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irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir | IranDailyWeb

Pezeshkian seeks public support through mosque-based initiatives

8



Republicans' defeat in US elections result of failure to 'break Iran's will': *Shekarchi*

2

Significance of FATF recognition amid continuing challenges



By Fatemeh Mahjourian
International banking expert

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

The Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) statement of 30 October 2026 on Iran deserves a careful reading. Although the document preserves Iran's high-risk designation, its wording suggests that progress is being made. Its references to renewed engagement, efforts made to address various action-plan items, and a specific technical development provide grounds for measured optimism. In international regulatory relationships, such recognition can be an important starting point.

The opening sentence matters. FATF expressly "acknowledges Iran's re-engagement" and urges Iran to make "more progress" in addressing anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorist-financing deficiencies. The second paragraph strengthens that constructive interpretation. FATF reports that, in September 2026, Iran provided an update on its "efforts" to address "various items" of the action plan. Neither expression is insignificant. "Efforts" recognizes an active process of engagement, even if the organization remains dissatisfied with its results. "Various items" is especially relevant: it situates Iran's submissions within a broader range of concerns, rather than portraying discussions as restricted to one convention or one isolated technical question.

Most concretely, FATF recognizes that Iran has developed a framework to receive international asset-freezing requests. It characterizes the resulting technical-compliance progress as "limited". Even so, the development merits attention. It can support future implementation and assessment.

Page 2

Iran presents 150 projects worth $300b to foreign investors at Shanghai forum

3



Officials and businesspeople take part in an Iran-China investment and trade conference held in Shanghai on the sidelines of the ninth China International Import Expo (CIIE).
IRNA

REPORT
EXCLUSIVE



Technical brilliance must not eclipse tombak's identity: *Virtuoso*

4-5



FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers:

Iran desperate to bounce back in crunch double-header

6



New excavation season underway at historic Cheshmeh Ali site

7









Republicans' defeat in US elections result of failure to 'break Iran's will': *Shekarchi*

International Desk

Iranian Armed Forces' spokesman Abolfazl Shekarchi said on Sunday that the Republican wipeout in the US elections was a direct result of Washington's failure to defeat Iran.

US President Donald Trump's setback reflects more than a domestic political shift but "a greater reality: the failure of the US to break Iran's will", Shekarchi said.

Democrats won control of both chambers of US Congress in November 3 elections, delivering a decisive rebuke of Republican governance in Washington and ushering in a new era of congressional resistance to Trump.

Shekarchi added that Trump and his "unwise, hardline, and terrorist" associates waged aggression against Iran with the aim of destroying the proud and civilized country.

"However, in a reversal of fortunes, they themselves became victims of strategic attrition, deep-seated domestic crises, and defeats inflicted by Iran's valiant Armed Forces and the Axis of Resistance."

"This strategic defeat proves that global power dynamics do not always favor hegemonic powers," Shekarchi said.

The Iranian military official underlined that any power that confronts Iran's "formidable strength and steely, divinely inspired resolve" will ultimately face nothing but downfall and disintegration in the eyes of world public opinion.

The remarks came as mediators have intensified efforts in recent days to end the war between Iran and the US amid fears it could reignite after the US midterm elections.

Trump has been threatening to carry out a new offensive against Iran, putting countries in the Persian Gulf on edge.

Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz also threatened Iran with new attacks on Sunday.

"With regard to Iran, the mission is still not complete". Katz claimed that Iran is trying to renew its efforts to obtain nuclear weapons – alongside other efforts that place Israel in real danger.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is fighting for his political life, has repeatedly threatened new strikes against Iran in recent weeks.

Iran's top security official also warned the US that any new war against Iran will be met with a "devastating response".

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Major General Mohsen Rezaei, issued the stern warning in a post on his X account on Saturday.

"Start a war, and you'll face a devastating response," Rezaei wrote.

Rear Admiral Mohsen Razzaqi, commander of Iran's Northern Fleet and the Fourth Naval Zone of Imam Reza (AS), also said coordination among the country's Armed Forces is at its highest level, underscoring naval units' readiness to defend maritime borders around the clock.

"The cost of any aggression against Iran must be raised to such an extent that the enemy will no longer dare attack the country again," he said.

He added that the Armed Forces' strategy goes beyond merely ending hostilities and aims to impose prohibitive costs on any aggressor.

In late October, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Sayyid Mojtaba Khamenei ordered "maximum deterrence," instructing commanders to deliver an immediate and effective response without geographical restriction should the country come under attack again.



Abolfazl Shekarchi
defapress.ir

More oil tankers caught fire in Strait of Hormuz after maritime violations

International Desk

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy said on Sunday that three oil tankers have exploded and caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz after violating Iran's regulations on maritime traffic.

The IRGC Navy said the incidents occurred in the early hours of the day along an unauthorized shipping route, with thick smoke from the burning vessels spreading across the strait.

The statement said the tankers had switched off their navigation and identification systems and were burning due to the "mischief" of the US "smuggling and aggressor army."

It warned that vessels defying Iranian regulations would face similar consequences.

The statement came less than a day after two oil tankers attempting to transit the Strait of Hormuz via unauthorized routes struck naval mines and caught fire, after committing multiple violations of Iranian regulations.


IRNA

In a statement late on Saturday, the IRGC Navy said the vessels — one located east of the strategic waterway and the other within the strait itself — had deactivated their navigation and positioning systems in a bid to slip through an unauthorized southern corridor.

Iranian forces have maintained full control over transit through the Strait — through which roughly one-fifth of global oil normally passes — requiring prior authorization and confining safe passage exclusively to designated northern corridors.

Southern routes near Omani waters have been declared unauthorized and mined, with repeated IRGC Navy statements confirming that vessels attempting to use them after disabling AIS systems have struck mines, exploded, and caught fire.

IRGC Navy units have repeatedly intercepted or neutralized ships attempting covert transit, including those linked to the Israeli regime or operating under US encouragement.

IRGC commanders have stressed that empty American promises of escort and protection have repeatedly proven hollow, as vessels trusting such assurances have been halted or destroyed.

The force has underscored that only ships complying with Iranian rules can transit safely, while those serving the interests of the aggressors face decisive consequences.

Iran imposed the restrictions on the strait in response to the latest round of US-Israeli aggression, which began on February 28.

Significance of FATF ...

The remaining concerns also define a reform agenda. FATF seeks changes to the

Page 1 ›

legal framework governing terrorist financing and targeted financial sanctions. It also reiterates objections concerning the scope of Iran's reservations to, and domestic implementation of, the Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions. Additional action-plan priorities include enforceable customer due diligence, action against unlicensed money or value transfer operators, mutual legal assistance, and complete originator and beneficiary information in wire transfers. Addressing these questions requires precision in legislative language, supervisory practice, and demonstrable results-not merely declarations of intent.

Furthermore, two elements preserve room for constructive movement. First, the statement calls for humanitarian assistance, food and health supplies, diplomatic operating expenses, and personal remittances to be handled appropriately on a risk basis. This is an important reminder that financial integrity and legitimate economic and humanitarian needs should not be treated as incompatible objectives. Second, FATF explicitly leaves open consideration of next steps, including possible suspension of countermeasures, if Iran ratifies and implements the relevant conventions consistently with its standards.

The October statement's most promising feature is that it records an ongoing process and identifies at least one concrete technical advance. The challenge now is to turn "efforts" into verifiable outcomes and "various items" into a sequence of resolved issues. Taken together, the October statement conveys an important message: although Iran and North Korea remain subject to FATF countermeasures, their respective positions should not be viewed as identical. Unlike the language used concerning North Korea, FATF's assessment of Iran explicitly acknowledges renewed engagement, ongoing efforts across various action-plan items, and tangible, albeit limited, technical progress. This distinction suggests that Iran has taken meaningful steps toward addressing international concerns, some of which have already received formal recognition.

Three countries- Iran, North Korea, and Myanmar-appear on the FATF's list of high-risk jurisdictions subject to a call for action under Recommendation 19. Among these jurisdictions, Iran stands out for the regularity of its documented engagement. As the FATF website records, Iran submitted progress reports in January, August, and December 2024; August and November 2025; and July 2026. Although important deficiencies remain, these repeated submissions demonstrate a willingness to remain engaged with international standards and dialogue rather than withdraw from the process. Particularly amid the extraordinary pressures of war, it is hoped that the international community will recognize these continuing efforts, distinguish engagement from inactivity, and encourage further practical progress through constructive, technically focused cooperation.

Ansarullah: Over 70 killed in Saudi-led coalition strikes on Yemen

Iran condemns airstrikes on civilian infrastructure, areas

International Desk

Yemen's Ansarullah group said on Sunday that at least 72 people were killed in recent Saudi-led coalition's strikes on Yemen as the two warring sides continued to exchange fire.

The Ansarullah group noted that the strikes mostly targeted the Bani Hushaish area, east of the capital of Sana'a. They also accused the Saudi-led coalition of targeting civilian facilities and infrastructure.

Iran's Foreign Ministry in a statement on Sunday strongly condemned airstrikes on civilian infrastructure and civilian areas in Yemen.

"The continued violation of Yemen's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the economic and air blockade of this country, are contrary to international law and Islamic teachings," the statement added.

The Saudi Energy Ministry also said on Sunday an Aramco building in Riyadh was targeted in an "attempted attack" with eyewitnesses saying the skyscraper sustained damage, after the Saudi-led coalition said it had intercepted missiles launched by Ansarullah.

Aramco facilities and infrastructure have been repeatedly struck by the Ansarullah's fighters in recent months, with tankers, refineries, storage areas and the company's headquarters, located in the King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD), all targeted by the group. KAFD is one of the most visible manifestations of the kingdom's ongoing economic and social reforms drive, with towering glass skyscrapers, high-end retail outlets and green spaces dotting the area.



Multiple floors of the Aramco tower appeared to have sustained damage, said a witness, with glass shattered and damage to part of the tower's facade visible.

Yemen slipped back into war between Ansarullah and the Saudi-backed government in July after years of relative calm, opening a new front in the conflict in the Middle East.

Since then, Saudi Arabia has regularly bombed Ansarullah's positions, while the group has multiplied its attacks against the oil-rich kingdom.

The conflict flared up in July after the Ansarullah allowed an Iranian plane to land in Yemen's capital Sana'a, in defiance of Saudi control over Yemeni airspace, setting off a spate of attacks.

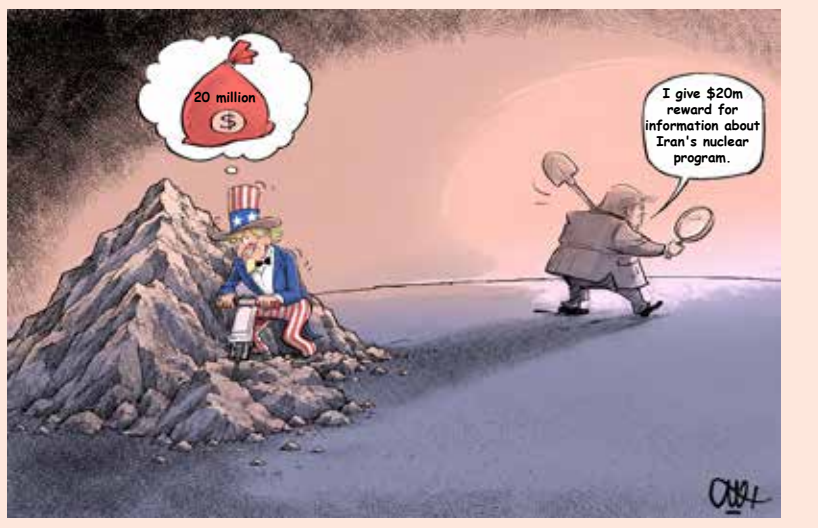
The Ansarullah then declared a maritime blockade of Saudi Arabia and began hitting its ships, territory and oil facilities.

The United Nations says more than 1,600 people have been killed and more than 300,000 displaced since fighting resumed in the impoverished country.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Iran presents 150 projects worth $300b to foreign investors at Shanghai forum

Economy Desk

Iran has prepared about 150 projects in 11 strategic sectors with an estimated value of $300 billion, Deputy Economy Minister Mehdi Heidari said at an Iran-China investment and trade conference in Shanghai, referring to the country's foreign investment opportunities, according to a Sunday report by IRNA.

The Iran-China Investment and Trade Conference was held on the sidelines of the ninth China International Import Expo in Shanghai. Heidari, a deputy minister of economic affairs and finance, said about 30 of the projects are in petrochemicals and require more than $45 billion in investment.

Heidari also said Iran needs about $250 billion in investment over the next five years to modernize and develop its energy and infrastructure sectors, citing broad needs in those areas.

The event, held under the theme "Cooperation Opportunities in the Iran-China Trade Supply Chain," drew about 300 Chinese economic actors, representatives of trade associations, chambers of commerce and official institutions. It introduced Iran's investment, export and industrial capacities in various fields.

Meanwhile, Iranian Ambassador to China Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli noted the 55th anniversary of contemporary diplomatic relations between Iran and China and the 10th anniversary of their comprehensive strategic partnership. He stressed the need to use existing capacities to expand economic and technological cooperation.

Rahmani Fazli said Iranian companies in energy, petrochemicals, mining, agriculture, food industries and emerging technologies were present at the ninth China International Import Expo. He said Iran's national pavilion focused on scientific and technological capacities in addition to traditional products.

Medical diagnostic equipment, nanomedicine, biopharmaceuticals and medicinal plants were among the capabilities presented at the pavilion and could provide a basis for developing shared value chains with Chinese companies, he said. He also listed joint research, emerging industries, clean production, technical standards, infrastructure, renewable energy, smart transportation and the green economy as important areas for cooperation.



Iranian Ambassador to China Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli (L) and Deputy Economy Minister Mehdi Heidari (2nd R) are attend the Iran-China Investment and Trade Conference held in Shanghai, China on November 8, 2026.
IRNA

Rahmani Fazli expressed hope that the forum would create direct links among economic actors, investors and companies from both countries and help identify joint projects and turn the opportunities presented into operational cooperation.

Hossein Rouzbeh, head of the Organization for Development of International Scientific and Technological Cooperation, stressed the need to move beyond the traditional model of trade exchanges and toward technological, industrial and joint investment partnerships.

In the petrochemical sector, the focus was on cooperation with Chinese companies to upgrade production capacity, complete petrochemical projects and expand markets for higher value-added products.

During the forum, representatives of Iranian and Chinese companies and institutions discussed project introductions, industrial cooperation, financing methods, investment guarantees and possible participation in supply and production chains.

The Iranian side emphasized its readiness for long-term cooperation and partnership with Chinese investors, saying that such cooperation, if operationalized, could increase non-oil exports, complete value chains, transfer technology and strengthen economic ties between Iran and China.

Iraq's Badr bloc rejects 'US dictates' to close Iran border crossings



IRNA

Economy Desk

Iraq's Badr Parliamentary Bloc said it firmly opposes US dictates to close border crossings with Iran, citing recent remarks by Iraq's foreign minister, IRNA reported on Sunday, citing Al-Mayadeen.

In a statement, the bloc said the foreign minister's remarks about US demands and dictates reflect plans and instructions targeting the country's south and constitute interference in sovereign decisions.

The bloc said Iraq's people and national forces will not stand idle against any violation of the country's sovereignty or any following of foreign orders that harm the country's interests. It declared its firm opposition to a policy of siege and starving the people, stressing that Iraq-Iran relations are deep and that the two countries have shed much blood in the fight against terrorism.

The statement said continued pressure only on southern crossings reflects an unacceptable double standard that requires urgent review.

The bloc called on the Iraqi government to immediately reopen the closed crossings and to prioritize citizens' interests and national sovereignty over any external pressure.

The statement came as Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein recently told Al Jazeera that the United States had formally requested the closure of all border crossings with Iran except two. He also said Baghdad had lost about $60 billion because of the halt in oil exports through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iraq's government announced on Oct. 20 that the al-Shaib (Chazzabeh) crossing with Iran was closed until further notice.

Earlier, government spokesman Haider al-Aboudi said the closure of al-Shaib was due to lack of readiness and some technical problems, but added that trade exchanges were ongoing at several other crossings on the Iran border.

Previously, Ayatollah Sayyid Yasin al-Mousavi, Baghdad's Friday prayer leader, warned about ill-considered economic decisions that increase living pressures on citizens, especially the poor and low-income groups. He called for a careful review of decisions related to border crossings and foreign trade and stressed that hasty decisions should not be taken without assessing their direct impact on the market and consumers.

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.

During two past weeks, several protests were held by truck drivers, taxi owners and employees of the al-Shaib crossing in Maysan Province. Local officials in Iraq's southeastern province say about 4,000 people depend on the crossing directly or indirectly for their livelihoods.

The United States has also imposed a naval blockade after a 40-day war that began in late February, as part of efforts to pressure Tehran into accepting Washington's terms for an agreement. The restrictions have targeted Iran's oil exports and maritime trade.

The US military has announced it will create a 20-member task force to find ways to disrupt land routes into Iran that it claims are used for shipments of weapons and illicit materials.

Turning to the US military's newly announced "Iron Gate" blockade of Iran's land borders, Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) spokesman Hossein Mohebi said on Sunday, "America can never achieve the type of economic blockade it's after, whichever iteration it takes."

Iran's peak power supply gap narrows to near 10,000 MW, spokesman says

Economy Desk



Iran's power supply gap at peak demand has narrowed to near 10,000 megawatts this year from about 17,500 megawatts two years ago and 14,500 megawatts last year, the spokesman for Iran's electricity industry said, while constraints on gas supply to thermal power plants remain one of the sector's biggest obstacles.

Ehsan Zabihzadeh, spokesman for the country's electricity industry, told a news conference for the 26th International Electricity Industry Exhibition of Iran that the volume of the gap at peak consumption was estimated at about 17,500 megawatts two years ago, fell to 14,500 megawatts last year, which began March 21, 2025, and declined to near 10,000 megawatts this year, which began March 21, 2026, according to Mehr news agency, citing the electricity industry.

The industry is entering the cold season while, despite the decline in the power supply gap this year, limits on gas supply to thermal power plants remain one of the biggest barriers in the sector. Filling liquid fuel reserves for power plants by the end of Aban, expanding power generation capacity and controlling consumption are among the fundamental bases of planning to pass the winter and achieve sustainable electricity next year.

Zabihzadeh recalled that this year's hot season dragged on because of continued abnormal heat until the end of Mehr. Unlike previous years, when the hot season generally began in mid-Ordibehesht and continued until mid-Shahrivar, this year temperatures were above normal in the second half of Shahrivar and even in Mehr, he added.

The spokesman said 14 megaprojects in 14 key areas have been drafted to expand power generation and grid capacity and manage consumption for next year's peak load, under which a significant increase in power generation capacity is envisaged.

In thermal power plants, a 4,500-megawatt increase in generation capacity is forecast, including the construction of new units, renovation of war-damaged sections and improvement of the capacity of active power plants, he said.

In addition, it is planned to add 6,000 megawatts to the country's solar power plant capacity before next year's peak consumption and to bring total renewable capacity to 12,000 megawatts, he said. Capacity upgrades are also being pursued in other power generation technologies in line with development plans.

Zabihzadeh stressed the need to develop transmission and distribution infrastructure, saying that raising the capacity of the transmission, superdistribution and distribution networks and expanding power substations are other dimensions planned for next year so the grid has a greater ability to transmit and supply electricity in various parts of the country.

Technical brilliance must not eclipse tombak's identity: *Virtuoso*



By Alireza Sepahvand
Freelance journalist

REPORT EXCLUSIVE

Iranian tombak virtuoso Arash Farhangfar believes that technical advancement alone cannot secure the future of this important percussion instrument in Iranian music. The son of legendary musician Nasser Farhangfar, he argues that contemporary tombak playing must return to the instrument's authentic sound and distinctive identity while preserving rhythmic complexity, improvisation and the art of ensemble performance.

The tombak, a goblet-shaped percussion instrument, is a cornerstone of Iranian classical music. Over the decades, it has evolved from its traditional role as an accompanying instrument into a vehicle for increasingly elaborate solo performances, with musicians exploring new techniques and expanding its expressive possibilities.

Yet this development raises an important question: how can technical innovation enrich the instrument without obscuring its distinctive sound and musical identity?

Arash Farhangfar grew up in a family deeply immersed in music, poetry and calligraphy. He began learning the tombak from his father, the celebrated musician Nasser Farhangfar, at the age of eight. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with leading figures in Iranian music, including Mohammadreza Lotfi, Mohammad Reza Shajarian, Parviz Meshkatian and Jalal Zolfonun.

In this exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Farhangfar reflects on his early musical education, his father's legacy, his experiences performing with distinguished musicians, and his work as a teacher and author. He also discusses what he sees as a growing tendency to prioritize technical display over the tombak's authentic sound and the ability to perform within an ensemble.

For Farhangfar, preserving tradition does not mean simply imitating the past. It means understanding the instrument's fundamental principles, developing an individual musical voice and ensuring that innovation remains rooted in the tombak's distinctive sound, rhythmic language and expressive character.



Arash Farhangfar, tombak player, records the exercise from the instructional book "Siah Mashq".
SOCIAL MEDIA

SEPAHVAND: You grew up in a family deeply connected to music and the arts, and your father, Master Nasser Farhangfar, was one of the most influential figures in the history of Iranian tombak playing. How did growing up in such an environment shape your musical outlook? And how did you find your own artistic voice while learning from a father whose style became a method in its own right?

FARHANGFAR: Growing up in such an environment naturally had a profound influence on me. My father was a major figure in Iranian music, and learning from him from an early age gave me an invaluable foundation. I was introduced not only to the technical aspects of the tombak but also to a particular way of thinking about music.

However, learning from a great master does not mean that a musician should simply reproduce everything that master did. One must understand the principles behind the music, learn the language of the instrument and gradually develop an individual approach. My father's method has its own distinctive characteristics, and I believe that preserving its values requires a deep understanding of those characteristics rather than superficial imitation.

You have worked with many prominent figures in Iranian music, including Mohammadreza Lotfi, Parviz Meshkatian, Dariush Pirniakan and other leading instrumentalists and vocalists. What have these collaborations taught you about the relationship between the tombak and other instruments, and how have they influenced your approach to rhythm, improvisation and musical dialogue?

Working with distinguished musicians provides an education that cannot be gained from technical practice alone. Each musician has a particular musical language, and accompanying them requires listening carefully, understanding their intentions and responding appropriately.

I have had the opportunity to work with important figures in Iranian music, including Mohammadreza Lotfi, Parviz Meshkatian, Jalal Zolfonun and Dariush Pirniakan. I have also accompanied musicians such as Ali-Asghar Bahari, Hassan Kassai, Ali Tajvidi and Fereydoun Hafezi. These experiences have helped me understand how different musical personalities approach rhythm, phrasing and improvisation.

I have particular admiration for Master Hassan Kassai. Working with musicians of this level teaches you that accompaniment is not simply a matter of maintaining a rhythmic pattern. It is about understanding the music as a whole, responding to the soloist and knowing when to contribute and when to leave space. The tombak player must listen attentively and remain musically alert. A successful performance depends on dialogue between the musicians, not merely on the technical ability of each individual performer.

The tombak has developed considerably as both an accompanying instrument and a solo instrument. In your view, how can performers expand its technical and expressive possibilities without losing the qualities that make its sound distinctive? What responsibilities do musicians have toward the instrument's authentic musical language?

We must focus on doing our own work. When you play the tombak, you should play the tombak. Your playing should not imitate another instrument, nor should you hold a tombak in your hands while trying to reproduce the expressive language of a different instrument. When you play the tombak, the sound people hear should be the sound of the tombak itself.

We need to give greater consideration to the instrument's authenticity. You can play with extraordinary technique and still play the tombak; you can be an accomplished musician and remain true to the instrument. Today, however, we have reached a point where someone performs exceptionally well and demonstrates impressive technical skills, yet when the performance ends, you feel like saying: "All right, well done! Now, could you play a little tombak for us?" That is precisely the problem. We need to reveal the instrument's authentic character and showcase the techniques that belong to the tombak itself.



Arash Farhangfar (3rd-R) poses for a photo with his father and legendary tombak player, Nasser Farhangfar (3rd-L) and other acquaintances in Tehran, Iran, in the summer of 1992.
SOCIAL MEDIA

The tombak-playing scene has become somewhat chaotic. You hear everything imaginable — every kind of noise. Master Siamak Banaei used the term "palasht-navazi" (lit. playing filthy) years ago, referring to playing that is disorderly, unrefined or lacking in musical coherence. Today, this kind of playing has reached its peak, and the situation has become quite troubling. In any case, this is one of the problems we are witnessing in tombak performance today.

In addition to collaborating with the Sheyda and Aref ensembles and other leading Iranian music groups, you have also performed in duos with distinguished artists such as Master Reza Shafieian. What are the technical and expressive differences between playing the tombak in a large ensemble and performing in a duo? In the more intimate setting of a duo, how can a percussionist maintain an independent musical voice while responding to the subtlest musical nuances of the other performer?

In fact, I believe playing in an ensemble places greater limitations on a musician. Many aspects of performance change in a group setting. Playing in an ensemble is different from performing in a duo, particularly when improvisation is involved. An ensemble generally operates within a more defined framework, and with so many musicians playing together, the approach to the tombak inevitably changes.

When you sit down with just one other musician to improvise or perform a piece, however, I think the experience becomes much more comfortable, beautiful and engaging. A group can restrict your freedom to some extent, unless it is an ensemble you have worked with for years, rehearsed extensively with and developed a deep musical rapport with. That is a different matter altogether.

> When you play the tombak, you should play the tombak. Your playing should not imitate another instrument, nor should you hold a tombak in your hands while trying to reproduce the expressive language of a different instrument. When you play the tombak, the sound people hear should be the sound of the tombak itself.

Duo performances and small-group collaborations offer a different kind of musical environment. We, the musicians associated with the method of Farhangfar, often improvise in these settings. Even when a piece has been composed in advance, we try to preserve an element of improvisation, introduce variations and avoid performing in the same way every time or falling into predictable patterns.

You have performed in numerous countries across Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. How have non-Iranian audiences responded to the tombak and its distinctive sonic and performance characteristics? Do cultural differences influence how listeners perceive rhythm and percussion, and how can a performer connect with such audiences without compromising the instrument's authentic identity?

When you perform in different countries, you often find that audiences — particularly in places where music is taken seriously, such as many European countries — have a different appreciation of percussion instruments. They enjoy percussion and are genuinely interested in it. Even when you perform instrumental music without vocals, they listen attentively and find the experience enjoyable.

Master Nasser Farhangfar is also internationally renowned. During your tours and performances abroad, have you encountered audiences who were already familiar with his artistry and his method of tombak playing? How has this familiarity influenced their understanding of your performances and the legacy of Iranian tombak playing?

Yes, many people were interested in the Farhangfar method. They knew my father, and I met many foreign listeners who were thoroughly familiar with my father's tombak playing, as well as that of Master Hossein Tehrani and Master Mohammad Esmaeili. They spoke of these masters with great respect and admiration.

Naturally, this makes my responsibility even greater. Whenever I perform, I always try to present both the Farhangfar method and

a genuinely engaging, accomplished form of tombak playing, adapting to the circumstances and building my performance around improvisation.

As a teacher, how do you approach the challenge of passing on the Farhangfar method to younger generations while encouraging students to develop their own musical identities? How can a student learn from a master without becoming merely an imitator?

A student must learn the foundations of the instrument and understand the approach of the method in which they are studying. But learning should not end with imitation. Each musician needs to develop an individual identity and discover a personal way of expressing musical ideas. It is important to understand the work of previous masters, but it is equally important to think independently and find one's own voice. A musician should not simply reproduce another person's playing. The aim is to learn, understand and eventually develop an approach of one's own.

You have contributed to tombak education through instructional books, including "The Farhangfar Method: An Instructional Course" and "Siah Mashq". What motivated you to document this musical knowledge in writing, and what do you hope students will gain from these publications?

I have tried to document and transmit the knowledge associated with my father's method. These publications are intended to help students understand the instrument and become familiar with the approaches and techniques developed within this tradition.

Among these works are the first and second volumes of "The Farhangfar Method: An Instructional Course," as well as "Siah Mashq 1" and "Siah Mashq 2". My father's poetry has also been published by Gooya Publications. Writing instructional material is one way to preserve knowledge and make it available to future generations. But books alone cannot replace the experience of listening, practising and playing with other musicians. Students need to combine study with sustained practice and careful attention to the music itself.



Arash Farhangfar (R) poses for a photo with Master Mohammadreza Shajarian (3rd-R) and his son Homayoun Shajarian (L) in August 1998 at Rudaki (Vahdat) Hall on the night of the Aava ensemble's concert.
SOCIAL MEDIA

You began teaching at a very young age, reportedly taking on teaching responsibilities when you were only 15. How did that early experience shape your understanding of the tombak, and what did teaching reveal to you about the relationship between performing, practising and transmitting musical knowledge?

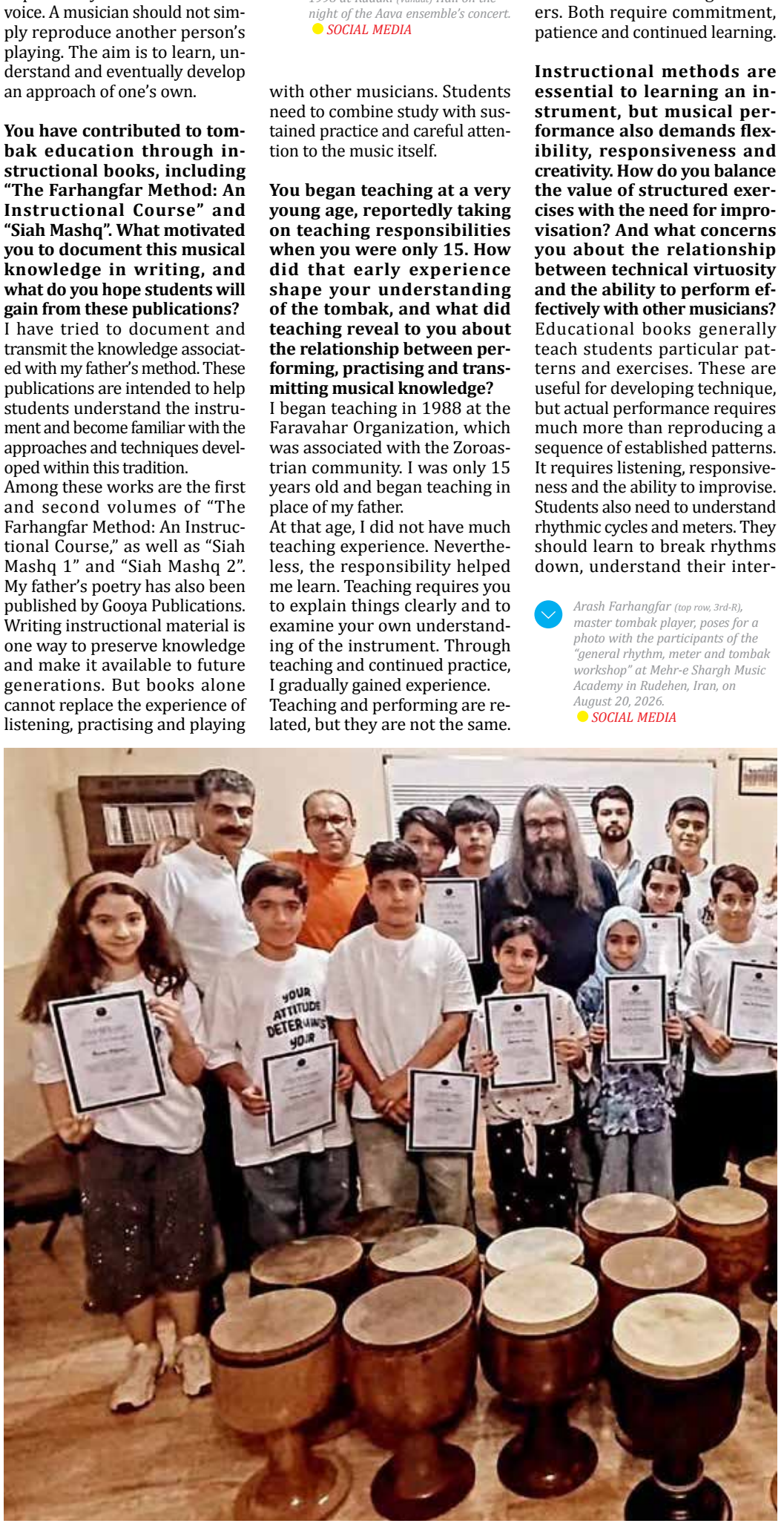
I began teaching in 1988 at the Faravahar Organization, which was associated with the Zoroastrian community. I was only 15 years old and began teaching in place of my father.

At that age, I did not have much teaching experience. Nevertheless, the responsibility helped me learn. Teaching requires you to explain things clearly and to examine your own understanding of the instrument. Through teaching and continued practice, I gradually gained experience.

Teaching and performing are related, but they are not the same. A performer must develop the ability to play, while a teacher must also understand how to communicate knowledge to others. Both require commitment, patience and continued learning.

Instructional methods are essential to learning an instrument, but musical performance also demands flexibility, responsiveness and creativity. How do you balance the value of structured exercises with the need for improvisation? And what concerns you about the relationship between technical virtuosity and the ability to perform effectively with other musicians?

Educational books generally teach students particular patterns and exercises. These are useful for developing technique, but actual performance requires much more than reproducing a sequence of established patterns. It requires listening, responsiveness and the ability to improvise. Students also need to understand rhythmic cycles and meters. They should learn to break rhythms down, understand their internal structure and recognize how different patterns relate to one another. Technical knowledge is important, but it must serve the music.



Arash Farhangfar (top row, 3rd-R), master tombak player, poses for a photo with the participants of the "general rhythm, meter and tombak workshop" at Mehr-e Shargh Music Academy in Rudehen, Iran, on August 20, 2026.
SOCIAL MEDIA

One problem today is that some performers introduce techniques that do not necessarily contribute to the musical context. A performance can become a succession of difficult movements without a coherent musical purpose.

There are also musicians who perform impressive solos but struggle when they have to play with an ensemble. Solo performance and ensemble playing demand different abilities. In a group, the musician must listen to others, maintain a sense of balance and understand how the tombak contributes to the overall musical texture. Technical ability alone is not enough. A musician must also understand the music, respond to fellow performers and know how to use technique in the service of musical expression.

How can musicians avoid becoming trapped in established conventions while continuing to develop their own approaches? Is innovation something that can be taught, or does it emerge through an individual musician's experience, sensibility and understanding of tradition?

The question of how a musician can avoid becoming confined by established conventions while continuing to innovate is not one that can be answered easily. Someone who is genuinely innovative will find a way to innovate. You cannot simply train a musician to become an innovator. You can train a number of musicians, and perhaps one of them will eventually develop the ability to introduce something new. But it is not possible to guarantee that training will produce an innovative musician — or even an artist — in the first place.

> We must preserve our traditions and learn from them, but we must also develop our own identities, establish our own approaches and find our own means of expression. Only then can we begin to innovate. And innovation, in itself, does not necessarily mean something is good. We should not assume that something is beautiful or valuable simply because it is new.



Cover design of Arash Farhangfar's tombak instructional book titled "Siah Mashq 1," featuring a photo of his father, Nasser Farhangfar
naakojaaketab.com

We must preserve our traditions and learn from them, but we must also develop our own identities, establish our own approaches and find our own means of expression. Only then can we begin to innovate. And innovation, in itself, does not necessarily mean something is good. We should not assume that something is beautiful or valuable simply because it is new.

Personally, I do not listen to much contemporary music. I tend to listen more to music from the past, and I am not particularly drawn to many of today's performers or to every instrument in its contemporary form. If someone is playing the tar today, for example, I prefer to listen to the recordings of masters such as Jalil Shahnaz, Farhang Sharif, Lotfollah Majd and Mohammadreza Lotfi. The same applies to other instruments. When it comes to the santur, I enjoy listening to Parviz Meshkatian, Reza Shafieian, Faramarz Payvar and other great masters.

Looking back at the past century of tombak playing, we encounter successive generations of performers and a variety of musical approaches. In your view, which of their contributions and distinctive qualities are most likely to stand the test of time? What enables a particular style of playing to transcend the period in which it emerged and become part of a lasting musical heritage?

Over approximately the past hundred years, several musicians have made outstanding contributions to the development of the tombak. They include Master Hossein Tehrani, Master Amir Nasser Eftetah, Master Bahman Rajabi, Master Mohammad Esmaeili and my father, Master Nasser Farhangfar.

These are five figures whose names deserve to be remembered. In time, the musical community will continue to recognize the immense and valuable contributions they made to Iranian tombak playing. The art of tombak playing will always owe a great deal to the dedication and achievements of these distinguished artists and musicians.

Drawing on your many years of experience as a performer, teacher and custodian of Iran's musical heritage, what do you consider the most important responsibility of today's Iranian musicians toward tradition? And what understanding of the tombak and Iranian music would you like international audiences to gain through your work?

Of course, performing concerts in other countries allows us to introduce the tombak and Iranian music to international audiences. We have done so, and we will continue to do so. But what is even more important is introducing our own instrument and musical heritage to people in our own country.

We need to help our fellow citizens become familiar with the tombak and understand its musical possibilities. We must do much more in this regard. We need to introduce our compatriots to music through live performances and present high-quality music so that they can experience it firsthand, recognize its value and learn to appreciate it.

FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers:

Iran desperate to bounce back in crunch double-header

Sports Desk

Iran's national basketball team will look to recover from a disappointing start to its Group E campaign when head coach Sotiris Manolopoulos's men return to action in the FIBA World Cup Asian Qualifiers later this month.
Having topped the first-round Group C with back-to-back victories over Jordan, either side of a win against Syria in June, Iran opened the second round with a 93-91 overtime defeat to New Zealand before suffering a 68-56 loss to the Philippines in August. Both games were staged in Pasay, the Philippines. Although the group opener was designated as a home fixture for Iran, Manolopoulos's side was forced to play at the neutral venue of SM Mall of Asia Arena due to security concerns amid the conflict in the region. The same circumstances had previously forced Iran to move its home game against Syria to Amman, Jordan, in the first round.
The Iranian Basketball Federation appealed to the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) in September to have its hosting rights reinstated for the remainder of the campaign, but the request was rejected. Iran will therefore have to play its upcoming double-header in Seremban, Malaysia.
Iran will take on Australia at Karisma Arena on November 27 before facing the Philippines at the same venue two days later.
With the top three teams in the group standings qualifying for the World Cup, third-placed Iran remains firmly in contention for a place at next year's showpiece in Qatar. However, further slip-ups in the remaining four fixtures could allow Jordan, currently fourth on 13 points and level with Iran, to overtake it.
The Greek coach has called up 18 players for the latest training camp, which began in Tehran on Saturday.
Arsalan Kazemi, Mohammad Jamshidi, Arman Zangeneh, Peter Gregorian, Seyyed Mehdi Jafari, Amirhossein Tousian, Mohammadmehdi Rahimi, Alireza Sharifi, Khashayar Aliakbari, Mobin Sheikhi, Seyyed Mohammad Ghaffari, Mohammadmehdi Heydari, Navid Rezaeifar, Matin Aghajanpour, Sarem Jafari, Hassan Aliakbari, Jalal Aghamiri and Mohammadmehdi Jalali are included in the preliminary roster.
Overseas-based players Behnam Yakhchali, Mohammad Amini, Mohsen Asgarinia and Salar Taheri are expected to join the squad in the coming days.
The return of prolific duo Yakhchali and Amini, who missed the previous window for different reasons, will provide Manolopoulos with a major boost ahead of the crucial double-header.s
Yakhchali's international experience and ability to score from beyond the arc could strengthen Iran's offensive game. Amini, meanwhile, brings athleticism, penetration and an effective presence in attacking situations, offering another dimension to the team's offense.
Their availability will give the Greek coach more options in devising attacking strategies. However, integrating the two players into the squad and the limited time available for collective training remain key considerations ahead of the games.



ROUELLE UMALI/XINHUA


AFC

AFC Women's Champions League:

Khatoon crashes out after finishing bottom of Group A

Sports Desk

Iranian top-flight champion Bam Khatoon was knocked out of the AFC Women's Champions League after suffering a third successive defeat in Group A, going down 3-0 to host Ayeyawady FC in Yangon, Myanmar, on Saturday.
The defeat capped a dismal campaign for head coach Marziyeh Jafari's side, which opened its group campaign with a 4-1 loss to Japan's Kobe Leonessa before suffering a 6-1 thrashing at the hands of defending champion Naegohyang of North Korea last Wednesday.
Nwe Than Than scored in each half, with Hinari Miyamoto adding a third just after the hour mark to seal the victory for the Myanmar side, which finished third in the standings with three points.
Both teams came into the match on the back of successive defeats, but Ayeyawady capitalized on a shaky start from Khatoon.
The hosts' high press forced Khatoon defender Melika Motevalli into an error as early as the second minute, allowing Nwe Than Than to pounce on the loose ball and set up Phyu Phyu Win, whose long-range effort looped over goalkeeper Raha Yazdani and found the net.
Khatoon tried to respond, but Mona Hamoudi's effort was blocked before Fatemeh Shaban sent a long-range free kick over the bar in the fifth minute.
Ayeyawady continued to create the better chances, with Min Htone May Zitar firing wide in the 14th minute before Yazdani denied Naw Htet Htet Wai's low effort two minutes later.
The Myanmar side threatened again in the 27th minute when Kurumi Iwashita met Phyu Phyu Win's cross following a corner but sent her effort over the bar. Shaban's strike sailed narrowly over at the other end in the 32nd minute.
Ayeyawady picked up where it had left off after the break, with Yazdani denying Nwe Than Than from close range in the 48th minute after the forward was set up by Naw Htet Htet Wai.
Nwe Than Than made no mistake 10 minutes later, though, as Win Win's through ball found Phyu Phyu Win, who surged into the box before squaring for her teammate to fire into the top-left corner.
The Iranian side conceded again in the 63rd minute when Kana Ueda lofted the ball into the box for Hinari Miyamoto, who beat the advancing Yazdani with a deft chip.
Despite their best efforts, Khatoon failed to find a way back into the match. Shahnaz Jafari headed over from inside the box in the 80th minute before Roujin Tamrian was sent off two minutes later after receiving a second yellow card.

Mozaffar hails players' commitment despite travel fatigue

Sports Desk

Iran women's futsal head coach Shahrzad Mozaffar was full of praise for her players following a 3-1 victory over hosts China on Saturday, saying they gave everything despite severe travel fatigue and a demanding schedule. The victory marked Iran's second successive win at the friendly tournament in China, following a 6-0 triumph over Hong Kong in their opening match.
"Our journey was extremely long. It took us around 24 hours from the time we left Iran until we arrived at the hotel. The players had limited time to rest before facing Hong Kong the following day. Despite their travel fatigue, they put in an excellent performance and secured a 6-0 victory," she said.
"The game was entirely under our control, and we created numerous scoring opportunities. The players performed well in both defense and attack, and everyone got the chance to play. Only Fatemeh Rahmati missed the match due to a minor injury she had sustained during league action."
Reflecting on the subsequent match against China, Mozaffar highlighted the demanding schedule, noting that the players had to compete on consecutive days following their lengthy journey.
"The gap between the two matches was very short, and the players had to play on consecutive days after a 24-hour journey. I believe they overcame not only their two opponents but also fatigue," she said.
"We conceded early and were caught by surprise, but managed to finish the first half 1-1. We had some problems in the opening period, particularly in our defensive structure. We discussed those issues at halftime and provided the players with the necessary solutions. Fortunately, they implemented our instructions very well and did not allow the opposition to create any serious or dangerous chances in the second half," she said.
"The second half was entirely under our control, and we could even have scored more than two additional goals. China resorted to the power-play system in the final four to five minutes, but our players defended resolutely and even managed to score once during that period."
The Iranian coach was particularly pleased with her players' commitment and team spirit throughout the tournament.
"I am genuinely satisfied with the players' performances. Despite severe travel fatigue and the demanding schedule, they gave everything. Their work rate, commitment and self-sacrifice were admirable. They played wholeheartedly and for one another, providing a perfect example of a united and cohesive team. This unity and mutual support were evident both on and off the court," Mozaffar said.
She also acknowledged the quality of the Chinese team, saying it had undergone considerable changes since last year's Asian Cup.
"Almost half of their players are different from those who featured in the continental championship. Nevertheless, China are a very strong team in terms of physical strength, coordination in combination play and overall team structure. It is clear that a great deal of work has gone into preparing this team," she added.
"We beat China 3-1 at the Asian Cup, but their current team is different and they are a very high-quality opponent. Considering that our own squad is a blend of young and experienced players who have not had much experience playing demanding matches together, I believe the players have successfully passed a difficult test at this stage of the tournament," she said.



FFIRI

New excavation season underway at historic Cheshmeh Ali site



Iranica Desk

The third season of archaeological excavations at Cheshmeh Ali Hill in Shahr-e Rey has begun under the direction of Hamidreza Valipour, a faculty member of Shahid Beheshti University's Department of Archaeology.

The 45-day excavation is being carried out as part of the university's five-year research program at the ancient site. According to Valipour, the latest season began on November 3.

Valipour, who heads the excavation team, told ISNA that archaeologists will continue working in previously opened trenches while seeking to reach older archaeological layers and investigate connections between the Neolithic, transitional Chalcolithic and Early Chalcolithic periods.

The team will also examine the possibility of identifying evidence of later cultural horizons, including periods associated with the emergence of writing.

Discussing findings from the first two seasons, Valipour said the excavations had uncovered settlement architecture dating back approximately 6,300 years, along with evidence of several phases of construction during the Early Chalcolithic period.

Other significant discoveries include seals, clay sealings, seal impressions, clay objects known as tokens, and evidence of metalworking. Further study of these finds could shed light on the economic and social structures of prehistoric communities in Shahr-e Rey and the Central Iranian Plateau, he said.

Valipour noted that despite Cheshmeh Ali Hill's importance to understanding the ancient history of the Central Iranian Plateau, the site has suffered considerable damage over recent decades as a result of urban expansion.

Alongside its research objectives, the excavation team is therefore emphasizing the protection of the site's archaeological remains and the establishment of a site museum at Cheshmeh Ali.

A proposed plan for the museum, together with an estimate of its costs, has been prepared and submitted to the Shahr-e Rey Cultural Heritage Department and city officials, Valipour said.

Fars Province set to lead Iran in registered natural heritage sites



IRNA

Iranica Desk

Seventeen natural heritage registration dossiers have been prepared in Fars Province, and their approval would place the southern province at the top of the national ranking for the number of nationally registered natural heritage sites.

Majid Salari, an official responsible for the national registration of natural heritage at the Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Fars Province, told IRNA that 74 natural heritage sites had been registered nationally in the province between 2011 and the end of 2025.

He said this year's program focuses on identifying and registering natural heritage sites across different counties of the province.

Salari added that ancient trees have been given priority because, more than other types of natural heritage, they are vulnerable to threats such as wildfires and illegal felling.

As part of this effort, 10 natural heritage dossiers have been prepared in Jahrom, three in Juyom and five in Abadeh, he said. The completed dossiers will be submitted to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts for assessment by the end of the current month.

Commenting on the age of registered natural heritage sites in Fars Province, Salari explained that the age of ancient trees is determined using methods designed to minimize damage to them. Consequently, the ages reported for these trees are estimates, and claims such as identifying a particular tree as the oldest in the country should not be made without thorough scientific investigation. He pointed to several notable ancient trees already identified and registered in the province.

Among them is a grove of ancient cypress trees in Rostaq, Darab, some of which are estimated to be around 1,400 years old.

An ancient jujube tree in Kazerun has also been identified, with an estimated age of approximately 1,200 years. Last year, another ancient cypress tree, located in Deh Sarv village near Shiraz, was registered with a similar estimated age, he added.

Regarding the benefits of national registration, Salari said registered natural heritage sites enjoy legal protection comparable to that afforded to historical monuments. This provides the necessary legal basis for pursuing cases involving their destruction or damage.

He explained that a conservation and management plan is drawn up for each site following its registration.

The first step is to inform local residents and communities living near the site about its national registration. An information board containing details about the site, including the estimated age of ancient trees, should also be installed at the location.

Further conservation and management measures are then implemented according to the specific conditions of each site, he said.

For example, suitable plant species, such as boxwood, can be planted around some ancient trees to establish a protective buffer while preserving the natural landscape. In areas where a site faces a greater risk of damage, physical barriers such as fencing may also be necessary.

Salari said continuous monitoring was another essential component of natural heritage conservation.

The condition of registered sites must be regularly assessed to identify potential damage caused by pests, determine whether trees require reinforcement and detect other factors that could threaten their preservation, he added.

However, Salari stressed that implementing these conservation programs requires adequate funding, warning that without financial support, many plans would remain on paper.

He noted that Fars Province had so far received no dedicated funding for the natural heritage registration process, while some other provinces had secured financial allocations for this purpose.

This funding gap, he said, represents a significant shortcoming for a province with such extensive natural heritage resources.

Ilam's Cham Jangal holds promise for nature tourism

Iranica Desk

The village of Cham Jangal in Sirvan, Ilam Province, has considerable potential for developing nature tourism, thanks to its oak forests, natural landscape and scenic views of the Seymareh River. However, rising water levels in the Seymareh Dam reservoir have damaged and submerged parts of the village's pomegranate orchards and agricultural lands.

Located in the Rudbar Rural District of Sirvan, Cham Jangal lies alongside the Seymareh River, approximately 11 kilometers from Lumar. With its pristine natural surroundings, oak woodlands and picturesque river views, the village is among Ilam Province's lesser-known destinations with considerable potential for nature-based tourism. Nevertheless, rising water levels in the Seymareh Dam reservoir have put some of its agricultural land and pomegranate orchards at risk.

Talking to ISNA, Lida Mirzaei, head of Cham Jangal's Village Council, said the village enjoys



a distinctive natural setting.

"Situated in the highlands and close to the Seymareh River, the village offers visitors beautiful panoramic views of the river and the surrounding landscape," she said.

Mirzaei noted that the village is particularly attractive in spring, when its hillsides become lush and green. The oak forests and scenic views of the Seymareh River create picturesque landscapes for both residents and visitors.

These natural attractions, combined with the village's mountainous terrain and rich vegetation, provide considerable opportunities for developing tourism and attracting nature enthusiasts, she added.

The mountains surrounding Cham Jangal are among the area's main natural attractions. Their natural vegetation, oak forests and beautiful views of the Seymareh River make them suitable destinations for tourists and outdoor enthusiasts, Mirzaei said.

She also highlighted one of the village's best-known attractions: a natural formation inside a mountain resembling a cave, from which remarkably cool air flows during the summer.

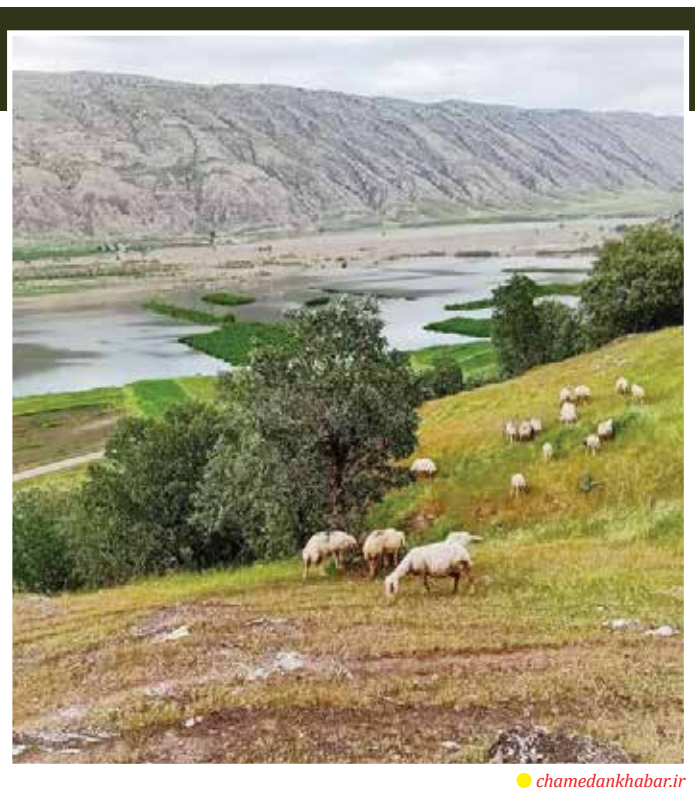
The unusual feature has attracted both local residents and tourists, particularly during the warmer months, when visitors come to enjoy the cool air and the area's natural beauty, she added.

Turning to the local economy, Mirzaei said agriculture and livestock farming are among the main economic activities supporting the livelihoods of Cham Jangal's residents.

Wheat, barley and rice are among the village's principal agricultural products, while livestock rearing has long been a traditional occupation in the area. Given the availability of agricultural land and water resources, there is considerable potential to expand farming and animal husbandry, she said.

Mirzaei also pointed to infrastructure shortcomings, noting that although some village roads have been asphalted, others remain unpaved and require groundwork and surfacing.

She stressed the need to improve the village's appearance through better street management, the development of green spaces, tree planting and the installation of public and sports amenities.



chamedankhabar.ir

Enhancing the village's visual appeal through cleaner surroundings and attractive public spaces in keeping with its rural character could play an important role in attracting tourists and improving residents' quality of life, she said.

However, Mirzaei identified the Seymareh Dam project as one of the village's main challenges, explaining that part of its land lies within the dam project's designated area. Rising water levels in the reservoir have already affected some of the village's agricultural lands.

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Pezeshkian seeks public support through mosque-based initiatives

Social Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for greater public participation in addressing local social problems through Iran's 80,000 mosques.

He urged religious institutions to help mobilize communities, promote energy conservation and support efforts to protect domestic production.

Speaking on Saturday, November 7, at Imam Zain al-Abidin Mosque in Tehran, Pezeshkian said mosques could mobilize public participation in addressing community needs, with support from the Basij volunteer force.

"The government could not tackle all the country's problems alone and called on cultural, religious and social institutions to coordinate efforts to identify local needs and find solutions," he said.

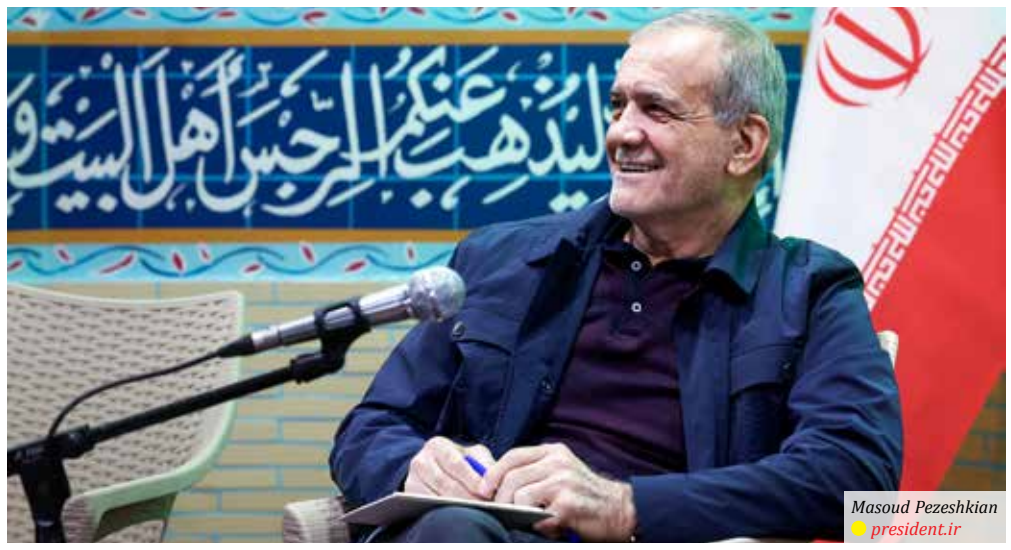
Activities at the mosque could serve as a model for similar initiatives across the country, he added.

"US-Israeli attacks had disrupted Iran's gas production, making fuel and energy savings particularly important during the colder months," he said.

He referred to the recent wars in Iran. The first was the 12-day war in June 2025, and the second 40-days war happened in late February 2026.

He called mosques to set an example in promoting efficient electricity and gas consumption, warning that energy shortages could disrupt supplies to manufacturing industries and hurt domestic production.

The mosque-based program aims to connect the resources of capable individuals and groups with the needs of residents in local communities.



Masoud Pezeshkian
president.ir

University of Tehran ranks fifth global in polymer science



Social Desk

The University of Tehran ranked fifth globally in polymer science in the 2026-2027 U.S. News Best Global Universities rankings.

The ranking placed two Iranian institutions among the world's top 12 in the field.

The university scored 83.2 points among 250 institutions assessed.

Four Chinese universities took the top spots, while Iran's Islamic Azad University ranked 12th.

The results come as 80 Iranian universities featured in the overall rankings, which covered more than 2,250 institutions in more than 100 countries.

The University of Tehran, based in the Iranian capital, ranked 314th worldwide, the highest position among Iranian universities.

Islamic Azad University came 460th, followed by Sharif University of Technology at 578th and Tehran University of Medical Sciences at 585th.

Other Iranian institutions among the country's top 10 were the University of Tabriz at 662nd, Mashhad University of Medical Sciences and Tarbiat Modares University, tied at 783rd, Amir Kabir University of Technology at 791st, and Shiraz University of Medical Sciences and Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, tied at 801st.

In subject rankings, Iran placed 17th globally in green and sustainable science and technology, 35th in water resources, 68th in engineering and 104th in artificial intelligence.

The U.S. News rankings assess universities based on research performance, including publications, citation impact and international collaboration. Subject rankings use indicators tailored to individual fields.

The results highlight Iranian universities' research strengths in selected disciplines.

Iran's Red Crescent adds smart robots to rescue fleet

Social Desk

Between 70 and 80 smart robots for search-and-rescue operations will be acquired by Iran's Red Crescent Society, Mehr reported.

"The equipment intended to protect emergency workers and improve responses in high-risk areas," the head of society Pir Hossein Kolivand said.

The society was expanding its use of advanced technology after finding that modern equipment had improved its operational performance, he added.

He said that the society sought to use drones and smart robots in rescue missions to protect emergency workers facing dangerous conditions during the 40-days US-Israeli war in late February.

"The robots can enter damaged buildings and areas hit by strikes, detect gas leaks and provide initial assessments of conditions at disaster sites," Kolivand explained.

Some can also deliver equipment and supplies to affected areas, he added.

He said the technology could help rescue people trapped under rubble.

Rescue teams pulled more than 7,250 people alive from collapsed buildings during the previous war, he added.

Faster operations, improved rescue services and lower costs are among the other benefits, he added.

The society currently has between 70 and 80 of the devices, Kolivand said, expressing hope that expanded domestic production would further strengthen the country's emergency response fleet.



IRNA

Vietnam envoy proposes student exchange with Iranian university

Social Desk

Vietnam's ambassador to Iran has proposed an academic partnership between Imam Khomeini International University and Hanoi University to expand student exchanges and strengthen educational and cultural ties between the two countries.

Nguyen Luong Ngoc made the proposal during a visit to Imam Khomeini International University in Qazvin, northwest of Tehran, on Sunday, expressing hope that more Vietnamese students would be able to study at the Iranian institution.

The ambassador praised the university's academic and educational capacity, saying its programs offered valuable opportunities for Vietnamese students.

He also welcomed the presence of international students at the university, describing it as a source of pride.

Ngoc highlighted Vietnam's own capacity for higher education and Persian-language studies, pointing to Hanoi University's School of Oriental Studies, where Persian is taught.

He said Hanoi University had already signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Tehran and expressed hope that similar academic ties could be established with Imam Khomeini International University.

The proposed partnership could provide a new channel for educational and cultural exchanges between Iran and Vietnam, building on existing academic links between universities in the two countries.

The ambassador's proposal comes as both sides seek to broaden cooperation through higher education, with student mobility and Persian-language studies offering potential areas for closer engagement.



Vietnam's ambassador to Iran Nguyen Luong Ngoc (C) visits Imam Khomeini International University in Qazvin on November 8, 2026.
IRNA