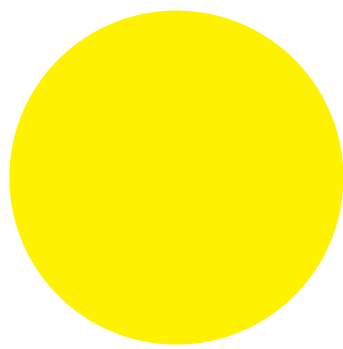


National post company unveils smart addressing system, delivery robot



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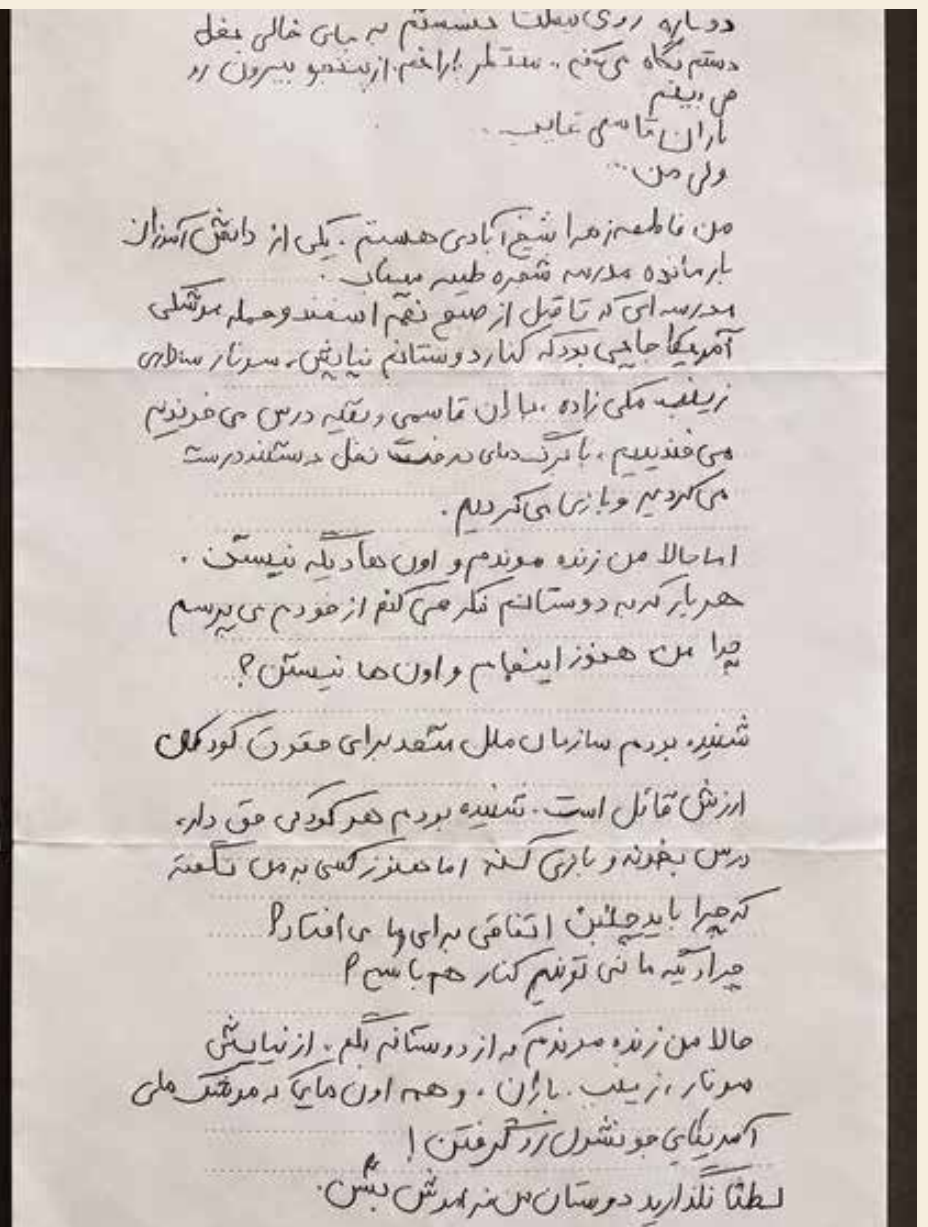
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'Do not let my friends be forgotten,' surviving pupil demands

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The photo shows a handwritten letter in Persian by a girl who survived a US missile attack on an elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, in late February, to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

IRNA

## China backs region-led security framework for Middle East: *Scholar*

By Delaram Ahmadi  
Staff writer

INTERVIEW  
EXCLUSIVE

China is backing a new security framework for the Middle East led by the countries of the region, while remaining ready to contribute as a partner in development and a promoter of peace, according to Professor Hongda Fan, Director of the China-Middle East Center at Shaoxing University and a Visiting Scholar at the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore.



Hongda Fan

Speaking to Iran Daily, Fan said President Xi Jinping's call for a new regional security architecture reflects the needs of Middle Eastern coun-

tries after decades of crisis management. He said lasting stability depends primarily on regional countries themselves, with reconciliation and development serving as the foundations of a sustainable security framework. Fan said China's role would be supportive rather than dominant, stressing that Beijing can help promote peace and development while the countries of the region take responsibility for their own security. He said China's relations with both Iran and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf give Beijing an important position from which to engage with different sides and support efforts to build a new regional framework. He argued that the effectiveness of such a framework will ultimately depend on whether regional governments can overcome differences, prioritize development and build

sufficient trust to sustain cooperation for the future. On Iran-China relations, Fan said Beijing has consistently sought to deepen cooperation with Tehran, but is likely to remain cautious because the future of bilateral ties will depend to a considerable extent on Iran's domestic development path. He said Iran needs a clear approach to development and a predictable outlook if it wants to expand practical cooperation with China. Fan also addressed the recent discussions between President Xi Jinping and US President Donald Trump on the Iranian nuclear issue and international waterways. He said the understanding reached by the two leaders is consistent with Tehran's stated position that it does not seek nuclear weapons, while keeping the Strait of Hormuz open is also in Iran's interests. He added that China's position on these issues predates

the Xi-Trump meeting and that successful Iran-US negotiations will require compromises from both sides. On China's relations with Iran and the Arab states, Fan said Beijing has maintained a balanced diplomatic approach for years, but economic cooperation is also influenced by the conditions offered by individual countries. He noted that Iran's cooperation with China has lagged behind that of Saudi Arabia and Egypt in trade and investment since Xi's 2016 visits, while stressing that China's relations across the Persian Gulf can help it engage with all sides on a new regional framework. Following is the full text of the interview:

IRAN DAILY: President Xi Jinping has recently called for a new security architecture in the Middle East, with regional countries taking greater

responsibility for their own security. What would this new security architecture look like in practice, and what role would China be prepared to play in building it?

FAN: For a country or region, external leadership or dominance may help resolve immediate problems, but lasting stability and development depend above all on its own efforts. After decades of crisis management, Middle Eastern countries have come to recognize the need to build a security framework that they themselves lead. In my view, President Xi Jinping's call closely aligns with the region's current needs. The success of this new security framework depends on reconciliation among regional countries and requires each country to make development a guiding priority in both domestic and foreign affairs. China will play a role as a partner in development and a promoter of peace.

The current crisis has highlighted the importance of China-Iran economic and strategic ties, particularly under sanctions. Do you expect the crisis to lead to a more concrete expansion of China-Iran economic cooperation, or will Beijing remain cautious because of its broader economic ties with other countries in the region?

I believe Beijing has consistently sought to deepen cooperation with Iran. Frankly, however, China-Iran relations will depend to a large extent on how Iran develops internally in the coming years. A country's immediate difficulties are not necessarily cause for alarm, but it needs a reasonably clear approach to development and a predictable outlook. With the Iranian people themselves still uncertain about their country's future, I believe China will proceed cautiously in its cooperation with Iran.

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