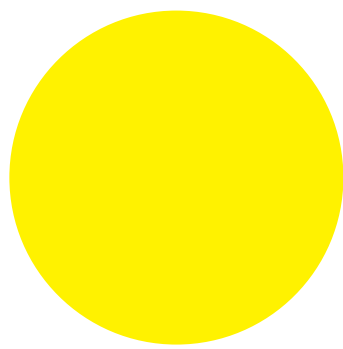


Araghchi describes US efforts for dialogue as 'positive step'



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Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezelgeh (c) and other attendees stand for Iran's national anthem during the first meeting on Iran-Africa agricultural cooperation in Tehran, Iran, October 31, 2026.

maj.ir

China's pottery capital offers potential for sister-city ties with Iran's Lalejin

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

FEATURE REPORT
EXCLUSIVE



Journalists experience pottery making at a pottery factory in Yixing City, China, on October 29, 2026

Yixing, a county-level city administered by Wuxi in east China's Jiangsu Province, is widely known as China's "pottery capital." Its centuries-old tradition of purple clay pottery could provide a basis for closer cultural ties with Lalejin in Iran's Hamedan Province, which has been recognized internationally as a World City of Pottery. Best known for its distinctive purple clay, or zisha, Yixing has a pottery-making tradition dating back to the Song and Yuan dynasties (960-1368), which flourished during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Pottery made from Yixing's purple clay has earned international recognition, with the techniques used to produce it inscribed on China's national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006. The craft's reputation is closely intertwined with the spread of Chinese tea culture, particularly the use of distinctive purple clay teapots.

Zisha clay is extracted from red ore deposits in Huanglongshan and Zhaozhuangshan, two mountains overlooking Dingshan, the area of Yixing where most pottery artisans live and work.

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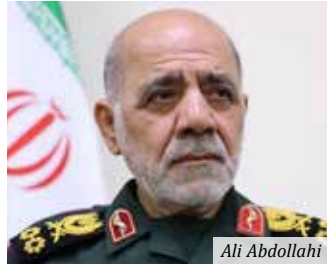
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Leader orders Armed Forces to deliver 'geographically unrestricted response' to enemy threats



Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei



Ali Abdollahi



Ahmad Vahidi



Amir Hatami

International Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Commander-in-Chief of Iran's Armed Forces Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei ordered senior military commanders to ensure that any level or type of enemy threat is met with an "immediate, impactful, and geographically unrestricted response."

During a meeting with senior commanders of the Armed Forces, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized that "intelligent combat readiness for a

powerful confrontation with enemies is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving maximum deterrence."

He stated that should Iran's enemies resume military or terrorist attacks, "it will be the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic and the Iranian nation that will determine when and under what conditions those attacks will end."

The commander-in-chief also underscored the need to "strengthen military intelligence architecture," deepen indigenous defense capabilities

in both "doctrine" and "tactics," and "enhance modernized defense and security capacities through the utilization of emerging technologies."

In another directive, the Leader ordered the "comprehensive updating of the military target database" to ensure that "all physical and non-physical assets of the US-Zionist enemy are brought within the reach of the Armed Forces."

He described nationwide support for the Armed Forces as "one of the pillars of deterrence against anti-Iranian foreign

powers and their domestic mercenaries."

Referring to the eight-month presence of people in public squares across Iran, the Leader said it was "a continuation of the Eight-Year Sacred Defense," which, alongside the steadfastness of military, police and Basij forces, "has protected, and will continue to protect, the territorial integrity of Iran and the Islamic system."

During the meeting, Major General Ali Abdollahi, Chief of the Joint Staff of Iran's Armed Forces, Major General

Amir Hatami, commander of the Army, and Major General Ahmad Vahidi, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), presented reports on the high readiness of the country's defenders along the Persian Gulf coast, in the operational areas of the Strait of Hormuz and the Sea of Oman, and along the northwestern and southeastern borders.

They also briefed the Leader on the multi-fold increase in the production of various types of key munitions and reconnaissance, support, and combat weapons.

The meeting came amid threats by the US and Israel of further military action against Iran.

Iran's Army also warned that any new US attack would only spread their war wider.

"If the US president once again embarks on more regional adventurism under pressure

from, and in an attempt to appease, the Zionists, the flames of war will undoubtedly engulf a much wider geographical area," Iranian Army spokesman Mohammad Akraminia said in a post on X.

The war between Iran and the US began in late February with US-Israeli strikes on Iran that killed the country's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, senior military commanders and thousands of civilians.

Iran in response targeted US assets across the Middle East as well as Israel.

Most recently hostilities have focused on the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial Persian Gulf shipping route for energy exports that Iran has blockaded since the start of the war.

The US has in retaliation been blockading Iranian ports in an attempt to squeeze the nation's economy.

Araghchi describes US efforts for dialogue as 'positive step'

'Iran carefully reviewed Vance's letter'

Iranian delegation in Doha for consultation with Qatari officials

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Saturday that Tehran had carefully reviewed a message sent by US Vice President JD Vance and discussed it at high-level meetings, describing Washington's efforts to open a broader channel for dialogue as a "positive step".

Araghchi made the remarks in an interview with Al Jazeera after a Qatari newspaper reported the arrival of an Iranian delegation in Doha for consultations aimed at ending the US war on Iran, which began in February.

During the interview, the Iranian foreign minister confirmed the visit by the Iranian delegation to Doha.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Wednesday that Vance had sent a letter to Iran's security chief at the direction of President Donald Trump in a bid to revive negotiations and avert further US strikes.

"If the purpose of Washington's message through Vance is to create differences and divisions, it would be another mistake added to America's past errors," Araghchi told Al Jazeera. The Qatari newspaper Al-Araby Al-Jadeed reported on Saturday that an Iranian delegation, including a deputy to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, is in Qatar for talks following a reported breakthrough in indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington.

Citing an Iranian source, Al-Araby Al-Jadeed said the delegation was in the Qatari capital, Doha, "to facilitate engagement with the Qatari mediator."

The visit followed "intensive discussions held by a Qatari negotiating delegation in Tehran, which resulted in a breakthrough in indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington," the newspaper reported, citing the source.

The discussions also paved the way for the Iranian negotiating team to

Abbas Araghchi
AFP

accompany the Qatari delegation on its return trip to Doha.

Sources close to Qatar and Pakistan-led mediation efforts also told Al-Araby Al-Jadeed that an American delegation was expected to join the diplomatic process in Doha.

The potential arrangement would also involve China and Russia as guarantors, according to the newspaper. The sources claimed that the US delegation could hold direct talks with Iranian negotiators.

No meeting with US officials

However, the Iranian foreign minister said there is currently no plans for a meeting with US officials, dismissing reports of a possible encounter as media speculation.

Tehran sees no need for a meeting with the American side under the current circumstances, he said, adding that Iran's conditions were clear and mediators were continuing consultations over them.

Araghchi said a decision on whether future negotiations would be held directly or indirectly would be made only after Washington agreed to Tehran's conditions.

Araghchi added that Tehran's proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz was the only plan currently on the table.

He also said the mediators had also put forward proposals on the nuclear

issue that Iran was reviewing as part of the second phase of negotiations.

Pakistan 'cautiously optimistic'

Spokesman for Pakistan's military also said on Friday that Pakistan's Army is "cautiously optimistic" about mediation efforts as regional countries seek to revive a ceasefire in the eight-month-old war.

Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry suggested that there were positive signs in attempts to de-escalate the conflict.

Army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, Pakistan's chief mediator, has been to Tehran twice this month, most recently on Monday, alongside Saudi and Turkish officials.

"Why would the Field Marshal be going twice if it is not for some positivity? So yes, of course," Chaudhry said when asked whether the trips were a positive sign.

"The word that we would use is always cautiously optimistic," added Chaudhry, director general of Inter-Services Public Relations.

US President Donald Trump meanwhile said Friday that Iran wants to keep holding negotiations, claiming that the US "has time" to do so.

"There are talks, they want to talk, they keep talking," he told reporters in the Oval Office when asked about the negotiations. "We have time, frankly."

Iranian officials denounce Germany for complaining of costs of war

Rezaei: 'War and terror come at a price. Now it's your turn to pay'

International Desk

Iranian officials reacted to the recent remarks by German chancellor over the cost of the US war on Iran on the Europe's economy, denouncing the European country's support for the aggression.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in a post on X warned that there will be no more red lines if Iran comes under another round of US-Israeli aggression, saying the country's powerful Armed Forces will inflict a devastating blow on anyone who dares to attack the Iranian nation.

Araghchi was responding to remarks by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz about the possibility of renewed US attacks on Iran and the economic costs of the conflict for Europe.

"When Israel-US bombings of Iran began last year, Mr. Merz hailed them. 'Doing Europe's dirty work,'" Araghchi wrote, invoking the German chancellor's remarks during the first round of US-Israeli war of aggression on Iran last year.

He added that more than 100 billion euros in economic costs is "nothing compared to the Earth-shattering blow Iran's Powerful Armed Forces will deal against those who dare harm our people."

"Red lines are a thing of the past," the Iranian foreign minister further warned.

Araghchi was referring to Merz's remarks on Friday, when the German chancellor, speaking at the end of his visit to South Korea, said the war could not be resolved through military means and urged all parties to pursue a diplomatic solution.

Speaking to reporters, Merz said Germany was coordinating and stepping up diplomatic efforts to bring the war to an end. "Businesses and consumers in Europe have paid more than 100 billion euros extra because energy has become more expensive as a result of this conflict," he said. "We therefore also have an economic interest in bringing this conflict to an end as quickly as possible."

Merz also appealed for dialogue, saying, "This conflict cannot be resolved militarily."

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Major General Mohsen Rezaei also reacted to Merz's remarks, saying that the European governments are reaping the consequences of their earlier support for the Israel's terrorist actions.

In a post on his X account on Friday, Rezaei wrote: "Just yesterday, Europe took pride in the dirty work of the Zionist regime. Today, it's whining about billions the war with Iran is costing it. When you cheered on war crimes, did you think the fallout wouldn't hit you, too? War and terror come at a price. Now it's your turn to pay"

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Iran-Africa meeting focuses on joint investment, agricultural production

Economy Desk

Iran is seeking to move agricultural ties with African countries beyond trade in goods towards joint production, investment and technology transfer, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah said on Saturday at a meeting on expanding cooperation between the two sides. Speaking at the first national meeting on Iran-Africa agricultural cooperation in Tehran, Nouri-Qezeljah said Iran's priorities included expanding balanced, market-oriented agricultural trade, technology transfer and workforce training, joint investment in agricultural value chains, and removing operational barriers while strengthening institutional cooperation. The meeting was attended by ambassadors, economic advisers, honorary consuls and more than 200 businesspeople, ISNA reported. He said Africa should be viewed not simply as a market for Iranian products but as a partner in joint investment, production and technology development. Cooperation should move beyond occasional exchanges and identifying business opportunities towards practical projects and lasting partnerships, he added. Nouri-Qezeljah said Iran had expertise in water and soil management, modern irrigation, greenhouse production,

agricultural machinery, seeds, livestock and poultry, vaccines, veterinary products, fisheries and food processing. African countries, meanwhile, had significant potential in crop production, tropical products, livestock farming and fisheries. Linking these capabilities could boost productivity, employment and added value, he said. Trade between Iran and African countries reached about \$940 million in the first nine months of the Iranian year beginning on March 21, 2025, up 66% from the same period a year earlier, according to figures cited by the minister. About two-thirds of Iran's imports from Africa consisted of food and agricultural products. Despite the growth, Nouri-Qezeljah said trade remained below the potential of Africa's market of more than one billion people. He called for more balanced trade, reciprocal investment and the development of joint value chains. Turning to ongoing cooperation, he said Iran had taken steps to expand agricultural ties with Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania and Kenya, including meetings of joint economic commissions and efforts to advance technical and trade agreements. Iran had also held one- to two-month training courses for delegations from Mauritania, Mali and Senegal in veterinary medicine, vaccine production, fisheries,

livestock farming and agricultural mechanization, he said. The courses could be extended to other African countries. The Agriculture Ministry's international affairs office serves as the secretariat for six joint cooperation commissions with African countries and more than 10 joint agricultural committees, Nouri-Qezeljah said. The aim was to make better use of existing mechanisms and prevent negotiations from stalling at the stage of administrative correspondence, he added. He urged businesspeople to submit specific project proposals identifying partners, target markets, required investment, legal requirements, timelines and performance indicators. Selecting a limited number of feasible projects and appointing designated contacts in both countries would be essential to moving cooperation forward, he said. Nouri-Qezeljah also announced that the fourth Iran-Africa cooperation summit would be held next month, alongside the FIDAK (Foire Internationale de Dakar) event in Senegal, and called on private-sector companies and agricultural businesses to participate actively. At the same meeting, Akbar Khosravi-Nejad, the Foreign Ministry's director general for African affairs, said Iran and African countries needed to shift their economic ties away from exports alone



Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljah addresses the first national meeting on Iran-Africa agricultural cooperation in Tehran, on October 31, 2026. maj.ir

towards joint production, technology transfer and sustainable value creation. Agriculture was chosen as the focus of the first specialized Iran-Africa meeting because of its importance to African countries, he said. Despite having extensive arable land and a young, growing population, Africa continues to import tens of billions of dollars worth of food annually. African countries import an estimated \$65 billion to \$70 billion in food each year, Khosravi-Nejad said, pointing to significant opportunities for cooperation in agriculture and related industries.

He also said the African Union's strategic agenda for 2026-2035 placed emphasis on transforming agricultural and food systems and strengthening value chains across the continent. The African Continental Free Trade Area could also help create a larger market for technology and production, he added. These developments point to a shift in African development policies towards generating more added value within the continent, Khosravi-Nejad said, adding that Iran's economic cooperation with African countries should align with that approach.

Iran looks to ECO summit to boost regional economic ties



Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref chairs a meeting to plan the ECO summit in Tehran on October 31, 2026. IRNA

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), with a forthcoming summit offering an opportunity to address what its first vice president described as four decades of shortcomings by the bloc. Mohammad Reza Aref made the remarks on Saturday at a meeting to plan the ECO summit, saying Iran had expanded its engagement with members of the Shanghai Cooperation

Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union in recent years and established more substantive ties with them, IRNA reported. Aref identified tourism, science and technology, cybersecurity and trade as major areas for cooperation among ECO members and called for them to be prioritized at the upcoming summit. He said the meeting would provide an opportunity to chart a new course for regional economic cooperation. Aref said developing relations with regional countries was a government priority and that countries in the region were also more willing to expand cooperation with Iran. ECO, initially established by Iran, Pakistan

and Turkey and now comprising 10 member states, had not performed adequately, Aref said. Leaders of member countries had stressed the need to expand the organization's activities. He said stronger bilateral ties among ECO members, along with their cooperation through other regional organizations, had created favorable conditions for improving collaboration within the bloc. Aref also pointed to the readiness of countries in Central Asia, the Caucasus and east of Iran to expand ties, stressing the need to make use of regional capacities and the member states' shared cultural ties.

At Saturday's meeting, the Foreign Ministry presented an update on preparations for the summit. The ministers of culture, science, cultural heritage and tourism, and roads and urban development also outlined the latest state of Iran's cooperation with ECO members in their respective fields. Aref ordered the formation of five specialized working groups on cultural, tourism, diplomatic, economic and political affairs, to be headed by the relevant ministers. ECO has 10 members: Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Economy Desk

Iran is seeking to expand economic cooperation with regional countries through the

Protesters in Iraq demand reopening of border crossing with Iran

Economy Desk

Protesters gathered at a border crossing in south-eastern Iraq on Saturday, demanding its reopening after a 10-day closure that they say has disrupted the livelihoods of thousands of people dependent on cross-border trade. The protesters included truck and taxi owners and employees of the al-Shaib crossing in Maysan Province. They said the closure had cut off their income and halted business activity linked to border trade, Fars news agency reported. The demonstration followed several protests by truck drivers in recent days. On Friday, dozens of drivers gathered outside the crossing in their third protest in less than a week, Iraqi news outlet Al-Maalomah reported. The drivers said hundreds of trucks relied directly on the crossing for their operations. Earlier, on October 25, protesters blocked a road from the Bazargan area toward oil companies and reported rising fruit and

vegetable prices in Maysan markets following the border closure. On October 28, drivers also gathered outside the provincial governor's office, saying they had been protesting for about nine days. They said transferring their operations to the Shalamchah crossing was not a viable option because it would increase transport costs for both businesses and consumers. The Iraqi government decided on October 20 to close al-Shaib until further notice, with the measure taking effect on October 21. Baghdad said the crossing lacked the technical, technological and logistical readiness needed to continue operating and that it was working to complete infrastructure and control systems. The closure followed an earlier suspension of activity at al-Shaib, Shalamchah and Mandali crossings on September 12, after a drone attack on Saudi oil infrastructure was alleged to have originated from Iraqi territory. Trade resumed at

most crossings after security reviews, including at al-Shaib on September 17, but the crossing was shut again several weeks later. Al-Shaib, known as Chazabeh on the Iranian side, is an important land trade route between Iran and Iraq. Local Maysan officials say about 4,000 people depend on it directly or indirectly for their livelihoods. Some cargo can be diverted to alternative crossings, including Shalamchah, Zurbatiyah-Mehran, Mandali-Khosravi, Somar, Bashmaq and Parviz Khan. But rerouting shipments does not fully offset the disruption, as it increases travel distances and costs for businesses in Maysan. The impact of the closure comes amid substantial trade between the two countries. Figures from the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce put bilateral trade at about \$12 billion last year, including more than \$10.2 billion in Iranian exports to Iraq. Another estimate puts the value of bilateral trade in 2024 at about \$12.5 billion.

ADDENDUM NOTICE

Date: 1405/08/10 - No.:1267122

INVITATION TO ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

فهرست خدمات کشاورزی

وزارت جهاد کشاورزی

Further to Tender Notice no.1203315 published in Tehran Times and Ettelaat on 25/10/2026 and Moeen and Iran Daily on 26/10/2026, please be advised that the terms and conditions of tender for the purchase of 2×50000±5% MTS of Granular Triple Super Phosphate (GTSP) will be available until Monday dated 2/11/2026.

All qualified and interested companies that were unable to obtain the tender documents are invited to receive them from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of IRI. Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30-character identification code of 33903978226350065000000000000008.

The bidders are required to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Wednesday** dated **2/12/2026 at 9:00 a.m.** to our security office, located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be on **Wednesday** dated **2/12/2026 at 11:00 a.m.** with the presence of bidders' representatives in our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

Other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

Public Relations and International Affairs of Agricultural Support Services Company

What happens after midterm election



By William Alan Reinsch
Former president
of the US' National
Foreign Trade
Council

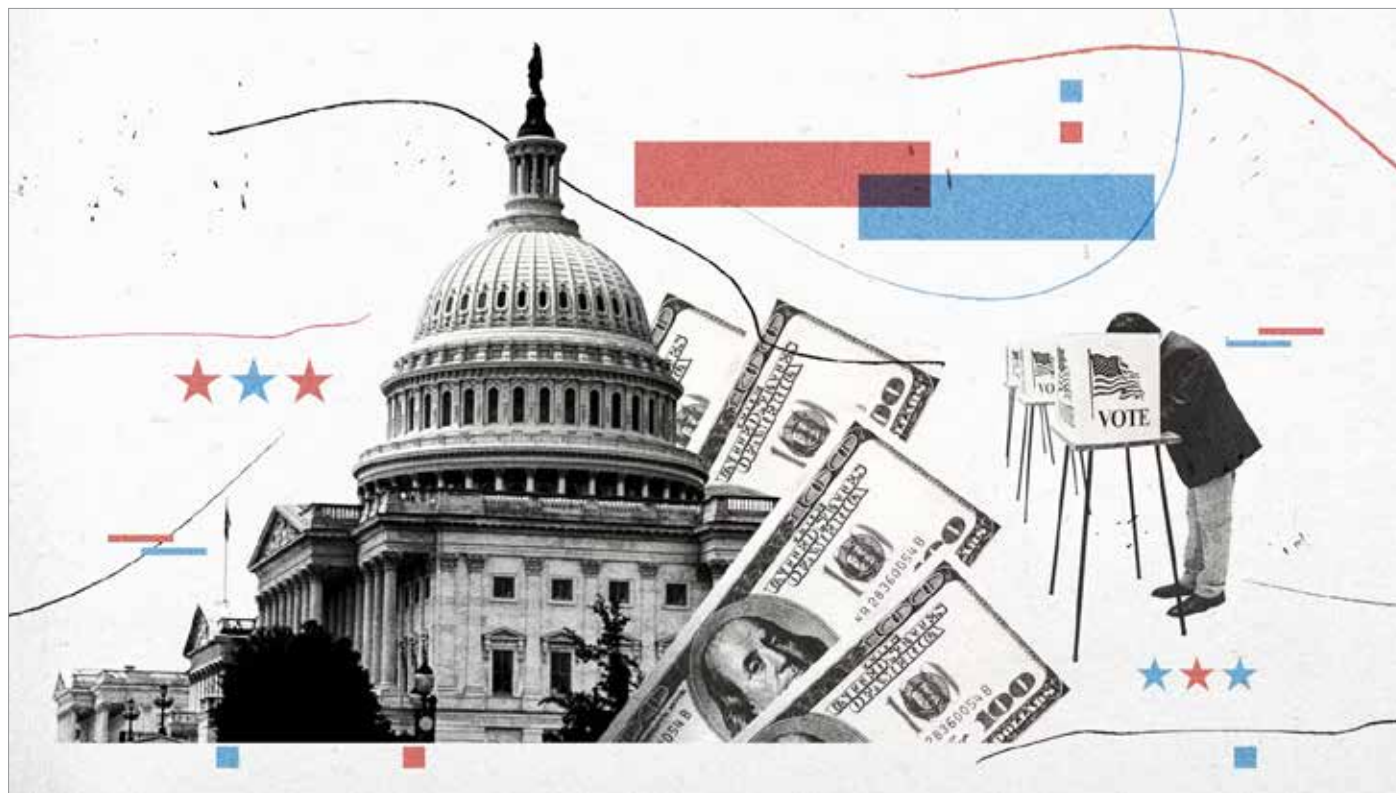
OPINION

It would be a mistake for an amateur like me to predict the election results, but I can, with some degree of confidence, predict what the outcome will bring in terms of trade actions. I will focus on scenarios where one or both houses of Congress are taken over by the Democrats. If that doesn't happen, the country should expect more of the same, and I can stop writing now. If the country does end up with a Democratic House or Senate, or both, we can expect a more active agenda on trade, as well as in other areas.

That level of activity, however, comes with a large caveat: No proposed legislation is likely to get across the finish line simply because the Democrats will not have a veto-proof majority in both houses. There will be proposals, hearings, committee markups, and possibly floor action, but nothing that passes is likely to get a presidential signature. That does not mean, however, that the efforts will be futile. Congress can pass legislation, appropriate money or decline to appropriate it, issue subpoenas and conduct investigations, confirm executive branch nominations (in the Senate), and influence public opinion by deciding what issues will be debated.

The most important of those is the power of the purse, which Democrats will use to direct funding to favored programs and deny it to those they oppose. That is not particularly relevant to trade, and neither are confirmations, unless US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer loses his job. Investigations and subpoenas could become important if investigators discover "pay-to-play" schemes in the tangled web of tariff exemptions.

The ability to reframe the trade debate is an important opportunity that will provide a means of criticizing Trump's trade policy and laying out a Democratic alternative in preparation for the 2028 presidential election. Of course, that depends on Democrats' ability to agree on an alternative, which will not be easy. In a recent column, I noted that Democrats have long been divided between trade skeptics, who sound remarkably like Trump except for who they blame for the trading system's failures, and centrists, who still think classical economist David Ricardo had



ALBERTO MIER/CNN

a point. Thus far, they have coalesced on two points: (1) while some tariffs are good, Trump's, for the most part, are bad, and (2) in imposing his tariffs, Trump did not follow legally mandated procedures and bypassed Congress. Those are good points, but they are not a policy, although they do suggest an agenda. So, while the debate over what a US trade policy should look like will continue for the next two years, just as it has for the past 35, there is a list of things we can expect Democrats to move forward, even though they know they will not succeed. Most of them are responses to the two criticisms just mentioned.

● Remove "bad" tariffs. The most obvious target here will be tariffs

on Canada.

● Repeal laws that Democrats believe have been misused. Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 and Section 338 of the Tariff Act of 1930 are prime targets. The now-expired Section 122 tariffs have already been invalidated by a lower court, and litigation over Section 338 is looming.

● Amend other sections of law, particularly Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 and Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. The former has been criticized for giving the president too much latitude, as when he determined that imports of kitchen cabinets constitute a national security threat. Trump's use of the latter to impose the forced labor tariffs has been criticized

as a distortion of the statute's intent and a pretext to restore the tariffs the Supreme Court invalidated last February.

● Look closely at the tariff refund issue and explore ways the refunds can find their way back to the consumers who actually paid the tariffs in the form of higher prices.

● Investigate tariff exemptions Trump granted to see if they were linked to campaign contributions or other quid pro quos. Other initiatives will likely focus on reasserting congressional authority over trade policy, which has eroded over Trump's terms:

● Build on the provisions of the United States-Taiwan Initiative on 21st-Century Trade First Agreement Implementation Act

of 2023 by requiring submission of trade agreements to Congress for approval whether or not they contain provisions that would require changes in US law. Variations of these ideas have already been proposed by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), and Chuck Grassley (R-IA). (CSIS has done extensive unpublished research on the question of when a trade agreement should require congressional approval. It turns out to be exceptionally complicated. If it appears these proposals get any traction, future columns will discuss the question in depth.)

● Require congressional approval for entering into future trade negotiations.

● Require congressional approval for any new tariffs.

As noted above, these legislative proposals, even if passed, will not survive a presidential veto. The investigations' traction will depend on any facts that are uncovered. Collectively, they will put the administration on the defensive and force it to spend considerable time providing information and defending itself. (I speak from experience, having served in an administration where the other party controlled Congress most of the time.) That will leave less bandwidth for new initiatives. But these measures are all reactive; they do not constitute a Democratic trade policy. Arguing that the current administration has failed may be a successful tactic in the upcoming election, but winning a presidential contest will require more than that.

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



If the country does end up with a Democratic House or Senate, or both, we can expect a more active agenda on trade, as well as in other areas. That level of activity, however, comes with a large caveat: No proposed legislation is likely to get across the finish line simply because the Democrats will not have a veto-proof majority in both houses. There will be proposals, hearings, committee markups, and possibly floor action, but nothing that passes is likely to get a presidential signature. That does not mean, however, that the efforts will be futile.



Former US president John F. Kennedy (seated) announces the signing of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. Section 232 of the act permits the president to impose tariffs if "an article is being imported into the United States in such quantities or under such circumstances as to threaten or impair the national security".
● jfklibrary.org



No real rebalancing in EU's trade deal with China



By Alicia García-Herrero
Chiefeconomist
for Asia Pacific at
Natixis Bank

OPINION

European Union Commissioner for Trade Maroš Šefčovič returned from the October 8-9

EU-China Trade and Investment Consultations in Beijing with three 'shared understandings' and a declaration: "This is far from the end."

The EU's headline gain is a 'shared understanding' with China on reducing Chinese exports of hybrid and plug-in hybrid-electric vehicles. However, Europe's bilateral trade deficit

with China is €360 billion, and Chinese automotive exports to the EU are worth around €15 billion. Much of the imbalance derives from increasingly large EU imports of machinery, chemicals, metals, solar panels, batteries and ICT products. A marginal reduction in automotive exports will hardly make a difference. The second 'shared understand-

ing' reached is even less impactful: China will lower tariffs on some European products, including car parts, olive oil and footwear, saving some €225 million in duties — again, marginal compared to the overall trade deficit.

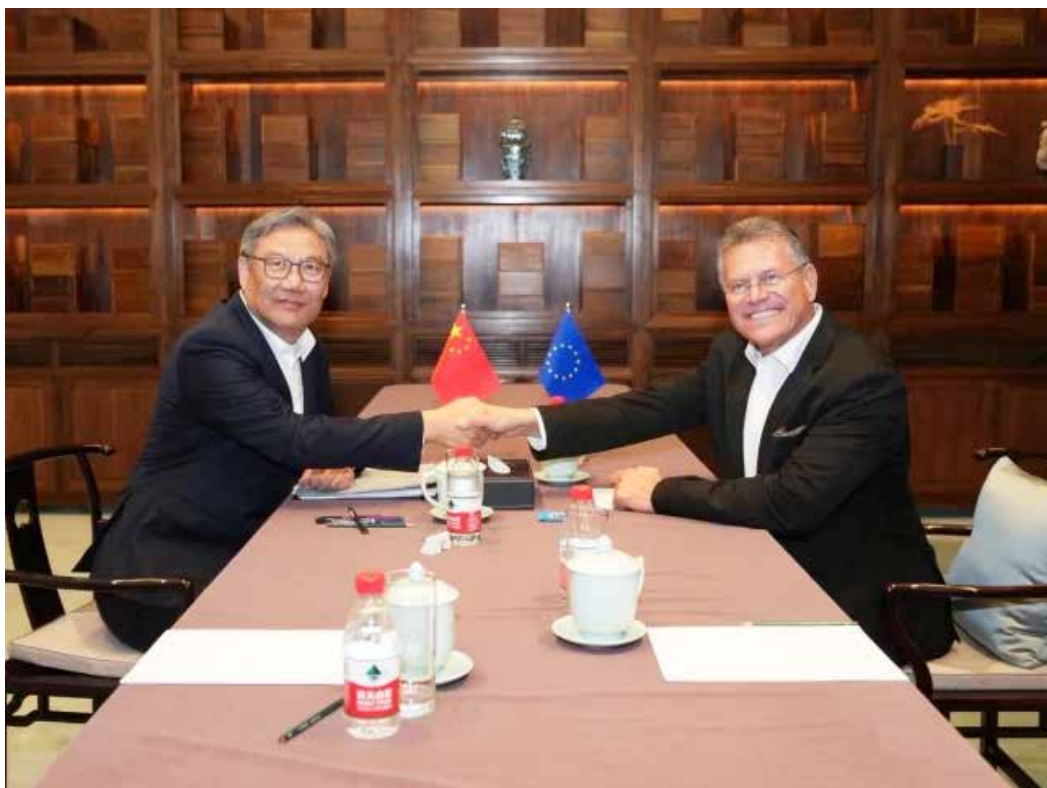
The third 'shared understanding' is the creation of a 'green channel' to facilitate licences for

rare earths and permanent magnets. Leaving such an agreement to China's discretion does not guarantee the provision of rare earths when needed, as Washington and Brussels discovered in October 2025.

Beijing's own readout of the meeting spells out the lack of Chinese concessions more clearly than the joint state-

ment published by the EU. In particular, the Chinese readout makes it clear that the softening of export controls must be reciprocal. Even the EU-issued joint statement mentions potentially softening European export controls on dual-use sectors, which could refer to Dutch export controls on ASML's exports of advanced

lithography, a critical component for advanced AI chips. This could limit the EU's most important leverage in trade with China. Beijing also secured a technical dialogue on the EU Foreign Subsidies Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2022/2560), which can be deployed to block or penalise foreign companies that receive trade-distorting state subsidies. This is one of the key tools the EU has to protect the single market from Chinese subsidies. Finally, China has also managed to reopen the EU's block on the use of solar inverters in EU-funded projects, put in place due to cybersecurity risks from certain 'high-risk' suppliers (mainly Chinese companies). In sum, it is difficult to say whether the EU received more than it gave. It got trade relief in one sector and goodwill on rare earth exports. But China still has the opportunity to up the pressure on technology controls, subsidy screening and cybersecurity measures. Regardless of any 'final score,' Europe's gains are too small to address the stated aim of rebalancing the trade relationship. Beyond the tactical wins, what really matters to Beijing is that it may have managed to influence the October 15–16 European Council meeting. China's main interest is preventing the



European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maroš Šefčovič (R) and Chinese Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao shake hands before a bilateral meeting at the Forbidden City in Beijing, China, on October 8, 2026.

European Council from implementing its trade tools, and the agreement in Beijing, made just before the summit, is designed to do exactly that. If European leaders consider this deal to be a good start and thus postpone additional measures, this will be

China's most important gain. Yet a joint letter sent on October 5 by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and French President Emmanuel Macron to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen states that the existing trade-defence toolbox is

no longer fit for purpose. They propose an instrument akin to Section 301 in the United States, capable of restricting or cutting off access to the European single market if a partner causes severe and systematic trade distortions. They also want a

diversification tool to reduce dependence on single suppliers of critical inputs, and trade investigations by sector rather than by product. This is a U-turn for Germany, which opposed duties on Chinese electric vehicles in the European Council in October 2024, thus avoiding retaliation against its carmakers. But German industry is now on the receiving end of the same overcapacity it once thought it could manage through exports to China. Beijing did not wait for Macron and Merz's letter to be officially sent. One week before the letter was published, China's Ministry of Commerce called the proposed instrument 'protectionist and unilateral' and warned it would respond firmly to any discriminatory restrictions. The reality is that Europe does not need another dialogue that produces shared understandings and a negligible change in the trade trajectory. It needs instruments that give it real leverage. The outcome from Šefčovič's trip to Beijing is simply not enough — especially on balance with what China gained — to justify the European Council not taking stronger measures to mitigate the EU's trade imbalance with China.

The article was first published by Bruegel.



Beijing's own readout of the meeting spells out the lack of Chinese concessions more clearly than the joint statement published by the EU. In particular, the Chinese readout makes it clear that the softening of export controls must be reciprocal. Even the EU-issued joint statement mentions potentially softening European export controls on dual-use sectors.

EU-China trade, investment understanding

A welcome buying of time

By Ignacio García Bercero
Former head of legal affairs at the WTO

OPINION

From the European Union's point of view, a 'common understanding' reached with China on October 9 on the EU-China trade and investment relationship, is primarily about the car industry. In particular, although details are still to be made public, there seems to be agreement that Chinese exports to the EU of hybrid electric cars will be halved for four years. The agreement will likely be implemented via an EU safeguard investigation, on the basis of which China will be allocated a quota in line with the common understanding. Trade in electric vehicles will continue to be regulated through the application of either countervailing duties or price undertakings. This approach is consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and makes sense as part of a coherent trade and industrial policy for the EU car sector. Also relevant for the car sector are trade-facilitating steps on export controls and a dialogue on investment. More broadly, the European Commission, which is responsible for the trade talks, has stated that the discussion on hybrids was introduced as a "proof of concept". Similar approaches are likely to be followed in other sectors affected by surging Chinese imports. In such cases, safeguards can justify the introduction of quotas allocated on the basis of import



shares over a recent representative period. Even if measures are applied to all imports, the impact on the trade of established suppliers is thus normally limited. Seeking early agreement with China on quota allocation can help diffuse tensions. Any safeguard measure should be temporary and progressively relaxed as a way to maintain incentives for EU industry to adjust to the new competitive environment. If the agreement on hybrids is indeed replicated in other sectors, it would represent a major breakthrough in managing import competition from China while avoiding escalation and respecting international commitments. From China's point of view, it would also introduce an element of

stability and predictability in relations with the EU. EU leaders will discuss the agreement with China at an October 15–16 summit. The reliance on WTO-consistent tools embodied in the agreement is in line with Franco-German recommendations circulated in a so-called 'non-paper' on October 5. This calls for the EU to "fully leverage the existing trade defence toolbox by deploying trade defence instruments (TDI) more swiftly and more efficiently" — in other words, to use WTO-consistent instruments as the first line of action. In case a third country seeks to counter application of the trade-defence toolbox through political or economic means, causing "severe and systematic distortions," France and Ger-

many suggest a new EU trade instrument that could result in rapid closure to that country of parts of the single market. This proposal intends to cover a particularly pernicious form of coercion in which measures such as export restrictions on critical supplies are threatened, potentially with a particularly negative impact on the EU economy. Guarding against this could be more effectively achieved by reforming decision-making under the EU Anti-Coercion Instrument (Regulation (EU) 2023/2675), which sets out a process for the EU to follow in case of trade or investment threats. The instrument should be amended so its application is triggered unless there is a qualified majority of EU countries against. This could be combined with the introduc-

tion of a fast-track procedure in case of coercive threats with a major impact on the EU economy. Another important part of the October 9 common understanding relates to export controls, in particular the commitment by China to facilitate export licences for the supply to the EU of rare earths and permanent magnets. While both sides make commitments on export controls, the EU's do not go beyond transparency or readiness to enter into dialogues. The good-faith implementation of the commitment on export controls will have to be monitored closely. It should in no way detract from the urgent need to reduce the EU's dependencies, in cooperation with trusted partners. It is worth noting that the EU and China have emphasised that their differences should be managed within the framework of WTO rules. The common understanding provides for enhanced bilateral cooperation on WTO reform. This should prioritise the level playing field. It is critical to test the extent to which China is ready to engage in good-faith negotiations on issues such as industrial subsidies or the role of state-controlled enterprises. These lay at the root of the competitive distortions in sectors in which EU imports from China have surged. While safeguards can facilitate EU adjustment in the next three to four years, a more structural solution will require both macroeconomic adjustments and improved disciplines on industrial subsidies.

The article was first published by Bruegel.



While both sides make commitments on export controls, the EU's do not go beyond transparency or readiness to enter into dialogues. The good-faith implementation of the commitment on export controls will have to be monitored closely.

Wrestling World Championships:

Iran finds freestyle consolation as Yazdani, Amouzad salvage bronze



Sports Desk

Hassan Yazdani and Rahman Amouzad gave the Iranian freestyle team some consolation at the end of two days of mixed results at the Wrestling World Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan, by claiming two bronze medals on Friday. Widely regarded as among the favorites in their respective divisions in the buildup to the tournament, both wrestlers had to recover from last-gasp setbacks in their second bouts on the preceding day to finish their campaigns with something to cheer about. Iranian wrestling great Yazdani, making his World Championships debut in the 97kg category, opened his bid for a fourth gold medal at the showpiece with a victory by technical superiority against South Korea's Pureun Kim but was undone by Arash Yoshida in the round of 16. Yazdani was leading 5-4 with less than 10 seconds remaining before Yoshida managed a go-behind for a 7-5 victory. Iran challenged the



Iranian freestyle wrestler Hassan Yazdani (blue) is seen in action against Japan's Arash Yoshida at the World Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Oct. 29, 2026.

● IAWFIR

call, believing the Japanese wrestler had scored the takedown after the clock had run out, but the two-point score was confirmed on review. Yazdani was given a second chance at a podium finish when Yoshida reached the final and made the most of it, storming to a 10-0 victory over India's Vicky in the repechage. Before the tournament, Iranian fans were hoping to see their national hero tested against two dominant forces in the weight class, American Kyle Snyder and Russia's Abdurashid Sadulaev. While neither of those showdowns materialized, Yazdani still set up a highly anticipated clash with reigning Olympic champion Akhmed Tazhudinov in the third-place bout and rose to the occasion, beating the Bahrain wrestler, who was

born in Russia, 5-0 – courtesy of four stepouts and a passivity point – to clinch an eighth world medal of his illustrious career, adding to his one gold and two silver medals at the Olympics. “Thank God I managed to win a bronze and not return home empty-handed. I had set my sights on a different outcome, but it just was not meant to be. I hope to upgrade my medal at next year’s World Championships and the 2028 Olympics, and make my people happy,” Yazdani said after becoming the first wrestler in the history of the World Championships to win medals in four different weight categories. The feat dates back to 2015, when he won a silver medal in the 70kg category on his maiden appearance. Snyder, meanwhile, went on to beat Yoshida on criteria (4-4) for his fifth world title, while Sadulaev defeated Poland’s Zbigniew Baranowski to claim the other bronze medal in the category. “They’re just monsters,” Snyder said of Yazdani and Sadulaev, who was beaten by the American in



Iran's Rahman Amouzad (red) wrestles Belgium's Ayub Musaev at the World Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Oct. 29, 2026.

● IAWFIR

the quarterfinals, after sharing the podium with the two wrestling greats. “They inspired me in many, many ways. They are a huge part of my life. They’re my friends, too.”

Relief for Rahman

Amouzad, meanwhile, got off to an emphatic start to his title defense in the 65kg category on Thursday, outmuscling Belgium’s Ayub Musaev and Turkey’s Ahmet Duman by technical superiority. The Iranian, however, was a shadow of his ruthless best against Armenia’s Vazgen Tevanyan in the quarterfinals, and his hesitant approach ultimately cost him as the Armenian pulled off a major upset after being awarded a point in the dying seconds for what was deemed to be fleeing the hold by the Iranian in the closing four seconds. Iranian coaches again had their challenge rejected as Tevanyan won 3-2. Amouzad bounced back to hammer Kazakhstan’s Ossimzhan Dastanbek 11-0 before edging out familiar rival Shamil Mamedov 5-4 to add a world bronze medal to his

two golds from 2022 and 2025. Amouzad and the other contenders in the division were handed a wake-up call ahead of the Olympics in two years after American prodigy Bo Basset – a world U20 champion in August – defeated Tevanyan 9-1 in the final to claim gold on his senior debut at the World Championships.

Zare', Javan into finals

Earlier in the day, Iran’s Ahmad Mohammadnejad Javan and Amirhossein Zare’ secured places in the finals of the 61kg and 125kg events, respectively. A silver medalist last year, Javan was barely convincing throughout the day but still managed to set up a final showdown with Russian defending champion Zavur Uguev – a rematch of last year’s final – after beating Kazakhstan’s Assyl Aita-

kyn 3-1 in the semifinals. Chasing a fourth world gold in five years, defending champion Zare’ again proved to be in a league of his own in the superheavyweight category, securing three victories by technical superiority without conceding a point, including a semifinal triumph over American Wyatt Hendrickson, to advance to the final, where he will face Russia’s Abdulla Kurbanov. The World Championships, meanwhile, proved to be a tournament to forget for Iranian medal hopefuls Kamran Qasempour and Sina Khalili. A two-time world champion in the 92kg category, Qasempour opened his campaign in style by defeating reigning Olympic champion Magomed Ramazanov of Bulgaria 5-3 but was stunned by lesser-known Kyrgyz wrestler Malik Shavaev in the round of 16, suffering a shock defeat by fall in the first period. World U20 champion Khalili, meanwhile, defeated Uzbekistan’s Shakhzodbek Yarashev 8-0 in his first bout in the 70kg category

Moscow Karate Universe International 2026:

Iran’s Nemati, Saeidabadi into kumite finals

Sports Desk

Iran’s Morteza Nemati and Fatemeh-Zahra Saeidabadi progressed to the finals of their respective kumite categories at the 2026 Moscow Karate Universe International. A gold medalist at June’s Asian Championships, Nema-

ti picked up where he had left off at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games in September, finishing atop his pool with three wins before defeating Turkmenistan’s Davut Nazmyradov 2-1 in the quarterfinals and following that up with a 6-0 semifinal victory over Uzbekistan’s Mamayusuf

Mukimjonov to reach the final of the men’s -75kg category, where he will face Russia’s Gadzhi Gadzhiev today. Saeidabadi, meanwhile, entered the women’s -55kg event fresh off an impressive silver medal at the Asian Games. She overcame opponents from Yemen and

the host nation to reach the knockout stage, where the young prodigy defeated Russia’s Anna Sergeevna Chernysheva 9-1 before outclassing Uzbek karateka Dilaferuz Kuzieva 8-0 to set up a final showdown with reigning world champion Ahlam Yousef of Egypt. Helia Komasi was the other Iranian in the category, but her campaign ended in the first knockout round following a defeat to Russia’s Sofia Liaskalo. Iran will also fancy its chances of winning a medal in the women’s -50kg category today, as Masoumeh Mohsenian takes on compatriot Setareh Zarei, while Yalda Naqi-Beiranvand faces Uzbekistan’s Mohinur Teshaboyeva in the two bronze-medal bouts. In women’s individual kata, Fatemeh Sadeqi and Melika Ezzati will also be aiming for bronze medals when they take on opponents from Thailand and Russia, respectively, in today’s third-place contests.

AFC Women’s Champions League: Khatoon to face Kobe Leonessa in Group A opener



Sports Desk

Iranian top-flight champion Bam Khatoon will take on Japan’s INAC Kobe Leonessa in its AFC Women’s Champions League Group A opener in Yangon, Myanmar, today. Khatoon is making its fifth appearance in AFC competitions – the most of any women’s club on the continent. Having won a 12th domestic league title

and a fifth in a row last season, Marzieh Jafari’s side will aim to improve on its quarterfinal finish in the 2024/25 campaign. INAC Kobe Leonessa ended a four-year wait for a second league title in the 2025/26 season to earn its place in the competition. The Iranian outfit will face defending champion Naegohyang Women’s FC of North Korea in its second game at

Thuwunna Stadium on Wednesday before concluding its group campaign against hosts AYEYAWADY FC next Saturday. The top two teams from each of the three groups will be joined in the quarterfinals by the two best third-placed teams. The quarterfinals will be played in single-leg ties in March, hosted by the three group winners and the best-ranked runner-up.



Iran's Morteza Nemati (L) and Fatemeh-Zahra Saeidabadi have progressed to the final bouts in their respective kumite divisions at the Moscow Karate Universe International.

● IKF

UNESCO inscription decision on Masouleh to follow expert evaluations

Iranica Desk

The final decision on the inscription of Masouleh on the UNESCO World Heritage List will be made following the completion of expert assessments and in accordance with UNESCO's world heritage procedures. Shaiful Shahidan, an evaluator with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), made the remarks during a meeting with Gilan Province's Governor General Hadi Haqshenas, highlighting the significance of Masouleh's world heritage nomination, according to ISNA. He said the preparation and pursuit of the nomination dossier had been the result of cooperation among various executive bodies, experts, and relevant institutions, adding that the support of the province's highest-ranking executive official reflected the importance attached to the initiative at the provincial level. Referring to Masouleh's historical and cultural significance, he said the referral of the dossier for further examination had provided an opportunity for a more

detailed assessment of the town's values and distinctive characteristics. Explaining the evaluation process, the ICOMOS representative stressed that the on-site assessment was only one stage of the world heritage nomination procedure. Once completed, the resulting report would be submitted to the relevant expert bodies for further consideration. The findings would then be examined through ICOMOS's specialist mechanisms. He expressed hope that continued cooperation among the responsible institutions and the completion of the required assessments would help advance Masouleh's world heritage bid. Haqshenas, for his part, said the documentation and evidence submitted as part of the nomination dossier demonstrated the town's historical and cultural significance, expressing hope that the evaluation process would proceed successfully. He praised the efforts of experts and those involved in preparing Masouleh's nomination dossier, adding that the specialist studies conducted so far had shed light

on various aspects of the town's historical and cultural value and provided a sound basis for the next stages of assessment. Haqshenas said Masouleh's historical background formed part of Gilan Province's broader civilizational heritage, noting that the province was home to numerous valuable historical monuments and archaeological sites, each reflecting the long history of settlement, knowledge, and culture in the region across different periods. Referring to the historic Marlik Cup, discovered in Rudbar, he said the approximately 3,000-year-old artifact, whose image once appeared on Iranian banknotes, demonstrated the ancient inhabitants' expertise in metalworking, mold-making, and artistic craftsmanship. He also identified the historic Espi Mazget structure as further evidence of Gilan's rich cultural heritage, saying the monument, whose origins date back to the pre-Islamic period, reflects an important part of the region's historical identity and architectural tradition. Espi Mazget is an ancient sanctu-



● IRNA

ary dating back to the pre-Islamic period that was also used during the Seljuk and Safavid eras. It is located 80 kilometers west of Rasht and 22 kilometers south of Talesh. Haqshenas further referred to the discovery of a skull dating back approximately 1,200 years in the village of Buyeh, which reportedly bears evidence of surgical intervention. He said the historical find, currently preserved at the Gilanology Research Institute, was a notable example of the region's medical knowledge in the

past. Other historical landmarks, including structures in Rasht dating back around 700 years, the centuries-old Rudkhan Castle, and numerous other monuments across the province, demonstrate the continuity of cultural and civilizational life in Gilan, he added. The governor noted that Rasht had also emerged as a regional center around 500 years ago, saying that the combined historical evidence highlighted Gilan's considerable potential for national and international recognition.

Emphasizing the importance of Masouleh's historical standing in the international evaluation process, Haqshenas said the town's cultural and historical significance was already well recognized by the people of Gilan and Iran. Its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List, he said, would constitute international recognition of a status that had long been established in the historical and cultural memory of the Iranian people. He stressed that Masouleh possessed valuable historical assets and supporting documentation for its world heritage bid, warning that failure to secure inscription would mean losing an important opportunity to introduce part of Iran's historical and cultural heritage to the international community. The Gilan governor expressed hope that, with the completion of specialist assessments and continued cooperation among the relevant authorities, Masouleh's nomination would successfully proceed through the remaining stages of the world heritage evaluation process.

Isfahan steps up efforts to restore historic Risbaf Factory

Iranica Desk

The governor general of Isfahan Province has announced that efforts to restore the historic Risbaf textile factory and transform it into the region's largest museum are being pursued through cooperation and coordination between national and provincial authorities. Mehdi Jamalinejad said protecting the province's historic heritage and removing obstacles to tourism development projects, particularly the national Risbaf project, remain key priorities. Speaking to IRNA, Jamalinejad said efforts to turn the Risbaf Factory into a museum meeting international standards were being pursued in earnest. He added that the latest progress and implementation plans for the historic complex were reviewed at the second meeting of the Risbaf Strategic Council, attended by Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. Describing the factory as one of



● IRNA

Iran's outstanding symbols of industrial architecture and its history of labor and production, the governor said Risbaf holds a special place in Isfahan's historical and urban identity. The meeting also examined ways to transform the complex into a museum meeting international standards, a long-standing demand of the province, he added. Jamalinejad said discussions also focused on protecting other

major historical sites and heritage complexes across Isfahan Province, accelerating efforts to resolve legal and administrative obstacles facing tourism projects, and making effective use of the province's exceptional heritage assets to promote sustainable development and preserve them for future generations. He added that accelerating the implementation of the national Risbaf project through greater

cooperation and coordination among relevant organizations at both national and provincial levels was one of the main priorities of the Strategic Council meeting. Earlier, the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts had stressed the importance of preserving the independence of decision-making on the Risbaf project and announced that full responsibility for the initiative would be entrusted to a qualified national council. Salehi-Amiri also said the project's design and implementation would move forward through the establishment of a steering council, drawing on the expertise of universities and securing the necessary financial resources. According to the minister, the council should comprise three main groups: heritage experts and academics from the universities of Isfahan and Tehran; executive officials, including provincial governors and local authorities; and institutions and

officials with the capacity to provide financial support, including the Plan and Budget Organization. The minister has described the aim of restoring Risbaf as transforming the complex into a landmark structure and the largest museum of its kind established since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The proposed museum is intended to reflect Isfahan's industrial heritage and historical identity while bringing together the city's cultural, economic and heritage potential within an integrated framework. The historic Risbaf Factory is among the last surviving wool-spinning mills in Isfahan. Located along the city's historic Chaharbagh-e Bala thoroughfare, the complex occupies a site of approximately 74,000 square meters, with a built-up area of nearly 54,000 square meters. Risbaf is regarded as one of Iran's significant industrial heritage sites. It was constructed during the Pahlavi period, when Iran was beginning its transition

towards industrialization. The factory was one of nine industrial complexes established as part of Isfahan's textile industry, playing an important role in the city's industrial history. The building was registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 2002 and remained under the ownership of Bank Melli for many years. Later plans were put forward to transfer ownership of the complex to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage for the establishment of a regional museum in Isfahan. However, the transfer was delayed by disputes over the factory's financial assets and the rights of Bank Melli shareholders. Finally, in December 2023, as part of efforts to rescue and preserve the historic site, the Risbaf Factory was officially handed over to the Isfahan Provincial Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. The transfer paved the way for renewed efforts to restore the complex and develop it into a regional museum.

Chalsara preserves its ancient heritage amid Ilam's urban expansion

Iranica Desk

Chalsara, a village on the southwestern outskirts of Ilam, offers a rich combination of archaeological heritage and natural attractions. Home to around 7,500 people, the village covers approximately 110 hectares under its rural development plan. As Ilam expands, however, Chalsara is facing significant changes. The growth of Qods Township has brought new roads and development closer to the village, with some local streets increasingly serving as connecting routes between the township and the city. Jaber Qobadi, head of Chalsara's village council, said the built-up

areas of the village and three neighboring villages are set to be incorporated into Ilam's municipal boundaries. The move is expected to contribute to the city's population growth, potentially taking it beyond 200,000, ISNA wrote. Yet Chalsara's significance extends well beyond its changing urban landscape. The village is home to several archaeological sites that shed light on the region's ancient past. The Bakheh Nam archaeological site, which dates back to the Bronze and Iron ages, covers an area of about five hectares, measuring approximately 500 meters by 100 meters. Its two sections, known as Bakheh

Nam 1 and Bakheh Nam 2, were registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 2003. Recent archaeological surveys have focused on defining the site's boundaries and identifying its protected zones. The ancient Mil Hill, another archaeological landmark, is also located near the village. Chalsara's historic attractions include the Geriyan and Khandan watermills. Geriyan Mill dates back to the post-Islamic period and was registered as a national heritage site on April 29, 2003. The village also boasts considerable natural appeal. Its walnut orchards, vegetable farms, natural springs and proximity

to the Godar Khosh River create a landscape that could support rural and nature-based tourism. Farzad Sharifi, director general of Ilam Province's Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, has highlighted the area's natural and cultural assets as potential foundations for tourism development. With its archaeological remains, historic watermills and scenic countryside, Chalsara has the potential to become a destination for visitors interested in both history and nature. Realizing that potential, however, will require careful planning to ensure that development does not come at the expense of the village's identity and heritage.



● ISNA



Iran to allow foreign tourists to exchange up to \$10,000 at entry points



Iraqi pilgrims at the holy shrine in Qom, Iran

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran has finalized a scheme allowing foreign tourists to exchange up to \$10,000 in

foreign currency at banks at the country's entry points, with transactions to be conducted at the unofficial market rate less a 2% commission, the tourism

minister said on Saturday. "Under the scheme, banks at airports, land border crossings and seaports will be able to convert visitors' foreign currency into rials," Reza Salehi-Amiri told a meeting with tourism industry associations, according to IRNA. He said Bank Shahr, Bank Mellat and Refah Bank had agreed to participate, although preparations for the scheme's implementation were still under way. "The \$10,000 limit will apply separately to each tourist, including every member of a family," Salehi-Amiri said. Visitors will be able to keep any unspent foreign currency for a future trip or receive its equivalent in rials when leaving

Iran, calculated at the prevailing rate after deduction of the commission. Currency exchange has long been a problem for foreign tourists visiting Iran. Salehi-Amiri has previously said that, in the absence of an adequate formal mechanism, visitors had been forced to exchange money through brokers and intermediaries. The government has also pursued a separate scheme to issue rial-denominated tourism cards. In June 2026, the Central Bank of Iran revised the rules for the tourism card scheme. Under the regulations, tourists' foreign currency is exchanged at a rate agreed between them

and a bank or exchange office. Cards can be loaded with up to the equivalent of €5,000 or its value in dollars, and each tourist may receive two cards. It is not yet clear whether the new mechanism announced by Salehi-Amiri, with its \$10,000 limit, is separate from the central bank's tourism card scheme or will be implemented under the existing framework. The difference between the two limits and the exchange-rate arrangements leaves questions over how the schemes will be coordinated. At the same meeting, Salehi-Amiri said Iran and Iraq had set a target of 10 million tourist trips between the two countries annually. The target covers

travel in both directions, rather than only Iraqi visitors to Iran. In September, the minister said about 3.6 million Iraqis visited Iran each year, while a similar number of Iranians traveled to Iraq. The figures exclude trips for the annual Arbāeen pilgrimage. Iraq is one of Iran's main sources of foreign tourists. About 6.2 million foreign visitors traveled to Iran in 2025, including more than 3.6 million Iraqis, according to figures from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. The scale of arrivals from Iraq makes it a major market for Iran's efforts to increase tourism revenue and attract foreign visitors.

Iran, Armenia plan talks on joint peace park to protect wildlife

Social Desk

Iran has proposed a joint "peace and friendship park" with Armenia and closer cooperation to protect the Aras River, a transboundary river between two countries, seeking to safeguard biodiversity and wildlife corridors along their shared border.

Hamid Zohrabi, deputy head of Iran's Department of Environment for natural environment and biodiversity, put forward the proposals at a meeting with Armenian Deputy Environment Minister Aram Meymaryan in Yerevan, IRNA reported. The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 17th

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) on Friday. Zohrabi thanked the Armenian government and people for hosting the conference and welcoming its participants. He identified protection of the Aras River and creation of a cross-border park as two key areas for bilateral environmental cooperation. "The proposed park would support biodiversity protection in northwestern Iran and the Caucasus region," he said. It would also help preserve important wildlife corridors used by species such as the Persian leopard, Zohrabi added.

Meymaryan welcomed both proposals and thanked the Iranian delegation for its active participation in COP17. The two sides agreed to establish a joint working group after the conference to pursue the initiatives. At the end of the meeting, the Iranian delegation presented Meymaryan with a sculpture of the Asiatic cheetah as a memento. COP17 is being held in Yerevan, the Armenian capital, from October 18 to 31, 2026. Participants are reviewing progress under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and discussing ways to accelerate conservation, secure funding and strengthen international cooperation.



A general view of Aras River

China's pottery capital ...

Wuxi Vocational Institute of Arts & Technology has

played an important role in preserving and promoting the craft by passing down traditional skills and nurturing a new generation of artisans. Its efforts extend beyond formal education, with training programs also targeting rural craftspeople. These initiatives have helped develop rural cultural industries while contributing to broader efforts to revitalize the countryside. Today, hundreds of pottery shops and artisan workshops line Dingshan Road, reflecting the craft's continued importance to the city's cultural identity and local economy. Yixing continues to promote its purple clay heritage as a distinctive cultural brand, seeking to keep its centuries-old pottery tradition alive and expand its reach.

Experience that inspired

In late October, Wuxi officials organized a tour of the city for journalists, giving them an opportunity to try their hand at pottery making and learn from local masters at a creative industrial park

converted from a former purple clay pottery factory. For Iran Daily reporter, the experience immediately brought to mind Lalejin, Iran's own pottery capital, despite the differences in style, materials and techniques between the two places. Located near the city of Hamedan, Lalejin was designated a World City of Crafts for Pottery in 2016. Its products are sold across Iran, with the town particularly known for its blue tableware and distinctive ornamental glazes. Lalejin has developed an extensive pottery ecosystem, encompassing everything from clay processing and production to workshops, retail outlets and showrooms. Around 80% of the town's nearly 20,000 residents are involved in the pottery industry, which operates through around 1,000 workshops. Although Yixing and Lalejin work with different types of clay and have developed distinct pottery styles, these differences could be a source of opportunity rather than an obstacle to cooperation. Both cities have built strong identities around a traditional craft, supported by established



A pottery store at Zisha Handicrafts Experience Hall, Yixing City, China

artisan communities and generations of accumulated expertise. This shared foundation provides a compelling case for exploring a sister-city partnership. Such an arrangement could go beyond symbolic cultural exchanges. It could create practical opportunities for artisans, educational institutions and municipal authorities to work together through joint exhibitions, craft workshops, artist exchanges and technical cooperation. Artisans from each city could introduce their counterparts to different production techniques, designs and approaches, opening up new creative possibilities while helping both traditions reach wider international

audiences. "Perhaps you can become the ambassador for Yixing and promote the idea of sisterhood," said Maple, a Wuxi local, after learning that Iran also has a city renowned for its pottery.

Beyond pottery

The potential for cooperation, however, extends beyond ceramics. Both cities have long histories and considerable cultural and tourism assets, offering another promising area for collaboration. A partnership could allow them to exchange experiences in cultural heritage preservation, tourism promotion and the development of local creative industries. Joint cultural events and

tourism initiatives could also introduce each destination to new audiences, giving travelers more reasons to explore their respective regions. Wuxi, for its part, has diversified its tourism offerings through attractions and activities such as a yacht club on Lake Tai, cycling facilities, tourist resorts, and themed towns and parks that draw on traditional Chinese culture. Its entertainment programs include live performances featuring music, dance, molten-iron fireworks, sky lanterns and drone displays. The city has also invested in exhibition and hosting venues capable of hosting national and international events. During the journalists' visit, Wuxi hosted the 2026 World Internet of Things Exposition, held under the provisional theme "IoT: Connecting Everything, Co-creating the Future." The event showcased emerging technologies, including robots and flying vehicles. For Yixing and Lalejin, a sister-city initiative could therefore serve as a starting point for a broader relationship that combines traditional craftsmanship with

cultural exchange, tourism development and economic cooperation. By building on their shared pottery heritage while learning from each other's distinct experiences,

the two cities could help preserve their artisanal traditions, create new opportunities for local communities and strengthen cultural links between Iran and China.



Notice of AMENDMENT for the bid submission tender for export sale No. Z/1405/18(renewed)

With reference to Tender Notice Z/1405-18, we hereby informed that the bid submission and bid opening have been revised as follows:

All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 14:00 P.M. on 04. Nov.2026- to Golgohar complex in Sirjan (50 km in shiraz road).

Bidders are invited to the transactions commission office of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 14:00 P.M. on 04. Nov. 2026 at the office of the Seller.

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.