the seventh day of the truce, Iran would reopen Hormuz.

Araghchi said he was waiting for a US response to the plan and maintained that China supported the proposal.

The proposal seeks to implement the conditions in the Memorandum of Understanding agreed by Washington and Tehran in June.



The US and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in June that aimed to end the war, reopen the strait and launch talks on Iran's nuclear program.

But the deal broke down shortly afterwards when the US violated its terms under the pretext of Iran's attacks on vessels in the Strait of Hormuz.

The restrictions on maritime traffic in Hormuz have become a key issue in the conflict due to the impact on oil and gas exports and the global economy.

The proposal comes as the war, started by US and Israeli strikes, is almost into its seventh month.

On Tuesday, Araghchi and US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner communicated through mediators on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York, the first such contacts since the Pakistani-mediated interim ceasefire agreement collapsed in July.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said Tehran had engaged with the US through a Qatari mediator in New York and conveyed conditions for the resumption of talks to end war between the two countries.



Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrives during the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly at UN Headquarters in New York, US, on September 22, 2026

AFP

"Steve and Jared had a very productive meeting today with mediators of Iran, merely mediators. Let's see what happens with that," US President Donald Trump said after the meeting.

Chinese President Xi Jinping in a meeting with Trump at the White House on Thursday hoped the US and Iran will return to the track of resolving issues through dialogue and negotiation as soon as possible.

In his talks with Donald Trump at the White House, Xi said China has always believed that the sovereignty and security of all countries should be respected, and has consistently played a constructive role in easing tensions and de-escalating situation.

Xi also said China supports the United States and Iran in returning to the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding.

Walkout of 77 delegations at UNGA rejects Israel's attempts to justify war: Deputy FM

International Desk

Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi described the walkout of 77 delegations during Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's UN speech as a powerful rejection of Israel's attempts to justify war and aggression.

In a post on his X account on Friday, Gharibabadi said, "The criminal Netanyahu came to the General Assembly to turn the podium of this international body into a loudspeaker for justifying war and aggression; but the exit of 77 delegations from the hall spoke louder than any speech."

"The world will not be fooled by narrative-building. History will judge the crimes, occupation, and aggression, not the publicity stunts in New York," Gharibabadi added. The third counsellor at the permanent mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Nasser Asadi, also reacted to remarks by Netanyahu during his UN speech.

"Mr. President, this organization was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Yet today, the chief architect of that very scourge, the notorious Prime Minister of the Israeli re-



gime, addressed this Assembly, an utmost disgrace to this body. This is the ultimate insult to all noble values such as justice, equality, and dignity and worth of the human person enshrined in this Organization's Charter," Asadi said.

"This is the greatest affront to the principles of humanity and the human conscience. This is a profound betrayal of the purpose and principles of this Organization. The UN was founded to preserve peace and uphold justice, not to serve as a platform for war criminals."

"How can a person who is currently facing proceedings before two international courts for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide be allowed to be present in this Assembly? Does he belong at this podium to justify his crimes, or in the dock of a court of law to answer for genocide?" he said.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Exports to Armenia rise 7.5% to \$385m in seven months: *TPO*

Economy Desk

Iran's exports to Armenia rose 7.5% in the first seven months of 2026 to \$385 million, an Iranian Trade Promotion Organization official said, as the two countries seek to speed up customs procedures and trade at their shared border.

Mehdi Babaei, director general of the Trade Promotion Organization's office for Central Asia, the Caucasus and Russia, said the figure on Friday while referring to a joint Iranian-Armenian border and customs meeting held on Sept. 12 in Jolfa. The two sides agreed at the meeting to expand customs co-operation and facilitate trade between the countries.

Iran and Armenia also agreed

to turn the Norduz border crossing in Iran's East Azerbaijan Province into a green customs corridor to reduce customs clearance times and speed up the processing of goods, following an agreement between the heads of the two countries' customs administrations.

Babaei described the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the green customs corridor as one of the main agreements reached at the meeting. He said the two sides would accelerate efforts to exchange customs documents and data electronically and identify and introduce authorized operators.

Implementing the measures could help facilitate and speed

up customs and transit procedures at the border, Babaei said, adding that under the agreements, the daily capacity of the Norduz crossing could rise to 300 trucks if the required conditions are met.

He said developing customs infrastructure, exchanging information electronically and increasing truck capacity at the Norduz crossing would help facilitate trade and strengthen economic and transit ties between Iran and Armenia.

Trade between Iran and Armenia reached \$768 million in 2025, with Iran exporting about \$680 million worth of goods to Armenia and importing about \$88 million from the country, according to official Armenian statistics.



IRNA

SATBA opens largest solar inverter plant as 1,700 MW of solar capacity comes online



Economy Desk

Iran has inaugurated the country's largest industrial solar inverter manufacturing plant alongside private-sector

renewable energy projects, while an Energy Ministry official said 1,700 megawatts of the planned 7,000 MW of solar power capacity had come online.

Mohsen Tarztaieb, head of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), made the remarks on the sidelines of the inauguration ceremony on Thursday.

The plant was inaugurated as Iran seeks to expand domestic production of equipment needed for solar power generation, ISNA reported.

"We have brought 1,700 megawatts of the 7,000-megawatt solar power program into operation," Tarztaieb said. Tarztaieb, who also serves as deputy energy minister, said batteries required for 500 MW of energy storage capacity had been ordered, while the construction of 100 MW of wind power plants was also on the agenda. The projects were developed

with private-sector investment to expand electricity generation from renewable sources and increase the share of clean energy in Iran's energy mix, which has reached about 4.3%, according to SATBA.

At the inauguration of the solar inverter plant, Tarztaieb said the facility produces inverters for solar power plants in different capacities and expressed hope that the share of locally manufactured components would gradually increase.

"We are also seriously pursuing the development of domestic solar panel production. Some factories are currently producing and assembling panels, and we hope the number of active facilities in this field will increase," he said.

Tarztaieb also stressed the need to expand the use of solar panels on the rooftops of industrial facilities, saying industrial rooftops should be equipped with solar panels.

"We hope to complete the 7,000-megawatt solar power capacity by next summer," Tarztaieb said.

The government has set a target of installing 30,000 MW of renewable energy capacity within the next two years to help reduce daily power shortages and improve the long-term stability of electricity supplies.

Tarztaieb also said expanding domestic production of equipment needed for solar power plants could accelerate the implementation of renewable

energy projects.

Already under Western sanctions for decades, Iran was experiencing energy shortages before the attacks, a situation exacerbated by the US-Israeli conflict that began in late February and the peak summer heat season.

According to the Energy Ministry, the country's installed power generation capacity has risen from 93,388 MW at the beginning of the government to 102,000 MW, an 8% increase. The Energy Ministry announced in August that it had added 2,028 MW of new power generation capacity since March 21, achieving 75% of its target for the current Persian calendar year, which began on March 21.

Eight war-damaged bridges back in service in Hormozgan



Economy Desk

Iran on Friday reopened eight bridges in Hormozgan Province that were damaged during the US-Israeli war, restoring safe road traffic on key routes less than 50 days after repair work began, IRNA reported.

The bridges were inaugurated at a ceremony attended by Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq at the Shahid Moayed Bridge in the southern province.

Abbas Sharafi, director

general of Hormozgan's Roads and Road Transport Department, said the inauguration of the eight bridges — out of nine damaged in attacks by the enemy — had restored safe traffic across various parts of the province.

Repair and reconstruction work began on July 27 and most of the bridges were made ready for use in less than 50 days through round-the-clock efforts by road maintenance workers and other personnel, Sharafi said.

The remaining damaged



Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq inaugurates the restored Shahid Moayed Bridge in Hormozgan Province on September 25, 2026.
● IRNA

bridge, located on the Bandar Abbas-Hajjiabad route, is expected to reopen by late October, Sharafi said.

Repair and safety work on damaged tunnels in the province is also under way and is scheduled to be completed by late November, he added.

Sharafi said the main goals of the work were to quickly return damaged infrastructure to service, ensure safe travel and maintain the stability of the province's road network.

According to IRNA, the Bandar Abbas Shahid Mirzaei Tunnel, in both directions, and nine bridges on various major routes in Hormozgan were damaged in US attacks on July 17-18.

Invitation to Participate in Public Tender

Tender No.: 14050442, 14050444

Project Title: Bridge and Steel Structures Group



Machine Sazi Arak Co. (MSA) hereby invites qualified and eligible companies to participate in Public tender for following items and according to attached technical specification:

1-101-A-201-AIRCOOLER BLOWER. QTY: 4 SET

2-104-A-201-AIRCOOLER BLOWER. QTY: 2 SET

Interested and qualified bidders are invited to obtain the Tender Documents/ supplementary technical information from commercial department, Mr. Moradi, under e-mail address of commercial6@msa.ir and submit their bids in accordance with the requirements, terms, and conditions specified therein. The manufacture must be in MOP list.

Tender Information

► **Tender Issuing Authority:** Machine Sazi Arak (MSA)

► **Tender Number:** 14050442, 14050444

► **Scope of Work/Supply:** supply FAN PACKAGE for Air cooler

► **Date of Publication:** 26/Sep/2026

► **Date of receiving the tender Documents:** 27/Sep/2026 (please contact Mr. Moradi, under e-mail address of commercial6@msa.ir to receive tender documents)

► **Deadline for Submission of Bids:** 30/Sep/2026

► **Place of Submission:** MSA Shop in Arak or through Email: Technical proposals to emails: a-mashayekh@msa.ir, commercial5@msa.ir, commercial6@msa.ir and commercial proposal only to email STC@MSA.IR

► **Bid Security:** Bank Guarantee or valid company cheque valuing around 5% of the total value of

Email Address: commercial6@Msa.ir, commercial5@msa.ir, a-mashayekh@msa.ir

Telephone: 08632172941

Bidders are required to carefully review all tender documents and submit their bids in full compliance with the specified requirements.

Machine Sazi Arak Co. (MSA) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations, without incurring any liability to the bidders. For further information and clarification, please contact:

Mr. Moradi, Tel no. 08632172941

Procurement and Commercial Deputy Dep

Trump's \$5,000 bribe cash-for-votes politics



By Saman Sofalgar
Political researcher

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Donald Trump has found a remarkably simple way to frame the 2026 midterm elections: vote Republican, and you could get \$5,000. At a Republican gathering in September, Trump promised that every adult American could receive a \$5,000 "dividend" if Republicans retain control of Congress. The White House has presented the proposal as a return to Americans generated by the administration's tariff revenues and economic policies. But behind the attractive number lies a much less attractive political and fiscal reality. The proposal would cost more than \$1.2 trillion if extended to roughly 245 million adult Americans. That is an extraordinary sum for a government already running a deficit approaching \$2 trillion and carrying more than \$40 trillion in debt. Recent tariff revenues are nowhere near sufficient to finance such a payment. FactCheck.org estimates that, at recent collection rates, tariff revenues would require years to cover the cost of a single \$5,000 payment. The promise, therefore, deserves to be examined not simply as an economic proposal, but as a political signal.

A president under electoral pressure

The timing matters. The 2026 midterms are approaching at a moment when Trump's second-term economic agenda is producing political vulnerabilities. Tariffs have become the centerpiece of his economic nationalism, but they have also generated disputes over prices, trade uncertainty and the distribution of their costs. There is no reliable way to establish a politician's private state of mind from a campaign speech. But the political logic of the proposal is difficult to miss. Rather than asking voters to judge tariffs, fiscal policy and the broader performance of his administration on their own merits, Trump is offering voters a direct material benefit attached to Republican congressional victory. That is why critics have described the proposal as a form of political bribery. The legal question is more complicated. A promise of a future government benefit is not automatically an illegal bribe, and legal experts have noted that the proposal would be difficult to classify as vote-buying unless the payment were explicitly conditioned on an individual's vote. Moreover, Congress (not the president alone) would have to authorize the expenditure. But legality is not the same as political propriety. The deeper issue is the transformation of public policy into a personalized electoral transaction.

When government becomes a campaign promise

Trump's language is significant. He calls the proposal the

"Trump Dividend". That formulation places the president (not Congress, not the Treasury, and not the broader federal government) at the center of the transaction. It is a revealing feature of Trump's governing style. Complex institutions are reduced to personal political relationships. Government policy becomes something a leader can deliver directly to citizens. Yet the American constitutional system is deliberately designed to prevent precisely this kind of personalization of public money. Congress controls federal appropriations. Presidents execute laws. They do not possess a personal treasury from which they can distribute rewards. The \$5,000 promise, therefore, contains an institutional contradiction. Trump presents himself as the political source of the payment, while the constitutional system requires Congress to decide whether taxpayers should finance it. That contradiction becomes even more striking when the promise is explicitly connected to a Republican victory in Congress.

Arithmetic of a government under \$40 trillion of debt

America's fiscal condition makes the proposal harder to defend as ordinary economic policy. The national debt has crossed \$40 trillion. At the same time, the federal government is running a deficit of roughly \$1.8 trillion in fiscal 2026. The \$5,000 dividend would add roughly \$1.2 trillion to that fiscal equation. Trump has suggested that tariff revenues could provide the money. But tariffs are taxes on imports, and the revenue they generate is nowhere close to the amount necessary to finance the proposed checks. That matters because the political language surrounding tariffs has often obscured their economic mechanics. Tariff revenue is not a free transfer from foreign governments into an American government account. Importers pay tariffs to US Customs, and the resulting costs can be passed through supply chains to busi-

nesses and consumers. In other words, the government cannot simply "collect from foreigners" and redistribute the proceeds without economic consequences inside the United States. The \$5,000 promise makes that distinction particularly important.

The politics of an expensive illusion

A universal \$5,000 payment would obviously be attractive to households. The political appeal requires little explanation. The difficulty begins with the second question: Who pays? If tariff revenues cannot cover the cost, the alternatives are straightforward: borrow the money, raise other taxes, cut other spending, or combine those approaches. Borrowing would be particularly consequential at a time when the United States is already spending enormous sums servicing its debt. Adding another trillion-dollar commitment could increase future interest costs and place additional pressure on the federal budget. There is also a macroeconomic problem. A massive cash transfer can stimulate consumption, but if it is financed by borrowing and comes without a corresponding increase in productive capacity, it can add to inflationary pressure. The irony is hard to miss: a government could borrow money to make Americans feel richer, only to leave them facing higher prices and a larger public debt.

Why the midterms matter

This is where the proposal's electoral significance becomes clearer. Trump's tariffs and economic policies have become central themes of his second presidency. If the administration believes that tariff revenues can be converted into direct payments, the dividend offers a way to turn a complicated and controversial policy into a tangible personal benefit. Instead of asking voters to evaluate the economic effects of tariffs, Trump can ask a much simpler question: Would you like \$5,000? That is an extraor-



Donald Trump's promise of a \$5,000 "dividend" to Americans if Republicans win the 2026 midterms reveals a president increasingly worried about the political costs of his policies and willing to turn public money into an electoral instrument.

dinarily powerful political reframing.

It also suggests a certain degree of anxiety about the political environment surrounding the midterms (not necessarily because Trump's private emotions can be established through it, but because his campaign rhetoric increasingly emphasizes the immediate material benefits that Republican control could supposedly deliver). The message is transactional: Republican victory produces money, Democratic victory does not. Such a message shifts the democratic conversation away from the quality of governance and toward the immediate financial return attached to political power.

The Republican dilemma

Republicans themselves face a difficult institutional problem. The Associated Press has reported that many Republican candidates have not made Trump's \$5,000 proposal central to their campaigns. House Speaker Mike Johnson has acknowledged that congressional approval would be required, while some Republicans have raised questions about its fiscal feasibility and inflationary effects.

That hesitation exposes the difference between campaigning and governing. A president can announce a spectacular number at a rally. Members of Congress must eventually vote on the bill, identify the funding source and explain the consequences to their constituents. Trump can promise the dividend but Congress would have to pay for it.

More than a check

The most important question, therefore, is not whether Americans would like \$5,000. Of course many would. The question is what the promise says about the state of American democracy. For decades, Washington's fiscal problems have accumulated under presidents and congressional majorities from both parties. Trump's proposal did not create America's \$40 trillion debt, nor did it create the structural deficit. But it demonstrates how difficult it has become for American politicians to confront those problems without simultaneously offering voters another immediate benefit.

The \$5,000 dividend is the purest expression of that contradiction. A government drowning in debt is promising to hand out more money. A president whose economic strategy relies heavily on tariffs is presenting tariff revenue as a national windfall. And a midterm election is being framed not only as a choice between competing political programs, but as a potential financial transaction between the government and the individual voter. Whether Congress ever authorizes the payment remains uncertain.

But the political message is already clear. Trump appears increasingly determined to make the 2026 midterms a referendum not on the long-term costs of his economic program, but on the immediate rewards he says Republicans can deliver. That may be the most revealing feature of the \$5,000 promise. It is not simply a proposal to distribute money. It is an attempt to turn the consequences of governing into the currency of campaigning and to make the ballot box feel, quite literally, like a cash register.

WHO ACTUALLY PAYS A U.S. TARIFF?



'Board of Peace' billionaire backs AIPAC fund targeting pro-Palestine candidates



By **Jonah Valdez**
Reporter

PERSPECTIVE

Marc Rowan has a vision for Gaza. "The potential here is tremendous," he said at a February gathering of President Donald Trump's so-called Board of Peace, where Rowan described land devastated by Israeli bombing with a developer's zeal. "This is not a problem of money or collateral. This is a problem with peace."

In the US, Rowan is simultaneously helping ensure a pro-Israel political project has no problem with money. Since the start of this year, according to Federal Election Commission filings, the billionaire CEO of Apollo Global Management has donated \$1.5 million to the United Democracy Project, a super PAC for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, spending a fraction of his vast wealth to preserve a foreign policy defined by support for Israel's genocide and the flow of US weapons to Israel.

Rowan — who is worth more than \$8 billion and reportedly consulted on his business with convicted sex offender and disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein — is an executive member of Trump's "Board of Peace," a United Nations-approved body tasked with carrying out Trump's stalled plan for Gaza. He made his first donation to UDP of the year in early March, giving \$1 million, filings show, just as the group began spending aggressively against the now-ousted Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky, a loud critic of US support for Israel.

A second donation for \$500,000 arrived on July 23. The same day, the AIPAC super PAC shelled out nearly \$50,000 in campaign mailers in Michigan to attack the progressive pro-Palestine candidate for

US Senate, Abdul El-Sayed. In Missouri, it dropped another \$100,000 for phone banking services against former Democratic Rep. Cori Bush in her race against pro-Israel incumbent Rep. Wesley Bell.

It's not clear which specific UDP efforts have been backed by Rowan's largesse, and neither Rowan nor UDP responded to requests for comment. But Raed Jarrar, advocacy director with Democracy for the Arab World Now, connected Rowan's position on Trump's Gaza board and his major part as a donor to AIPAC's super PAC as a matter of transparency.

"Now, he sits on a board that will decide Gaza's future," Jarrar told The Intercept. "Palestinians did not choose him, and neither did American voters. Americans and Palestinians alike deserve to know whose interests are actually being served."

Rowan, a major donor to Trump's failed 2020 presidential campaign, has long made

his animus toward critics of Israel known. In recent years, he has been a fierce advocate against student protesters calling for an end to the genocide in Gaza, broadly mischaracterizing their anti-genocide calls as "antisemitic," and played a key role in ousting leaders at his alma mater, the University of Pennsylvania, over their handling of the protests. In 2025, he served as a consultant to the White House in its recent attacks on higher education. He donated an initial \$250,000 to UDP in 2022, the year the AIPAC super PAC was founded, and more than quadrupled his giving by 2024. Trump appointed him to the Board of Peace this past January.

"Marc Rowan has used his position to try to silence Palestinians and smear students protesting Israel's genocide," said Margaret DeReus, executive director of Peace, Accountability, and Leadership PAC, which launched this cycle as a pro-Palestine counterweight to the pro-Israel lobby. PAL PAC backed both El-Sayed and Bush, who have committed to cutting military aid to Israel. (El-Sayed prevailed in his Democratic Senate primary against Michigan Rep. Ha-

ley Stevens, while both Bush and Massie lost their races.)

Rowan "gives millions to fund the now-fringe idea that billions of our tax dollars should fund the Israeli military and targets candidates who are calling to stop sending US tax dollars to Israel's genocide," DeReus said. She added that his presence on "Trump's corrupt board" lays bare the actual goal of the governing body: "the continued genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians living in Gaza".

As support for Israel among the American people has plummeted, and more leftist candidates run on promises to enact an arms embargo on Israel, AIPAC has broken its own spending records and set new ones, helping make El-Sayed and Massie's primaries among the most expensive ever. In Congress, the lobbying giant has also worked to consolidate power among its pro-Israel base. In July, AIPAC lobbied members for the pas-

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Now, he sits on a board that will decide Gaza's future. Palestinians did not choose him, and neither did American voters. Americans and Palestinians alike deserve to know whose interests are actually being served.

sage of a Pentagon program that further entmeshes military technological sharing between the US and Israeli militaries. Last week, Democratic leadership appointed three hawkish, pro-Israel, and AIPAC-backed Democrats to the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

In addition to his AIPAC super PAC spending, Rowan has also directly given to a host of pro-Israel candidates this cycle, including New Jersey Democrats Rep. Josh Gottheimer and Sen. Cory Booker, as well as Minnesota Rep. Angie Craig in her failed Senate bid.

The majority of Rowan's spending, however, has been in favor of Republicans, including Mike Rogers, who is facing off against El-Sayed; Florida Sen. Ashley Moody, a vocal opponent of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement; and Rep. Brian Mast, R-Fla., chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and former Israeli Defense Forces volunteer who famously wore his IDF uniform to Congress.

AIPAC has long championed Trump's plan for Gaza, which has included overt calls to displace Palestinians, and supports Israel's hard line in its negotiations with Hamas leaders. Israel, which occupies nearly 70 percent of Gaza, has refused to withdraw its military from the Strip. Israel blames Hamas for refusing to disarm, though the Palestinian armed political group has said it would only surrender its weapons in exchange for a full Israeli withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian state — conditions the Israeli cabinet has refused.

AIPAC also regularly celebrates the ongoing bombardment of the Strip, where more than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli strikes since the so-called cease-fire was brokered, including when bombing killed two children recently.

In Rowan's view, there's money to be made from the carnage. At the meeting in Washington, D.C., this past February — when Trump also pledged \$10 billion in public funds to the board — Rowan fired off property value estimates in Gaza, more than 80 percent of which lies in ruins. He cited a coastline valued at \$50 billion; a housing stock, if rebuilt, worth \$30 billion; and infrastructure projects worth another \$30 billion. Rowan spoke next to generic renderings of glistening high-rise apartments, palm tree-laden highways, solar power plants, and coastal oil depots. Consolidating all of these assets under the supervision of Trump's Board of Peace, Rowan said, would allow for "conflict-free management of the resources to benefit the Gazans".

"One hundred fifteen billion of value," he promised. "It just needs to be unlocked and financed."

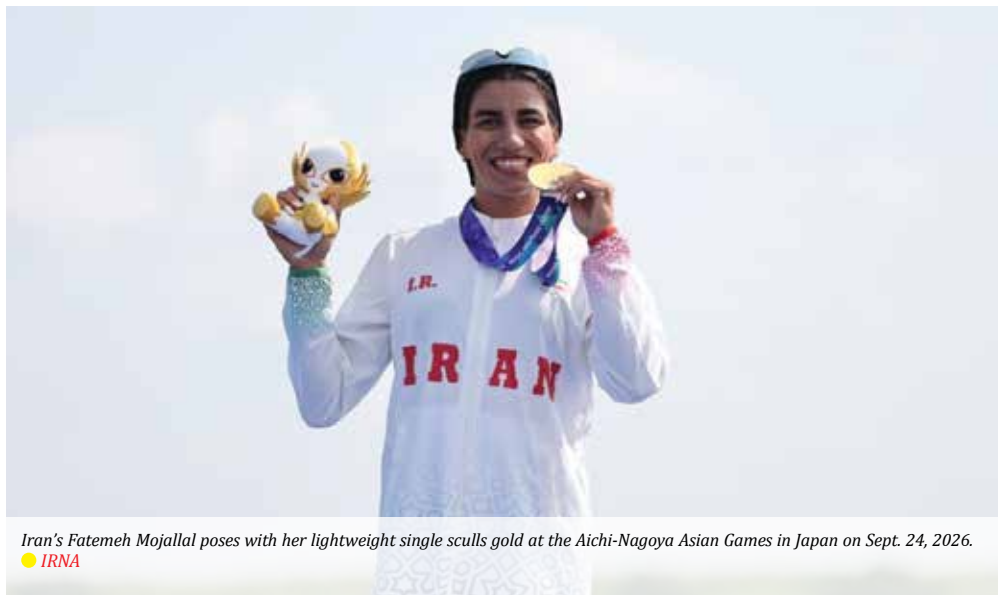
A map of the Gaza Strip is displayed at the inaugural meeting of the Board of Peace at the US Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C., on February 19, 2026.



The article first appeared on The Intercept.



Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games: Rowing heroics spearhead Iran's medal hunt



Iran's Fatemeh Mojallal poses with her lightweight single sculls gold at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games in Japan on Sept. 24, 2026.
● IRNA



Kimia Zarei (L) and Zeinab Norouzi celebrate with the Iranian flag after winning the lightweight double sculls gold at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games in Japan on Sept. 24, 2026.
● afrazvarzesh.ir

Sports Desk

Iranian female rowers stole the show at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games on Thursday, collecting five medals, including two golds, across different events.

Fatemeh Mojallal headlined the medal hunt by winning a historic gold and a bronze, while Zeinab Norouzi and Kimia Zarei teamed up for a gold and silver in the double sculls events. Mojallal first clocked 7:24.57 to win the top prize in the lightweight single sculls event, securing Iran's maiden rowing gold in the history of the multi-sport event, and then settled for a third-place finish in the single sculls final with a time of 7:35.99.

"Thank God. I would like to thank everyone who helped me along this journey. I am very happy that I was able to raise my country's flag and make the Iranian people happy. I won the most precious color of medal,

and I am very happy about it," said the 24-year-old rower, who dedicated her gold medal to her fellow Iranian girls.

"We had never won a rowing gold at the Asian Games, and I am the first," she said. "I worked very hard to break this spell, training hard in camps for two years in difficult conditions." There were further milestone achievements as Norouzi became the most decorated Iranian female athlete in the history of the Asian Games with one gold and three silvers to her name.

Norouzi and Zarei crossed the finish line in the lightweight double sculls with the fastest time of 6:53.93 – 5.31 seconds clear of Hong Kong's silver-winning pair – and then stood runner-up to the Chinese duo in the double sculls final in 6:55.78.

Meanwhile, the Iranian quartet of Mahsa Javer, Hengameh Kamyab, Soha Fakhri and Saqi Maleki added another silver

medal in the women's quadruple sculls event, courtesy of a 6:27.24 performance in the final, as Javer secured a fifth Asian Games medal of her career – a national high for any Iranian female athlete. Iran was also not short of success in the men's competition, as Amirhossein Mohammadpour claimed silver in the lightweight single sculls.

3x3 basketball consolation

The Iranian men's team won a bronze medal in 3x3 basketball, thanks to a 21-10 victory over the Philippines in the third-place contest on Friday. Mohammadbassir Momeni contributed 12 points, with Mohammad Rahimi finishing with five points and seven rebounds, as Iran, having hammered the host 21-3 in the quarterfinals, bounced back from a 14-11 setback against Qatar in the semifinals earlier

in the day to finish with a consolation medal.

Wushu quartet

Elsewhere, Iranians capped off an impressive wushu campaign on Thursday by collecting a gold and three sanda medals. Soheil Mousavi defeated Kazakhstan's Abdurashid Abdullayev in the final to finish with the gold in the men's 75kg class, while three of his compatriots fell short against Chinese fighters in their respective finals. Sogand Sinkaei suffered a 2-0 loss to Wu Di in the women's 52kg showdown, while Shoja Panahi (65kg) and Erfan Moharrami (70kg) were undone by Wang Chengjin and Ma Shue, respectively, by the same scoreline in the men's finals.

Artistic gymnastics

Iranians also enjoyed a decent run in artistic gymnastics by

grabbing two silver medals in the men's event.

Arman Khodaei opened Iran's account on Thursday by finishing second to Uzbekistan's Utkirbek Juraev in the pommel horse final, becoming only the second Iranian in the sport to win an Asian Games medal, following Mahdi Olfati's vault silver at Hangzhou 2022. Khodaei's 14.566 performance saw the 20-year-old sensation, making his international debut, finish above three-time Olympic gold medalist and five-time world champion Daiki Hashimoto of Japan, who settled for bronze.

Olfati, meanwhile, replicated his historic success from the previous edition, delivering a 14.533 performance to finish behind the Philippines' Carlos Yulo – a gold medalist at the Paris 2024 Olympics – in the men's vault final on Friday.

Athletics heartbreak

Iran was dealt a massive blow

in its bid for a maiden women's medal in athletics after Fatemeh Mohitizadeh was disqualified from the heptathlon.

A gold medalist at last year's Islamic Solidarity Games, Mohitizadeh emerged as the favorite for the top prize after finishing atop the overall standings on Thursday by a safe margin ahead of Friday's three remaining disciplines.

However, her campaign came to an abrupt end after she was reportedly found to have worn sprint footwear for the long jump contest, which is against World Athletics regulations. Iran still found some consolation in the athletics contests after Sadeq Samimi managed to win bronze in the men's discus throw. Samimi registered a personal-best throw of 60.32m with his third attempt, while Abuduaini Tuerhong (64.26m) and Wu Nanjun (61.58m) completed an all-Chinese one-two as Iran missed out on the discus gold for the first time since Busan 2002.

Iran coach Qalenoiei rues 'schoolboy mistakes' in Uzbekistan defeat

Sports Desk

Iran head coach Amir Qalenoiei lamented "schoolboy mistakes" by two players in his side's 3-1 defeat to Uzbekistan in a friendly in Fergana on Thursday, apologizing for the loss but expressing confidence that the national team would improve. Iranian captain Ehsan Hajsafi, who on the day equaled Javad Nekounam as Team Melli's all-time most-capped player with 149 appearances, was to blame for the first goal, as his sideways pass was intercepted by Eldor Shomurodov before the Uzbek striker's low drive found the bottom corner in the 10th minute.

Jakhongir Urozoov's own goal from a Ramin Rezaeian set piece drew Iran level four minutes into the second half, but Shomurodov restored the home side's advantage from the spot nine minutes later after Iranian goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand punched Behruzjon Karimov in the head while attempting to clear the ball.

Khusain Norchaev added the third in the fourth minute of added time as Iran's winless run against the Central Asian side extended to seven games

since the 2023 CAFA Championship final.

"I apologize for this defeat and congratulate Uzbekistan and their good coach. It was a very good game," Qalenoiei said after the game.

The coach said Iran conceded its first two goals through individual errors while controlling the game.

"We conceded the first and second goals because of individual mistakes, at times when we were controlling the game," Qalenoiei said. "The first goal came from a very schoolboy mistake. In the second half, our substitutions helped us score,

and we were trying to score a second goal, but an experienced player made another very

childish mistake and our situation fell apart." Qalenoiei said the large number of changes made to the team since its World Cup campaign in June had also contributed to

an inconsistent performance, with several players making their international debuts.

"We made many changes and many players were playing in the national team environment for the first time," he said. "We were satisfied with some of them, while others need more time and more matches before they can

help the national team."

The Iranian coach acknowledged Uzbekistan's progress but said the match was primarily an opportunity to assess younger players. He rejected suggestions that Iran's problems were physical, saying the team had held only a few training sessions since the World Cup.

"The problem was not physical. You can only have two or three training sessions in such circumstances," he said. "This was also the first FIFA international window after the World Cup, and I said yesterday that we have not yet reached our ideal condition. I am certain we will be in much better shape against Russia."

Iran will then play Russia in Kazan on Tuesday, which will mark a third friendly between the two sides since Qalenoiei was appointed to the national team job for a second spell in March 2023.

Qalenoiei still accepted responsibility for the defeat, while saying mistakes were part of football.

"I accept that the schoolboy mistakes made by two of our players cost us the result," he said. "The

main culprit is me. Even though it was a friendly, we have to apologize to the Iranian people."

With the Asian Cup approaching, Qalenoiei also acknowledged the need for changes to the squad but said they would have to be made gradually.

"We want to make changes, but they have to be made in a way that does not hurt us too much," he said. "Unfortunately, today we were hurt by two experienced players and conceded goals. That is part of football." Qalenoiei concluded by expressing confidence in Iran's recovery. "I am certain that the national team's progress will resume," he said.

Three-time champion Iran will begin its bid for a first title since 1976 when the continental showcase gets underway in Saudi Arabia on January 7, where Team Melli is joined by China, Kyrgyzstan and Syria in Group C.



Iranian center-back Shoja Khalilzadeh (4) challenges Uzbekistan's Eldor Shomurodov during a friendly game in Fergana, Uzbekistan, on September 24, 2026.
● FFIRI

Ojabeyt Palace in Kelardasht reopens as archaeological museum



farsnews.ir

Iranica Desk

The historic Ojabeyt Palace in Kelardasht, dating back to the early Pahlavi period, has been converted into an archaeological museum and returned to the public after years of waiting, following sustained efforts by the government. According to Mehr News Agency, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, made the remarks at the official opening ceremony of the complex on Thursday, attended by provincial officials and members of the cultural community, according to ISNA.

Salehi-Amiri described the project as a step toward redistributing the country's cultural and identity-related heritage. He said that after several decades, the palace and its historic museum complex had been returned to their "original owners" — the people of Kelardasht — through the efforts of the president and with the support of the presidential executive affairs office. He called the opening of the archaeological center a gift from the government to the historical memory of the Iranian people. The minister said the historically and archaeologically significant complex,

which houses unique discoveries from the Kelardasht and Ramsar, is being presented for the first time as a standard palace museum to residents of the area, Mazandaran Province and the Iranian public. According to Salehi-Amiri, the museum can serve as a platform for tracing Iranian identity and strengthening national self-confidence. Highlighting the region's archaeological and historical wealth, the minister described Kelardasht as one of the ancient centers of settled civilization on the Iranian plateau. He said artifacts discovered by archaeologists and experts

and now displayed at the museum date back more than 4,000 years. Among the objects on display is the renowned Kelardasht Golden Cup, along with a collection of valuable gold and other ancient artifacts. Salehi-Amiri said the finds testify to the presence of artistic, creative and distinctive communities in the region more than 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. He stressed that scientific archaeological excavations and efforts to trace Iran's historical heritage would further highlight the country's place in the world's civilizational history. "Believe that Kelardasht was

once home to artists capable of creating the Golden Cup with such delicacy," he said, adding that systematic exploration, identification and presentation of Iran's historical heritage could contribute to a greater understanding of the achievements of Iranian civilization in the contemporary world. The minister also described the development of tourism as a key driver of sustainable economic growth in the region. Calling on economic actors and private-sector investors to consider Kelardasht as a strategic investment destination, he said tourism infrastructure projects in the area could offer

significant economic returns while also helping the public gain a deeper understanding of the region's rich heritage. At the end of his remarks, Salehi-Amiri announced that the doors of the Ojabeyt Palace Museum were now open to the general public, academics, researchers and scholars. He emphasized that the valuable complex and many of the nationally significant artifacts transferred to the museum belong to the people, adding that safeguarding and preserving the collection would be a shared responsibility between the local community and specialized institutions.

Haj Aliqoli Salt Lake reveals changing face of desert

Iranica Desk

Across the vast expanse of the earth, Haj Aliqoli Salt Lake offers a constantly changing story of the connection between land, water and light. At times, its orderly hexagonal patterns reveal a landscape shaped by nature's ancient geometry; at others, following rainfall, the salt lake turns into a vast mirror, embracing the boundless sky. This desert landscape is a geological wonder, shaped by the forces that have transformed the earth over millennia — a place where the boundary between reality and dreams seems to disappear amid shimmering light and salt crystals. Haj Aliqoli is more than a desert. The raised ridges and salt cracks across the landscape resemble the hands of an old man, their wrinkles telling stories of years spent beneath the sun and of endurance. Ridges formed by salt crystals have created irregular polygons stretching into the distance, producing a remarkable and mysterious geometry across the earth. The beauty of this landscape is intensified when it meets a rain-filled sky. Amid heavy, dark clouds and fading light, a seven-colored rainbow emerges above the horizon. It appears like a bridge of hope and renewal between the thirsty earth and the generous sky, casting a delicate spectrum of color across the dry salt flats. As daylight gradually withdraws from the desert and the sun, emerging from behind patches of gray cloud, casts its golden rays across the landscape like a shining crown, beams of light stream

from the heart of the sky toward the earth, offering the salt flats their final traces of warmth and brightness. The ground, covered with a carpet of polygonal shapes and natural grooves, rests beneath the soft, slanting light. It is as if the endless desert floor has risen in silent respect before the

breathe in the clean air of the salt lake, leave behind the noise of the world and become immersed in the endless silence of the salt flats. In this tranquil setting, the person opens their arms to embrace the landscape's vastness, peace and sense of freedom. In the final minutes of the day, the sun disappears behind the

force. A spectacular purple bolt of lightning, like a vein of light, tears through the dense clouds and reaches toward the horizon. In a fraction of a second, the sudden flash transforms the silent night across the salt flats into a vast hall of light, color and grandeur. Below, the salt pools and wet desert floor reflect the celestial dis-

expanse above. The white salt crystals, resting in the absolute silence of the earth, become mirrors facing this endless celestial spectacle. Toward the end of the night, the grandeur of the sky is framed by a striking diagonal arc stretching across the heavens. A dense band of luminous dust and countless

toward the farthest point of the horizon. On either side, shallow water and glittering salt crystals create a profound sense of calm beneath the vast sky, as if the road were a bridge between the patient earth and the boundless expanse of the cloud-filled heavens. At the end of the road, a small, solitary silhouette can be seen where the earth meets the sky, emphasizing the smallness of human beings in the face of nature's scale and simplicity. Above the unbroken line of the road, the sky is covered with soft, luminous patches of cloud. Haj Aliqoli Desert is not merely an expanse of salt, water and earth. It is a landscape that reveals a new face with every passing hour. At times, beneath the rain, it shelters the sky in its shallow waters; at others, under the heat of the sun, it breaks into thousands of crystalline polygons; and at night, it records galaxies, lightning and streaks of light in its silent mirror. Here, nature is neither still nor voiceless. It is alive and telling its story — a story of transformation, endurance and a grandeur hidden within the simplest elements of the world. What we saw across this landscape was an image of the sky reflected in water, a splash of color across salt, the silent movement of the wind and the wonder of human beings confronted by the vastness of the earth. In its silence, the desert invites us to pause and observe a world in which, for a brief moment, the boundaries between water and land, night and light, solitude and freedom disappear.



chtn.ir

magnificent display of light and fallen into deep solitude. Here, at the boundary between day and night, the horizon forms a straight, seemingly endless line, reminding visitors of the boundless scale of creation. Around sunset, when distant mountains are immersed in a halo of golden and purple light, a person stands in the heart of the desert with arms outstretched. Bare feet on the wet, polished surface convey a sense of direct connection with the earth. In this scene, the boundary between land and sky fades into the deep blue of the background. The backlit scene captures a profound pause amid the rush of everyday life — a moment to

dark mountain ranges, leaving its last glow like a ribbon of molten gold along the horizon and across the edge of a patch of cloud. The warm orange light creates a dreamlike contrast with the cool silver and deep-blue tones of the approaching night. Across the shallow pools of the salt flats, the warm light dances on the surface, creating bright patches of reflected sunlight among the ripples and salt formations, resembling golden scales. The mountains stand in the distance like steadfast guardians, while the lake, calm and silent, records this symphony of light and darkness in its watery memory. Amid the darkness of the desert, the sky suddenly reveals its full

play. A narrow dirt road, drawn like a line through the darkness, emerges under the brief illumination. Here, at the meeting point of the roar of the clouds and the silence of the salt flats, the desert reveals a vivid, powerful and majestic face of untouched nature. As midnight approaches, the sky over Haj Aliqoli unveils one of its deepest secrets. The Milky Way emerges from the endless darkness like a dense river of luminous dust and countless stars, filling the desert sky with an almost mythical grandeur. Far from night pollution and the noise of cities, the sky here appears so clear and close that it seems possible to reach out and pluck a star from the boundless

stars rises above the silent hills on the horizon and extends toward the heights of the sky. In the foreground, a calm, mirror-like pool of clear water from the salt lake completes the celestial spectacle. Bright stars reflected on the polished surface shine like candles in absolute darkness, blurring the boundary between the earth and the galaxy. Here, the salt-covered earth is no longer dormant; in a deep and poetic silence, it appears to embrace the sky in its entirety, creating one of nature's purest scenes. A narrow dirt road, straight and unwavering like a drawn line, divides the white expanse of the salt flats in two and leads the eye



India, Iran look to traditional medicine for new health cooperation



Indian Ambassador in Iran Vishwesh Negi addresses an event on World Ayurveda Day at the Indian Embassy's cultural center in Tehran on September 23, 2026.

● IRAN DAILY

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

FEATURE REPORT

India and Iran are looking to expand cooperation in traditional medicine alongside broader pharmaceutical ties, with the two countries seeking to draw on their shared heritage in herbal medicines and traditional treatments. Indian Ambassador to Tehran Vishwesh Negi said the two sides had agreed to develop cooperation in traditional medicine on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Health Ministers' Meeting in Chandigarh, India, in July 2026. A memorandum of understanding was signed between India's Ministry of Ayush and Iran's Ministry of Health and Medical Education to build on the countries' shared heritage in herbal medicines and traditional treatments. The agreement was discussed during

an event on Wednesday marking World Ayurveda Day at the Indian Embassy's cultural center in Tehran, where Negi outlined India's efforts to promote Ayurveda internationally while linking the ancient system to modern research, quality standards and international healthcare frameworks. Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of healthcare rooted in natural treatments and a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, takes its name from the Sanskrit words "Ayur", meaning life, and "Veda", meaning knowledge. It is commonly understood as the "knowledge of life" and goes beyond treating illness, placing emphasis on maintaining balance among the body, mind and spirit. Ayurveda has a history spanning thousands of years in the Indian subcontinent and has evolved over time as a system aimed at preserving health and treating illness.

Negi said Ayurveda should not be viewed as being in conflict with modern medicine. Instead, he said, it places particular emphasis on prevention, daily routines and rhythms, digestion, sleep and the body's natural functions. The theme of the 11th Ayurveda Day was "Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow". Negi said India was seeking to connect the centuries-old knowledge system with modern research, quality standards and international healthcare frameworks. The challenge, he said, was not simply to introduce Ayurveda to a wider global audience, but to establish the scientific evidence, credibility and institutional infrastructure needed for its responsible international growth. India's Ayurveda economy grew from \$2.85bn in 2014 to \$43.4bn in 2023, according to figures cited by the ambassador. The Indian government has also developed a broader ecosystem aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship, innovation and investment in the sector. In July 2026, India published a strategic roadmap for the globalization of Ayurveda, placing emphasis on quality standards, robust infrastructure, credible research, trained professionals, standardized products and international regulatory frameworks that can be understood and recognized across

countries. The roadmap aims to strengthen the institutional infrastructure and quality ecosystem surrounding Ayurveda and support its responsible expansion while building international confidence in its services and products. Negi also placed the development of Ayurveda in the context of India's broader role in traditional, complementary and integrative medicine. The World Health Organization recognizes Ayurveda as one of the major traditional healthcare systems. The WHO has also held two global summits on traditional medicine, the latest of which took place in New Delhi in December 2025. Discussions included scientific evidence, the integration of traditional medicine into health systems, regulation, biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, intellectual property and innovation. Negi said the future of Ayurveda's global development would depend on scientific evidence, innovation, quality, professional capacity and responsible globalization.

Ancient Indian system of medicine

Dr Sohrab Dehqan, an Ayurveda expert and PhD holder in Iranian traditional medicine, said Ayurveda was an ancient healthcare system whose roots could be traced to the Vedas and to around 3,000 BC. He said ancient texts addressed lifestyle, nutrition and medical treatment, while Ayurveda developed over the same broad historical period and evolved as a scientific system. One written Ayurveda work dating back about 2,500 years, he added, is still

used in treatment. Ayurvedic treatment focuses on lifestyle, medicinal plants and minerals, as well as detoxification, Dehqan said. Interest in Ayurveda has grown in Iran and elsewhere in recent years, he said, particularly alongside the popularity of yoga. Many people are interested in learning about their bodily constitution and choosing diets accordingly.

Healing as diplomacy

Dr Arman Zargran, adviser for international affairs at the Iranian Health Ministry's Centre for Iranian and Complementary Medicine, told Iran Daily on the sidelines of the event that traditional medicine had deep roots in Iran, India and China, with the three civilizations having maintained close contacts and influenced one another over centuries. He said there was an opportunity for Iran to expand ties with traditional medicine systems in neighboring countries and in the East, while strengthening commonalities and learning from differences. Traditional medicine, Zargran said, is part of the cultural and civilizational heritage of countries and can also serve as a tool for health diplomacy. Cooperation in the field, he added, can strengthen relations between countries and allow them to draw on each other's traditional medical knowledge and experience to advance health. Over the past decade, knowledge transfer and cultural interaction between Iran and India have expanded, with particularly close cooperation developing in the field of health, especially traditional medicine.

Once Upon a ...

From food to war

China invited journalists from around the world, including Iran, to a screening of the film in late September. The film moved almost all the viewers to tears, while also impressing them with its advanced visual and special effects and its tragic storyline. The film crew, including director Wen Muye, later took the stage, giving journalists an opportunity to ask questions. Iran Daily asked the director what had prompted him to explore the war genre and why he had chosen the Middle East as the setting for his story. "I didn't actively set out to explore war-themed stories," he said. Wen said the idea for the film came to him in 2017, shortly after he completed his debut feature, *Dying to Survive*, another film centered on cancer and its treatment. He said he came across a news report about Chinese people running restaurants in the Middle East, which prompted him to conduct further research. He subsequently discovered numerous real-life accounts of Chinese nationals operating restaurants in the region, and this discovery sparked his interest in developing the story. "I felt that through the juxtaposition of food and war, there was room to explore my thoughts on war and peace, viewing disputes, conflicts and the plight of war orphans through the perspective of an ordinary Chinese chef."

More than war film

China is often viewed as a neutral party in Middle Eastern conflicts, and the film could therefore also be interpreted as a metaphor for Beijing's approach to con-

flicts in the region.

The main character refuses to become involved in violence and instead seeks to foster peace by bringing people together around a table for a proper meal, regardless of their views or affiliations. He also goes to great lengths to prevent an orphaned boy's anger from turning into violence. Nevertheless, Wen said he had no intention of creating such a metaphor. "I never really thought about what symbols the story might carry, nor did I approach it from that angle." The narrative, he told Iran Daily, is rooted entirely in its individual characters and centers on the personal perspective and unique experiences of an ordinary Chinese chef. Although the film is categorized as a war movie, the director insists that war itself is not its central theme. Instead, the story focuses on food and human connections. The phrase "eat properly" is repeated throughout the film, reflecting the filmmakers' emphasis on the routines and simple concerns of everyday life. The main character brings people together through food, regardless of their language, nationality or occupation. Although the film is set in an Arab environment, its message can also resonate with Iranians who have experienced the consequences of war over the past year, not only in its military form but also through economic pressure. The film also resonates with an aspect of Iranian culture in which sharing "bread and salt" symbolizes friendship and creates an understanding that those who have eaten together should not turn against one another.

**ESCO**
Esfahan Steel Company

Brief Notice of International Tender No. 1091562 **Fist Announcement**

It is hereby notified that **Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO)** intends to purchase Purchasing the refractory materials and performing the operation of refractory lining of the top and body of Blast Furnace (BF) No.3 as per the required conditions and technical specifications through two-stage international Tender. Accordingly, all the prospective bidders are kindly requested to visit ESCO's website www.esfahansteel.ir so as to obtain the tender document and upload their techno-commercial offer to ESCO's website (through Sourcing Field) max. up to 07.October.2026. It is evident that this letter is only for notification purpose.

Yours Respectfully, M.Shateri,
Goods & Equipment Purchasing Management
Esfahan Steel Company

**ESCO**
Esfahan Steel Company

Brief Notice of International Tender No. 1097697 **Fist Announcement**

It is hereby notified that **Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO)** intends to purchase 4 Items Refractory Materials for the Submerged Mechanism of the Casting Station No.3's Tundish as per the required conditions and technical specifications through two-stage international Tender. Accordingly, all the prospective bidders are kindly requested to visit ESCO's website www.esfahansteel.ir so as to obtain the tender document and upload their techno-commercial offer to ESCO's website (through Sourcing Field) max. up to 07.October.2026. It is evident that this letter is only for notification purpose.

Yours Respectfully, M.Shateri,
Goods & Equipment Purchasing Management
Esfahan Steel Company