Italian-made Shahnameh facsimile arrives in Iran
8



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Americans, region 'sick, tired' of Israel duping US into 'forever wars': *FM*

2

President says Iran open to 'honorable' dialogue to end war

2



President Masoud Pezeshkian (C) is being briefed as he visits Iran Dairy Industries Co. in Tehran on November 9, 2026.
president.ir

Despite Republicans' setback, Iran must strengthen military, diplomatic means

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

The US midterm elections have ended in a setback for Republicans, potentially affecting the Trump administration's calculations over whether to resume military confrontation with Iran. In an interview with Iran Daily, Reza Ghobeishavi, international affairs analyst, said the Republicans' electoral defeat could make President Donald Trump more determined to secure a major achievement on Iran. However, given the available evidence, predicting Washington's next move remains difficult. Iran should therefore prepare for every scenario and strengthen both its military and diplomatic capabilities, he said.



Reza Ghobeishavi

IRAN DAILY: **How will the outcome of the US elections affect Washington's approach and calculations toward Iran? Should we expect a significant shift in US policy? How likely is a resumption of military confrontation under these new circumstances?**

GHOBEISHAVI: Given US President Donald Trump's unusual psychological and personality traits, as well as his distinctive management style, predicting what comes next is difficult. Trump himself and other US officials have also shown little consistency or transparency in their public statements. As a result, examining their remarks does not necessarily lead to any clear conclusions.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that the Republicans' electoral setback, partly attributable to Trump's policies and, above all, the adverse consequences of his war against Iran, could make him more determined to secure a major achievement on the Iran issue. The 40-day US war against Iran failed to deliver any major gains, leaving Trump with a significant political weakness.

Page 3



Trump's setback in Brazil
Lula's victory exposed limits of American power

4



Weightlifting World Championships:
Yousefi sets new world record to clinch C&J gold in superheavyweight

6



Semnan preserves rich ethnic, linguistic diversity

7

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President says Iran open to 'honorable' dialogue to end war

International Desk

Iran's president said on Monday that Tehran can engage in dialogue with dignity to resolve disputes with the United States but would not give in to coercion or bullying.

Referring to plots by Iran's enemies to undermine the country, Masoud Pezeshkian said the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei had ordered an end to the state of neither war nor peace.

"The Supreme Leader ordered us to put an end to the state of neither war nor peace. We can engage in dialogue with dignity and bring the matter to a dignified conclusion," he said.

"We are people of dialogue and negotiation, and logic dictates that if we can secure our rights through dialogue, we should not involve ourselves in war. But we will not surrender in the face of coercion and bullying," he added.

The president said he had also underscored Iran's position in his address to the United Nations General Assembly, making clear that Tehran was prepared to negotiate on the basis of justice and under equal conditions while insisting on its rights.

Regional mediators have stepped up diplomatic efforts after recent threats by the US President Donald Trump that the US could resume full-scale strikes on Iran.

However, Trump cast doubt on renewed fighting with Iran on Sunday, telling CNN it was "highly unlikely," ahead of a meeting with mediator Qatar's prime minister on Monday.

Trump threatened to resume strikes in recent weeks, with US media reports suggesting that hostilities could restart after last Tuesday's midterm elections.

The president told CNN that renewed fighting was "highly unlikely," but warned that his decision "depends on whether or not they sign a very strong agreement."

Trump is scheduled to meet Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, who is also the country's foreign minister, at the White House on Monday.

A senior Qatari official told Al Jazeera that both parties to the US-Iran conflict continue to speak to mediators about the main details of a deal to end the eight-month war.



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a ceremony marking the 72nd anniversary of the establishment of Iran Milk Industries Company in Tehran on November 9, 2026.
president.ir

Iran urges S Korea to refrain from deploying troops near Strait of Hormuz



South Koreans hold placards during a demonstration against South Korea's decision to deploy forces near Strait of Hormuz in front of the US Embassy in Seoul, South Korea, on September 15, 2026.
NURPHOTO

International Desk

Iran urged South Korea to refrain from deploying military forces to the region for naval operations aimed at helping reopen the Strait of Hormuz, warning that such a move could further complicate an already volatile situation.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei made the remarks in response to a question about reports concerning a possible South Korean naval deployment to help reopen the strategic waterway.

"South Korea should refrain from sending its military forces to the region to conduct certain naval operations aimed at helping reopen the Strait of Hormuz and should keep itself out of an issue that is already complicated enough," Baqaei said.

He described relations between Iran and South Korea as relatively longstanding, dating back more than 60 years, and said the ties had consistently been based on mutual respect and consideration for the interests of both countries.

"The Iranian people do not expect countries other than the United States, the Israeli regime and some of their allies, which openly or covertly supported this military aggression, to put themselves alongside the United States and the Israeli regime and in the position of accomplices in the military aggression of several months ago," he added.

He urged governments to steer clear of any moves that would only add to regional tensions and make an already complicated situation more difficult to resolve.

Iran has maintained a tight grip on the Strait of Hormuz since the early days of the US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said on Thursday it would deploy maritime patrol aircraft and an explosive ordnance disposal team to waters near the Strait of Hormuz as part of a mission to help keep the waterway open.

The announcement comes as Seoul maintains it will not deploy troops to intervene militarily in the aggression against Iran, while seeking to protect commercial shipping and energy supplies through one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints.

Americans, region 'sick, tired' of Israel duping US into 'forever wars': *FM*

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Americans and people across the West Asia region are fed up with Israel's role in dragging successive US administrations into "forever wars."

In a post on his X account on Monday, Araghchi said US President Donald Trump clearly recognized that the vast majority of Americans were "disgusted with Israel," but appeared confused about the reasons behind the sentiment, Press TV reported.

"Americans are evidently sick and tired of Israel bamboozling US administrations into Forever Wars," he wrote.

The region was equally exhausted by the prolonged conflicts, the top Iranian diplomat emphasized.

Araghchi's post comes in response to earlier remarks by the US president, who said in an interview with CBS News' 60 Minutes on Sunday that a "great dislike" for Israel, public opposition to the war against Iran, and rising gasoline prices were the main reasons Republicans suffered sweeping losses in last week's midterm elections.

Despite acknowledging the political costs of the war, Trump defended his decision to attack Iran, saying he would make the same choice again.

He claimed the US had won the war and that Tehran was interested in reaching an agreement.

Democrats secured control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate in Tuesday's elections, dealing a major setback to Trump's administration.

The United States and the Israeli regime waged their first illegal war against Iran, which lasted 12 days, in June 2025. Their second aggression began on February 28, 2026, and came to a halt in early April after 40 days.

In both wars, Iran's resistance and decisive retaliatory operations forced the aggressors to accept a ceasefire.

Iran has also maintained a tight grip on the Strait of Hormuz since the early days of the second imposed war amid acts of mischief by Washington in the region.



Abbas Araghchi
AFP

China calls for new regional security framework in Middle East

International Desk

China's special envoy for Middle East affairs called for a new regional security framework based on common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, urging efforts to achieve lasting stability in the region during meetings with senior Iranian officials in Tehran.

According to a statement published on the Chinese Foreign Ministry's website on Monday, Zhai Jun met Ali Bagheri Kani, deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, deputy foreign minister for political affairs, and Mohammad Ali Beik, assistant foreign minister and director general for Persian Gulf affairs, during a visit to Tehran on Sunday. The meetings covered bilateral relations between Tehran and Beijing as well as the latest developments in the Middle East, IRNA reported on Monday.

In separate meetings with the Iranian officials, Zhai highlighted the long-standing friendship between Iran and China, saying Beijing was ready to seize the opportunity presented by the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations and the 10th anniversary of their comprehensive strategic partnership to advance bilateral ties.

Addressing the continued military conflict in the Middle East, Zhai said military means could not resolve problems and stressed that the sovereignty and security of all countries must be respected.

"Relevant parties should choose the path of peace and, with a rational and pragmatic approach, focus on political solutions to resolve differences so that stability and development can return to the region as soon as possible," he said.

Zhai also referred to Chinese President Xi Jinping's initiatives and views on establishing peace and stability in the Middle East, saying Beijing supported the development of good-unneighborly relations among regional countries.

He called on countries to adhere to an approach centered on common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security to build a new regional security framework and secure long-term stability across the Middle East.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



AEOI details nuclear technology applications in agriculture, water, healthcare

Economy Desk

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) is seeking to expand the use of nuclear technology in water and soil management, agriculture and healthcare, with applications ranging from improving crop yields and shelf life to supplying medical equipment, AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami said on Monday.

Eslami made the remarks on the sidelines of an exhibition of Iran's peaceful nuclear achievements at the holy shrine of Hazrat Abdol-Azim al-Hasani in Shahr-e Rey, south of Tehran, IRNA reported.

"The use of nuclear technology to improve water and soil quality, increase the productivity and shelf life of agricultural products, and supply equipment needed in the healthcare sector is on the agenda," Eslami said.

"Given the growing needs of the public and various sectors of the country, nuclear technology can play a role in addressing existing problems and challenges," he added.

Referring to the country's water and soil challenges, Eslami said Iran needed to reassess how these resources were consumed and their quality. He said measures to improve the quality and safety of these resources were being pursued.

"The use of nuclear technology in agriculture increases productivity and extends the shelf life of products, making it possible to store them for longer periods without exposure to pests," he said.

On healthcare applications, Eslami said nuclear technology could be used to irradiate disposable products, equipment and other items used in healthcare processes.

He described Iran's nuclear industry as an integrated chain extending from the initial stages of production to end use by consumers.

"The chain begins at the mine and extends all the way to the point of consumption and use by people in their homes. Today, the nuclear industry is serving the public," he said.

The exhibition was inaugurated on Monday at a hall of the Hazrat Abdol-Azim al-Hasani shrine, with Eslami in attendance.

He said exhibitions showcasing peaceful nuclear achievements were intended to promote the technology and familiarize different segments of society with its applications.

Such events provide an opportunity for the public to learn firsthand about achievements made for their benefit and put at the service of society, he added.



Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami (C) tours an exhibition of Iran's peaceful nuclear achievements at the holy shrine of Hazrat Abdol-Azim al-Hasani in Shahr-e Rey, south of Tehran, on November 9, 2026.
IRNA

South Pars fifth refinery unit expected to resume operations by December

Economy Desk

Part of Iran's fifth South Pars refinery, damaged during the US-Israeli war in March, is expected to be ready for a return to service by the end of December, Mehr news agency reported. The first train of Unit 103 at the refinery is expected to be ready for commissioning by December, as repair work on key equipment has reached 67%, the report said. The rehabilitation of damaged equipment at two trains of Unit 103 began following the signing of a preliminary agreement on August 25.

Specialized personnel and contractors have been deployed at the refinery to carry out the work around the clock.

The work is focused on rebuilding the first train of the condensate stabilization unit and preparing the infrastructure needed to restart the refinery's two gas trains, which have a combined production capacity of 1 billion standard cubic feet of gas per day.

Since September 23, a dedicated workshop for mechanical equipment repairs and instrumentation calibration has been operating at the site. Restoration work on 21 major damaged pieces of equipment has been launched, reaching 67% completion, the report said.

Construction of the heavy steel structures required for the units has been completed, and the necessary supports have been installed in the first train of Unit 103.



SHANA

In addition, all equipment and materials requiring long delivery times have been ordered, with manufacturing underway at domestic factories operating three shifts. The work is being carried out by Petropars Group.

The fifth South Pars refinery was damaged on March 18, 2026, during US and Israeli attacks on gas facilities in Assaluyeh. Refineries associated with phases 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the South Pars gas field were targeted in the attacks.

During a visit to Bushehr Province in southern Iran and a tour of the fourth refinery at the South Pars Gas Complex this week, Central Bank of Iran Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati said Iran's central bank and banking network would continue to provide financial support for the reconstruction of gas facilities damaged during the 40-day US-Israeli war.

The attacks had taken about one-third of Iran's gas production capacity offline.

The fourth South Pars refinery, described as the largest sour gas refinery in the Middle East, was also heavily targeted during the war that began in late February. However, following the early start of reconstruction work, 70% of its production capacity has now been restored, according to IRNA.

In the latest update on the recovery of gas production across the South Pars Gas Complex, Farrokh Alikhani, acting head of the National Iranian Oil Company, said last week that 100 million cubic meters of gas had been returned to the network. He said 20,000 tons of debris were cleared from refineries hit by missiles. He added that some of the remaining capacity would also be restored before winter. Attacks on the four South Pars gas refineries in March initially knocked out about 230 million cubic meters of daily gas production capacity.

According to the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC), Iran was already facing a daily gas shortfall of about 300 million cubic meters before the war. With 100 million cubic meters of the initially lost production capacity restored, the remaining 130 million cubic meters of lost capacity has added to the country's existing supply constraints, underscoring the importance of efforts to curb consumption.

Iran holds about 34 trillion cubic meters of proven natural gas reserves, the world's second-largest after Russia, and accounts for about 17% of global proven gas reserves. Despite its vast reserves, a significant portion of the country's gas potential remains undeveloped because of sanctions-related constraints and insufficient investment.

Iran, Armenia discuss new bridge, border upgrades and cross-border energy links

Economy Desk

Iran and Armenia are seeking to expand economic cooperation in trade, transport and energy, with eight specialized committees meeting in Yerevan to discuss joint projects and prepare a cooperation agreement, Iran's state planning agency said on Monday.

Hamid Pourmohammadi, head of Iran's Plan and Budget Organization and leader of the Iranian delegation, are attending the 19th session of the Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Commission in the Armenian capital.

The eight committees are covering infrastructure, customs, trade, culture and the arts, healthcare, industry, mining and technology. The two-day meeting began on Monday, when the two sides are expected to sign a joint cooperation document, the organization said, according to Mehr news agency.

Transport infrastructure is among the main areas under discussion. Road construction from Jolfa to Nurdouz in Iran's East Azarbaijan Province is progressing, while Iranian contractors are also undertaking work on the Nurdouz-Yerevan route inside Armenia, Pourmohammadi said.



The 19th session of the Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Commission is held in Yerevan on November 9, 2026.
IRNA

Plans also include building a new bridge over the Aras River, expanding border terminals and increasing customs capacity to facilitate cross-border traffic and trade.

The two sides are also discussing measures to ease truck movements and increase travel by Iranian and Armenian tourists, he said.

In the energy sector, Iranian contractors are working on a power transmission line running through Armenia toward Iran. Iran's supply of petroleum products needed by Armenia is another potential area of bilateral cooperation, Pourmohammadi said.

The committees are also examining opportunities for cooperation in mining, industry, trade and technology, with both countries seeking to make use of their respective economic capacities.

Pourmohammadi is also scheduled to meet Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, as well as Armenia's deputy prime minister and the Armenian co-chair of the joint commission, to discuss bilateral issues and the outcome of the committee meetings.

Despite Republicans' setback ...

Page 1 ›

Such an achievement could come through either war or an agreement. What matters most to Trump is securing a major result, regardless of the means. So far, he has presented his claim of having "prevented Iran from obtaining a nuclear bomb" as one of his achievements. However, this is not enough to convince public opinion in the United States or internationally.

Iran and the United States are currently pursuing two parallel tracks: military confrontation and negotiations toward an agreement. Either could materialize at any moment.

US officials have also sent conflicting signals about the state of negotiations. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio recently said there were no signs of an imminent agreement between the two countries. At the same time, Trump said he was highly unlikely to order fresh strikes against Iran if negotiations made progress and produced a strong deal.

As a result, we do not know the US administration's actual position on negotiations with Iran. If we assess the current situation in light of the pattern set by the previous two wars, the likelihood of a US attack on Iran appears greater than that of an agreement.

Although recent diplomatic exchanges and efforts by Qatari officials offer grounds for optimism, the Qatari prime minister and foreign minister's recent visit to Washington for meetings with Trump and Vice President JD Vance can also be compared to the visit by Oman's foreign minister, who met Vance in the middle of negotiations, just days before the US war against Iran began on February 28. From this perspective, the visit by the senior Qatari officials should be seen as a warning sign.

If a new war breaks out, are we likely to see a short but intense confrontation, or could the conflict develop into a prolonged war of attrition?

If a new war begins, we will probably face a short but intense and highly destructive confrontation, based on what foreign media outlets have reported, citing informed sources. Such a confrontation would be part of a broader strategy of prolonged military pressure by the United States and Israel against Iran. The aim would be to combine external political, military and economic pressure to push Iranian society toward unrest and confrontation.

What role will Israel play in shaping future developments? Given the domestic political changes following Israel's elections, can we expect a shift in Tel Aviv's approach toward Iran?

Israel is not merely an active player in this situation; it is the director behind the scenes. It appears to have successfully advanced its agenda by turning its war against Iran into a US-Iran confrontation and even a Trump-Iran conflict, while remaining outside the main theater and watching the clashes unfold among Iran, the United States and regional countries. Any party that suffers damage in this confrontation stands to serve the interests of Israel's right-wing government led by Benjamin Netanyahu. Israel regards the United States and regional countries, including those that have established relations with Tel Aviv, as either open or undeclared adversaries and welcomes any harm inflicted on them. From Israel's perspective, Iranian attacks on the United States also deepen tensions and widen the rift between the two sides.

Moreover, the US-Israeli disputes with Iran constitute two separate issues. Although they overlap on certain matters, including the nuclear and missile programs, they are not entirely identical. Therefore, even if Washington reaches a comprehensive agreement with Tehran, Israel will continue various forms of activity against Iran, including military and paramilitary operations, if the deal fails to meet its demands.

As for the impact of Israel's elections on the confrontation with Iran, if Gadi Eisenkot, leader of the Yashar party and the opposition camp against Netanyahu, succeeds in forming the next government, we could see several changes in Tel Aviv's approach.

First, Israel would be less inclined to act unilaterally against Iran and would operate more closely within the framework of US policy toward Tehran. This could increase the chances of a US-Iran agreement. Relations between Washington and Tel Aviv would also become closer, with greater alignment between the Israeli government and Trump on various issues, including Iran. With Israel's cooperation, Trump could more easily implement his peace plan for Gaza. At the same time, the prospects for closer Israeli relations with regional countries could improve.

Nevertheless, Israel's military and intelligence services will continue to pursue their plans against Iran, regardless of whether Netanyahu or Eisenkot serves as prime minister. The methods, tactics and timelines may differ.

It should also be remembered that Eisenkot, a former chief of the Israeli military, was himself involved in intelligence, military and operational activities against Iran across the region. He does not fundamentally disagree with Netanyahu over the view that Iran poses a threat and is an adversary that Israel must confront. Their differences lie in the methods and approach.

How should Iran adjust its strategic calculations under the current circumstances?

First, Iran needs to develop a thorough and realistic understanding of regional developments and update its priorities accordingly. It should strengthen its decision-making and executive institutions, prevent the formation of regional coalitions against it, and bolster both its military and diplomatic instruments, using them in parallel.

Iran should also work to prevent regional countries from moving closer to Israel while ensuring that its own allies do not drift away.

Does maintaining the current state of neither war nor peace serve the interests of the parties involved, or is the situation gradually moving toward an inevitable confrontation? What factors could change this equation?

Maintaining the current situation primarily serves Israel's interests because it allows the country to inflict the consequences and costs of war on Iran and regional states without having to engage in an actual war.

Trump, too, may support the continuation of this situation under certain circumstances, particularly in the Persian Gulf. His reasoning could be that such an arrangement would benefit US production and exports of oil, gas, petroleum products and other energy resources, while harming China's economy by restricting its access to cheaper oil and gas supplies.

The continuation of this situation could also be part of a broader strategy to weaken Iran, alongside economic containment and continued military strikes.

Trump's setback in Brazil

Lula's victory exposed limits of American power



By Saman Sofalgar
Political researcher

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The victory of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva over Flávio Bolsonaro in Brazil's presidential election represents more than a triumph for the incumbent president. It is also a political defeat for Donald Trump and the ideological project he has sought to advance across Latin America. In a closely contested election, Lula secured 51.79 percent of the vote against Bolsonaro's 48.21 percent, demonstrating that Brazil's electorate was not prepared to return the country to the political orbit of the Bolsonaro family.

For Trump, the result carries implications that extend well beyond Brasília. Brazil is Latin America's largest economy, a major diplomatic power, and an increasingly important actor in the competition between Washington and Beijing. Losing the opportunity to see a politically aligned government return to power in Brasília is therefore a considerable setback for an administration that has sought to consolidate its influence across the Western Hemisphere.

The election also exposed a fundamental weakness in Trump's approach to international politics. The assumption that economic leverage, political intimidation, and ideological solidarity can substitute for genuine diplomatic influence.

A defeat for Trump's Latin American strategy

Trump's political ambitions in Latin America have increasingly revolved around building relationships with conservative and nationalist leaders who share his hostility toward left-wing governments, multilateral institutions, and what he describes as the liberal international establishment. Brazil occupies a particularly important position in this strategy. Its economic weight, natural resources, agricultural exports, and diplomatic influence make it indispensable to any serious American effort to shape the regional political landscape.

A Bolsonaro victory would have offered Washington an opportunity to strengthen its ideological presence in South America and constrain Lula's efforts to maintain an independent foreign policy. It would also have brought a politically sympathetic administration back into the leadership of a country whose relations with China, Russia, and other emerging powers have become increasingly consequential. Instead, Brazilian voters delivered a different verdict.

Lula's victory demonstrates that Trump's political influence has limits, even in countries where conservative movements have established substantial electoral support. Washington may possess enormous economic and military resources, but those advantages do not automatically translate into the ability to determine another country's political future.

Economic coercion and the backlash against Washington

Perhaps the most revealing dimension of the election was the failure of Trump's pressure-oriented approach toward Brazil. The Trump administration's use of additional tariffs against Brazilian exports, alongside its criticism of the legal proceedings against former president Jair Bolsonaro, contributed to an increasingly confrontational relationship with Lula's government. Trump portrayed the treatment of Bolsonaro as politically motivated and repeatedly criticized Brazilian institutions. His position effectively transformed a domestic legal and political dispute into an international confrontation between Washington and Brasília. But this strategy carried considerable risks.

For Brazilian voters, American pressure could be interpreted not as solidarity with a political ally but as interference in the country's sovereignty. Lula was able to frame the confrontation as a question of national independence, arguing that Brazil should not allow foreign governments to dictate its political choices.

This was a politically effective argument. Trump's approach reflected a familiar misconception: that economic power can be converted directly into political obedience. Yet economic coercion can produce the opposite outcome, particularly when it reinforces nationalist sentiment and allows political opponents to portray themselves as defenders of national sovereignty. Rather than weakening Lula decisively, Trump's pressure may have helped him consolidate support among voters concerned about foreign interference.



The cartoon shows the Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (L) sweeping away his electoral rival Flávio Bolsonaro (bottom-R) and US President Donald Trump with a large broom labeled "Brazilian Elections 2026".
JOSÉ ALBERTO RODRÍGUEZ AVILA/ SOCIAL MEDIA

Bolsonaro family: an ideological alliance with political costs

The election also raises questions about Trump's choice of political allies. Jair Bolsonaro was one of Trump's closest ideological partners in Latin America. Their political styles shared several characteristics: confrontational nationalism, hostility toward independent media, attacks on political opponents, and persistent challenges to institutional constraints. Flávio Bolsonaro sought to inherit this political legacy. However, the election demonstrated that the Bolsonaro brand, despite retaining considerable support, was not sufficient to secure a return to executive power.

The political baggage associated with the former president proved particularly consequential. Jair Bolsonaro's conviction over his role in efforts to overturn the 2022 election result has made the issue of democratic accountability central to the family's political identity. For Trump, the association carries an additional problem. His continued political sympathy for the Bolsonaro movement reinforces the perception that his international alliances are driven less by democratic principles than by ideological loyalty.

His response to Lula's victory further illustrated this contradiction. By questioning the legitimacy of the electoral outcome without presenting credible evidence of fraud, Trump once again demonstrated his willingness to undermine democratic institutions when their decisions produce an unfavorable political result. The implication is troubling: electoral legitimacy appears increasingly conditional in Trump's political worldview.



Flávio Bolsonaro's supporters wave the American and Israeli flags and float a giant balloon depicting the US President Donald Trump holding Brazil's president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, during the Independence Day parade in Sao Paulo on September 7, 2026.
MIGUEL SCHINCARIOL/AFP

> Lula's victory demonstrates that Trump's political influence has limits, even in countries where conservative movements have established substantial electoral support. Washington may possess enormous economic and military resources, but those advantages do not automatically translate into the ability to determine another country's political future.

Myth of an inevitable right-wing wave

Brazil's election also challenges the assumption that Latin America is undergoing an irreversible conservative transformation. Right-wing populist movements have gained ground across the region, capitalizing on economic dissatisfaction, public insecurity, and frustration with established political parties. Trump has sought to position himself as the central international figure of this broader ideological movement. But Brazil demonstrates that this political momentum is neither universal nor inevitable.

Lula's victory suggests that economic redistribution, social protection, democratic institutions, and national sovereignty remain powerful electoral themes. It also shows that conservative movements can encounter significant obstacles when their political identity becomes closely associated with institutional confrontation and external intervention. Nevertheless, the narrow margin of victory should not be overlooked. Nearly half of Brazilian voters supported Bolsonaro. His movement remains a powerful political force, and Lula will face a difficult governing environment, particularly given the strength of conservative interests in Congress. The election should therefore be interpreted not as the end of Bolsonarism but as evidence that its political reach has limits.

The implications of Lula's victory extend into the geopolitical competition between the United States and China. Brazil has consistently sought to preserve strategic autonomy, maintaining substantial economic relations with Beijing while also engaging with Washington and European capitals. Under Lula, this approach is likely to continue. For Trump, this presents a strategic challenge. His administration may find it increasingly difficult to persuade Brasília to align itself with Washington's priorities on trade, technology, international institutions, and relations with China.

Brazil's presidential election was more than a domestic political contest. It was a significant setback for Donald Trump's ambitions in Latin America and a reminder that economic coercion, ideological alliances, and political pressure cannot guarantee electoral outcomes.

What next for US relations?



By Christopher Sabatini
Researcher on Middle Eastern affairs

OPINION

While US President Donald Trump claimed Brazil's second round presidential election looked 'rigged' on October 26, other heads of state rushed to recognize President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's unexpected second-round presidential victory over conservative Flávio Bolsonaro.

French President Emmanuel Macron, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney all publicly congratulated Lula on his victory. Even Brazil's more conservative neighbours joined the chorus, including Peruvian President Keiko Fujimori, Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa, Chilean President José Antonio Kast, and Paraguayan President Santiago Peña.

The White House's response is not surprising. It had been counting on the election of Bolsonaro to complete its bingo card of right-wing presidents in the Western Hemisphere, following a period of sustained electoral success for right-wing candidates stretching from Honduras to Argentina. But Latin American regional solidarity and respect for democratic institutions and the popular will trumped ideology and alignment with the US.

Adding Latin America's largest democracy and economy would have represented a major victory for the self-proclaimed 'Donroe Doctrine'. Instead, public support for Lula's re-election may demonstrate that the bloc of Trump-aligned and Trump-adjacent presidents may not be as strong and ideological as many thought. (Only Argentine President Javier Milei has withheld congratulations for Lula.)

After initially calling for an annulment, members of the defeated candidate's team said the party accepted the results but questioned the conditions of the election process. Unlike his father, Jair, did in 2022 when he lost to Lula, Flávio seems to be walking back an outright rejection of the election, while still undermining public confidence in the election results.

Their questions over how the situation unfolded hinges on a Supreme Court justice who supported Lula's Workers' Party request to extend voting by two hours on October 25. That request was made originally by both parties to Brazil's electoral court — in order to accommodate voters who struggled to make it to the booths due to heavy rains, and others allegedly affected by limited public transportation. But the decision to kick the request up to the Supreme Court after the electoral court failed to respond casts a pall over the results — and further threatens the reputation of a Supreme Court already under suspicion for being politicized.

Brazil's modern, transparent voting system will be able to demonstrate the results — for those who want to believe them. But for core Bolsonaro supporters, trusting the results may be difficult. Flávio's father also claimed unproven fraud in 2022. And father and son have baked distrust of the judicial and electoral system into their political DNA, polarizing politics and society in Brazil.

In the end, how far Flávio's team decides to take its claims of fraud may depend on the White House and the US State Department. Both had a lot riding on a Bolsonaro victory. For Trump, it would have been the crowning achievement for his support in the region, during this heavy year of presidential elections across the hemisphere.

For others the issue is more ideological and personal. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, like many Cuban-Americans, saw Lula's Workers' Party as complicit in upholding the communist regimes in Cuba and Nicaragua. Creating a ring of conservative, anti-communist governments across the hemisphere to stand with the US against those regimes has long been a dream of Republican administrations and Cuban-Americans in Florida. Their perspective will likely also help decide whether and when the Trump administration accepts a Lula victory.

With conservative majorities in both houses of Congress, Lula will have a difficult time attempting to tackle the economic and fiscal reforms necessary to keep the government solvent and address its looming sovereign debt. But the biggest loser in the election is social trust. The country's voters are now almost evenly split between Bolsonaro and Lula (only 3.6 per cent separated the two leaders). And popular confidence in the Supreme Court may decline even more.

Will Lula change Brazil's approach to China?



By Bruno Binetti
Policy Advisor at the E3G

OPINION

Lula's re-election, following a campaign in which he declared that Brazil was 'nobody's backyard' and denounced foreign interference, will be welcomed in Beijing.

China retains a close partner in Latin America's largest economy, at a time when most countries in the region have moved closer to the Trump administration. Lula shares China's commitment to a multipolar international order with a stronger role for the Global South. That includes efforts within BRICS to reduce reliance on the US dollar in international trade, reform global financial institutions and expand climate finance for developing countries.

This partnership is underpinned by strong economic ties — ties so important they would have endured a Bolsonaro victory. China has been Brazil's largest trading partner since 2009, driven by Brazilian exports of soybeans, iron ore and crude oil. In 2025, Brazilian exports to China reached $100 billion, compared with $38 billion to the US. This makes continued engagement with Beijing a priority for the powerful agribusiness sector, which is well represented in Congress and traditionally aligned with Bolsonaro and the political right.

Brazil was also the world's largest recipient of Chinese investment in 2025, with Chinese firms expanding their presence in electricity infrastructure, manufacturing and mining. In the automotive sector, BYD and Great Wall Motor have established electric vehicle production facilities in Brazil, and Lula is pushing Chinese manufacturers to use more local suppliers and create jobs.

Brazil-China relations are likely to deepen during Lula's fourth term, especially if the Trump administration continues to impose tariffs and other trade restrictions on Brazil.

Yet Lula is the ultimate pragmatist. He has always sought to maintain good relations with competing powers. Brazil and the US are already discussing a potential trade agreement that could include cooperation on critical minerals, a top priority for Washington as it tries to reduce dependence on China.

With the world's second-largest rare-earth reserves, Lula is open to investment from both China and the US, provided it helps Brazil develop its own processing industries and move up the value chain.



Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva waves a flag during a rally in Sao Paulo, Brazil ahead of the presidential runoff on October 24, 2026.
ALEXANDRE SCHNEIDER/GETTY IMAGES

What does this result mean for left, right in Latin America?



By Vanessa Rubio Marquez
Former Mexican senator and deputy minister

OPINION

With Lula's clear victory in the presidential run-off on October 25, the two largest Latin American economies, Brazil and Mexico, will be perceived as the remaining guardians of the left, in a region that has largely flipped to the right of the political spectrum in recent years. However, the more relevant question is whether being left or right in the Western Hemisphere — and the world — still means what it once did.

Traditionally, the distinction between left and right was relatively clear. The left favoured a stronger role for the state in reducing inequality and redistributing wealth. The right, by contrast, placed greater emphasis on individual responsibility, private enterprise and preserving existing economic and social structures, accepting inequalities as a natural feature of society.

Today, these boundaries are being blurred. For instance, under Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil increased minimum monthly welfare transfers by 50 per cent (R$400 to R$600), reaching over 20 million families ahead of the 2022 election. And the reduction of the working week from 44 to 40 hours also took place under his mandate. Similar measures to protect specific sectors in society were implemented in Ecuador, where right-wing Daniel Noboa introduced financial assistance for vulnerable entrepreneurs.

However, the left -wing Mexican government of Andrés Manuel López Obrador limited pandemic spending and direct budget support to 0.7 per cent of GDP, compared with over 3 per cent across G20 emerging economies. And Chile's left-wing president, Gabriel Boric, oversaw a 23.1 per cent real reduction in government spending in 2022.

Ever more, the extremes of left and right converge in pragmatic, immediate and populist policies. The more important divide is how governments exercise power, respect democratic institutions and protect individual freedoms while they deliver for the people.

A very interesting case of a tension between democracy and tangible results in matters that people prioritise is seen in El Salvador. President Nayib Bukele's crackdown on gangs has brought major security gains, but at a cost to civil liberties. Emergency powers have been extended 55 times since 2022, with over 93,000 arrests and restrictions on due process.

Being the 'remaining two of the left' matters less than how the countries that jointly produce more than 88 per cent of Latin America's GDP are governed.

Lula's victory reminds us of a broader, more concerning regional trend: the defining divide is increasingly between governments that preserve democratic institutions and individual freedoms and those willing to weaken them for ideological, political and electoral reasons.

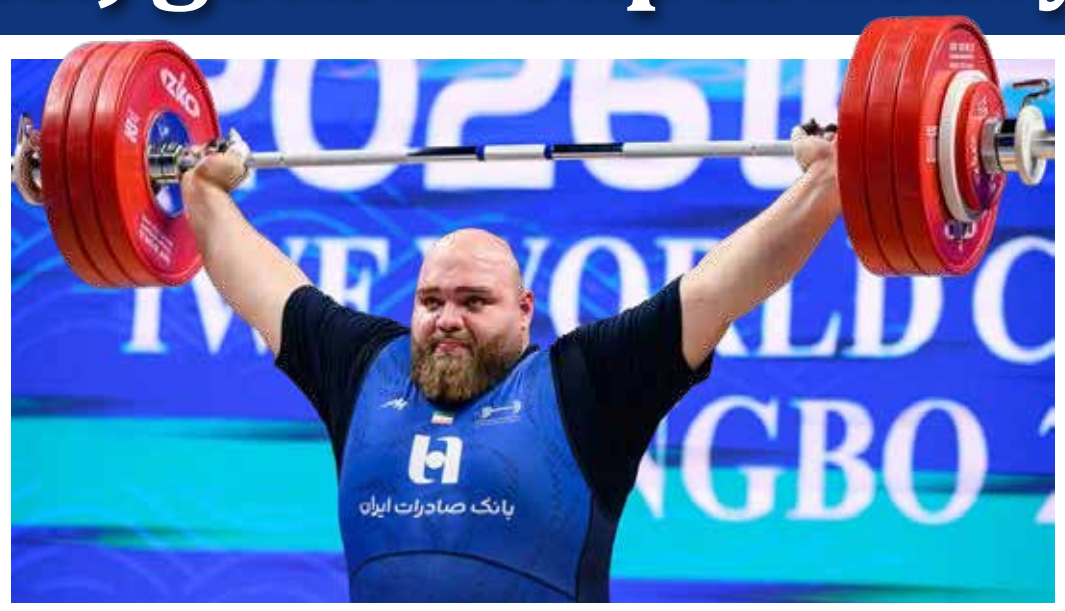
The articles were first published by Chatham House.

Weightlifting World Championships:

Yousefi sets new world record to clinch C&J gold in superheavyweight

Sports Desk

A thrilling final day at the Weightlifting World Championships in Ningbo, China, saw Iran's Alireza Yousefi win the clean & jerk gold in the men's +110kg category, setting a new world record in the process, before claiming silver in the total on Sunday.
Yousefi's fellow Iranian superheavyweight Ali Davoudi, meanwhile, settled for bronze in the snatch but missed out on the podium in the clean & jerk and total, finishing fourth in both events.
Ali Ammar Yusur, who controversially lost out to Davoudi in the race for gold at September's Asian Games after being denied an attempt due to a timing error, made history by winning gold in the total and snatch, as well as silver in the clean & jerk, to become the first Iraqi world champion in an Olympic sport.
The snatch competition was hardly one to remember for Yousefi, who opened with a successful 186kg lift before clearing 191kg and 195kg on his next two attempts, but ultimately had to settle for fourth place.
Ammar claimed snatch gold with 211kg, although he failed to improve his own world record by one kilogram, missing his 220kg attempt.
Two-time defending champion Varazdat Lalayan, a silver medalist at the Paris 2024 Olympics, finished runner-up to Ammar with 210kg, four kilograms ahead of Davoudi.
In the clean & jerk, both Davoudi and Yousefi had two attempts remaining after Ammar had completed his campaign with 255kg, while Lalayan had one attempt left.
Lalayan went first but failed to lift 257kg, capping a disappointing championships for Armenia, which saw four of its lifters bomb out, one withdraw and none complete more than three of their six attempts. Lalayan's 210-247-457 performance made him the country's only total medalist, with bronze.
Yousefi initially lifted 258kg but had the attempt overturned because of bar oscillation. The Iranian and his coaching staff were visibly unhappy with the decision, arguing that the rules only penalize "deliberate oscillation" and that the bar had moved without any intervention from the lifter.
Remarkably, Yousefi, who had trailed Ammar by 16kg in the snatch, bounced back to lift a world-record 263kg and claim clean & jerk gold. The effort also propelled him past Lalayan into second place in the total with a combined 458kg (195-263).
Davoudi, who had lifted 262kg to win the Asian Games title, failed twice in his attempt to clear 261kg after opening with 246kg, finishing with a total of 452kg (206-246). Meanwhile, Ammar and the Iraqi coaching staff, including his father and coach, celebrated the historic achievement backstage.
Only four superheavyweights this century have recorded a total in the 460kg range by the age of 22, and the other three were in Ningbo: Iranian head coach Behdad Salimi, his legendary compatriot Hossein Rezazadeh, director of Iran's national teams, and Georgian sensation Lasha Talakhadze, who withdrew from the B Group in his first international appearance since winning a third consecutive Olympic gold in Paris.
Sunday's results took Iran's medal tally to eight across four men's weight categories at the championships.
Alireza Nasiri, who turns 21 next month, recovered from a slow start to claim two impressive silver medals with a 185-233-418 performance in the men's 110kg category, where Uzbekistan's Akbar Djuraev swept all three gold medals.
Nasiri's compatriot Alireza Moeini, who won snatch gold and total silver in the 94kg category last year, had to settle for 12th place on his debut in the 110kg division. He posted a combined total of 388kg, lifting 180kg in the snatch and 208kg in the clean & jerk in the B Group.
Ali A'alipour, meanwhile, claimed three bronze medals in the 95kg category, posting a total of 396kg with lifts of 181kg in the snatch and 215kg in the clean & jerk.
Mir-Mostafa Javadi and Abdollah Beiranvand were the first Iranian lifters to take to the platform in Ningbo, finishing empty-handed in the 85kg category.
Beiranvand finished ninth with a total of 363kg (170kg in the snatch and 193kg in the clean & jerk), while former world champion Javadi placed 13th with 360kg (160kg and 200kg, respectively).
Iran collected 425 points to finish third in the men's standings, behind North Korea and China, which amassed 533 and 527 points, respectively.



Iranian weightlifter Alireza Yousefi competes in the men's +110kg category at the IWF World Championships in Ningbo, China, on November 8, 2026.
IWF

Taremi omitted as Iran names new-look squad for Basra tournament

Sports Desk

Al Wasl striker Mehdi Taremi headlines a list of high-profile absentees after Iran head coach Amir Qalenoei named a youthful, revamped 29-man squad for the November international break.
Iran will take on Palestine in a friendly tournament in Basra, Iraq, on Saturday before facing the host nation the following Tuesday.
The event was originally intended to serve as part of Iran's preparations for next January's AFC Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia. However, the Asian Football Confederation postponed the tournament until December 2027 amid security concerns in the region, following an escalation in the conflict involving Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Ansarullah movement.
With the flagship continental competition pushed back by 11 months, Qalenoei and his coaching staff have decided to inject fresh blood into the national team. The move comes after growing scrutiny of Iran's aging squad, which was the second-oldest at June's FIFA World Cup.
The new squad reflects "the coaching staff's belief in the need for a generational transition, as they look to pave the way for younger players and assess emerging talent in Iranian football. It is a process that is not being put off until some distant future but is already taking shape at this training camp," the Iranian Football Federation said on Monday.
"The coaching staff's approach during the current FIFA international window is to give younger players more opportunities and assess their abilities in the international matches in Iraq. "The plan was initially due to be implemented at the previous training camp but was postponed until the current gathering following coordination between the senior national team's coaching staff and the U23 team, whose young players took part in the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games in September.
"Accordingly, the coaching staff have decided to leave out several experienced members of the national team from the current camp to create more opportunities for younger players to feature and be assessed.
"The decision has been made solely as part of the technical plans for the current training camp and should not be interpreted as a change in the status or role of experienced players in the national team's future plans," the statement added.
Goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand, who is shortlisted for the AFC Player of the Year award to be announced later this month, has also been left out, along with veteran defenders Ehsan Hajsafi, Shoja Khalilzadeh and Ramin Rezaeian.
Meanwhile, Adib Zarei and Esmaeil Qolizadeh have earned their first international call-ups under Qalenoei.
The following is Iran's 29-man squad for the two friendlies in Basra:
Goalkeepers: Payam Niazmand (Persepolis), Habib Farabbasi (Esteghlal), Mohammad Khalifeh (Aluminium Arak), Adib Zarei (Shams Azar)
Defenders: Ali Nemati (Lusail), Mohammad-Mahdi Zare' (Persepolis), Aref Aqasi (Esteghlal), Saman Fallah (Esteghlal), Amin Hazbavi (Sepahan), Abolfazl Razzaqour (Foolad Khuzestan), Hossein Goudarzi (Esteghlal), Jafar Salmani (Al Talaba), Saleh Hardani (Esteghlal), Aria Yousefi (Sepahan)
Midfielders: Mohammad Qorbani (Al Wahda), Amirmohammad Razzaqinia (Esteghlal), Omid Nourafkan (Sepahan), Mohammad-Javad Hosseinnejad (Dynamo Makhachkala), Saeid Ezzatollahi (Shabab Al Ahli), Esmaeil Qolizadeh (Esteghlal), Mahdi Limouchi (Sepahan), Afshin Sadeqi (Nassaji Mazandaran), Amirhossein Farsi (Khaybar), Mohammad Mohebbi (HNK Rijeka), Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh (Tractor), Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi (Persepolis)
Strikers: Sardar Azmoun (Shabab Al Ahli), Kasra Taheri (Sepahan), Dennis Eckert Dargahi (Standard de Liège).


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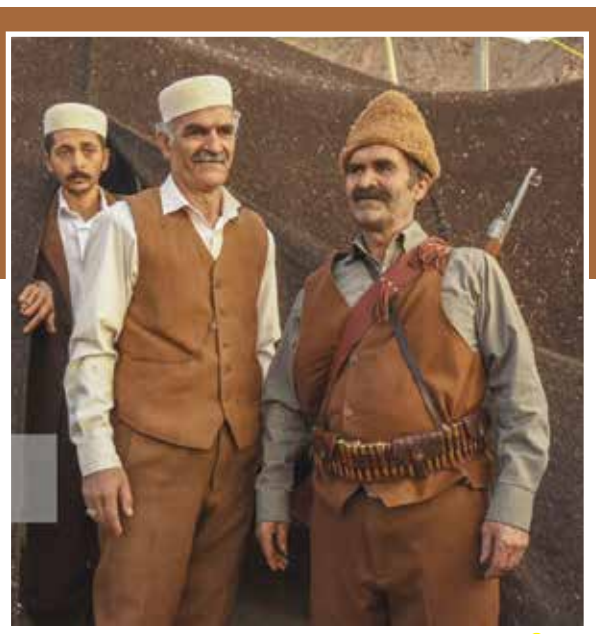
Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics:

Iran suffers last-four heartbreak in women's futsal

Sports Desk

Iran's women's youth futsal team suffered a heartbreaking 3-2 defeat to Venezuela in the semifinals at the Dakar Youth Olympic Games on Sunday.
Iran fell behind 1-0 in the first half before Venezuela doubled its lead after the break.
The Iranian girls, however, staged a spirited comeback to level the score at 2-2 and force extra time.
The match went into two three-minute periods of extra time, but Iran conceded the decisive goal with just 30 seconds remaining in the second period to suffer a narrow defeat and miss out on a place in the final showpiece.
Iran had enjoyed an impressive run in the group stage, recording three consecutive victories over Cameroon, Costa Rica and Italy, which will face Iran again in the bronze-medal contest, to finish top of Group B and secure a semifinal berth.

Semnan preserves rich ethnic, linguistic diversity



ISNA

Iranica Desk

Semnan Province, located along the southern slopes of the Alborz Mountains and on the edge of Iran's central desert, is one of the country's historically significant regions. Its geographical location has played an important role in shaping its ethnic and cultural diversity throughout history. Formerly known as Qumis, or Komesh, the region lay along a major route connecting the Iranian Plateau with Khorasan, Ray, and Gorgan. This strategic position made it a place of passage, migration, and settlement for different populations over the centuries.

Parts of what is now Semnan Province were within the territory of the Median kingdom. The region later retained its strategic and commercial importance under the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian empires. During the Parthian period, Qumis was considered one of the empire's important provinces.

In subsequent centuries, the arrival and settlement of different ethnic groups and tribal communities gradually contributed to the region's diverse demographic and cultural makeup.

The province's population includes communities with longstanding roots in the area, as well as tribal groups that migrated there at different points in history. Nomadic pastoralism also remains an important part of the cultural identity of areas such as Garmsar, Shahrud, Damghan, and Mehdishahr.

One of Semnan Province's most distinctive features is its linguistic diversity. The province is sometimes described as an "island of dialects" because of the variety of languages and local speech forms found there. Semnani belongs to the Western Iranian branch of the Iranian languages and has preserved distinctive historical and grammatical features. Other local varieties include Sangesari, Sorkhei, Lasgerdi, Shahmirzadi, and Aftari. Languages and dialects such as Turkish, Kurdish, Baluchi, Mazandarani, and local varieties of Persian are also spoken in different parts of the province. This linguistic diversity reflects centuries of coexistence, migration, and cultural interaction among different communities.

Alireza Shah-Hosseini, head of the Semnan Provincial Branch of the Iranology Foundation, says that more than 78 dialects have been identified in the province. He believes that the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups and the region's linguistic diversity have made Semnan a small-scale reflection of Iran as a whole. In his view, this diversity is not a threat but an opportunity to strengthen cultural ties and showcase Iran's intangible heritage.

In an interview with IRNA, Shah-Hosseini described Semnan as a "colorful mosaic of ethnic groups and dialects," saying that the presence of different cultures has given the province a distinctive identity. He cited Kurdish, Lor, Turkic, Baluchi, Mazandarani, Tabari, and Turkmen communities, alongside speakers of local languages and dialects such as Semnani, Sorkhei, Lasgerdi, Aftari, and Parvari.

He noted that traces of Turkmen presence can even be found in Abr village in Shahrud, further illustrating the province's ethnic and cultural diversity. Shah-Hosseini said that local subcultures are among the valuable assets of any region and that Semnan, despite having a population of less than one million, has considerable cultural diversity. This diversity, he added, can help strengthen national identity, deepen understanding of local cultures, and introduce Iran's cultural heritage to a wider audience.



TASNIM

He also described Semnan as a "paradise of dialects and accents," noting that some elements of its linguistic heritage have been registered on Iran's National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. According to Shah-Hosseini, the Semnani language and local varieties such as Sangesari and Sorkhei are important components of this heritage. Preserving them, he said, is essential to passing the province's historical and cultural identity on to future generations.

Shah-Hosseini attributes part of Semnan's ethnic and linguistic diversity to the migration and movement of communities from different parts of Iran over various historical periods. Groups with distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds gradually settled in the region and continued their lives alongside its established population. One example is the presence of people of Georgian descent in Abbasabad village, in Meyami in the eastern part of the province. Shah-Hosseini says the village's residents have Georgian roots and that some old Georgian words can still be identified in their speech. According to him, the community was relocated to the area during the reign of Shah Abbas I of the Safavid dynasty. The village was previously known as Asadabad.

He considers the peaceful coexistence of migrant communities and the region's established population one of Semnan's defining cultural characteristics. Over generations, these communities have lived alongside one another, preserving elements of their own languages and traditions while also contributing to the development of a shared regional culture.

Alongside the efforts of researchers and cultural activists, local officials have also announced initiatives to support Semnan's language and cultural heritage. Mehdi Samimian, governor of the city of Semnan, has announced plans to establish an academy for the Semnani language in the provincial capital. The proposed institution is intended to support the ancient Iranian language and create opportunities for its wider use and long-term preservation.

In an interview with ISNA, Samimian said that Semnani has considerable linguistic and cultural potential and that the city's administration supports efforts to promote the language and expand its use.

He added that establishing an academy could contribute to the language's development and help preserve the region's local culture.

Samimian also announced plans to give greater recognition to notable figures from Semnan, including Hakim Elahi, and to improve the condition of his mausoleum. Another initiative involves creating a garden cemetery for the province's distinguished historical and cultural figures near the scholar's resting place.

Despite changes in lifestyles and the declining use of some languages, dialects, and traditional forms of clothing, Semnan's cultural heritage remains an important part of the region's historical identity. Establishing an academy for the Semnani language, documenting local dialects, honoring prominent figures, and reviving traditional practices could all help preserve this cultural wealth and pass it on to future generations. Shaped by centuries of migration and coexistence, Semnan's ethnic and linguistic diversity is part of the broader picture of Iran's cultural richness.

Reading Room

Two books uncover forgotten chapter in northern Iran's history

Iranica Desk

Two newly unveiled books by Iranian contemporary history researcher Mostafa Nouri explore a turbulent and often overlooked chapter in the history of northern Iran, documenting the Soviet occupation of Mazandaran and Gorgan during World War II and the political and social developments that followed in the years leading up to the August 1953 coup.

The books, titled Years of Turmoil: Mazandaran and Gorgan under Soviet Red Army Occupation (1941–1946) and Years Without Refuge: Mazandaran and Gorgan from the End of World War II to the August 1953 Coup (1946–1953), were introduced at a ceremony held at the National University of Skill in Sari. The event was organized as part of the programs marking National Mazandaran Day and Mazandaran Week, according to IRNA.

Drawing on historical documents and archival sources, the two volumes examine a period when international political rivalries and the presence of foreign military forces had a profound impact on Iran, particularly its northern provinces. Rather than focusing exclusively on high-level political developments, Nouri's research also investigates how these events affected local communities, public institutions, economic activities and the everyday lives of ordinary people.

The first volume, Years of Turmoil, focuses on the years 1941 to 1946, when Soviet forces were stationed in northern Iran following the Allied invasion of the country during World War II. The occupation, which formed part of the wider Allied effort to secure supply routes to the Soviet Union, had consequences that extended well beyond military and diplomatic affairs.

The book documents various aspects of the Soviet military presence in Mazandaran and Gorgan, including the occupation and use of buildings, the requisitioning of local resources and supplies, financial losses and the use of railway facilities. It also examines the detention of Turkmen and Iranian military personnel, offering insight into the experiences of people and communities caught up in the political and military circumstances of the time. By examining these issues at a local level, the volume seeks to show how the presence of foreign troops shaped everyday life in the region. The experiences of residents, the pressures placed on local resources and the disruption of normal economic and administrative activities form an important part of the historical picture presented in the book.

The first book was initially published in 2015 by the National Library and Archives of Iran. Its latest edition is the third, and has been revised and reorganized. The new edition comprises 444 pages and reflects Nouri's continued work on the subject and his efforts to present the material in a more comprehensive form.

The second volume, Years Without Refuge, continues the story from 1946 to 1953, covering the years between the end of the Second World War and the coup of August 1953. This period was marked by significant political tensions and changes in Iran, as domestic power struggles increasingly intersected with international developments. The book explores the political rivalries and social conditions that shaped Mazandaran and Gorgan during these years. Among the subjects it addresses are the activities and competition of political parties, the consequences of the withdrawal of foreign forces, the nationalization of Iran's oil industry and the developments that culminated in the 1953 coup.

The second volume also considers how national political events were reflected in the provinces. By tracing developments in Mazandaran and Gorgan, it places the region within the broader political history of Iran and highlights the importance of provincial experiences in understanding the country's modern past. The book comprises 520 pages.



Mostafa Nouri

The unveiling ceremony brought together academics, researchers and cultural figures to discuss the historical significance of the books and the importance of documenting the history of northern Iran.

Nouri, whose research focuses on contemporary Iranian history, said that the two books were the outcome of years of study and writing. His work seeks to bring together documentary evidence and historical analysis to provide a clearer account of developments that have not always received sufficient attention in broader narratives of Iran's modern history.

He also noted that the publication of the revised third edition of the first volume offered an opportunity to reorganize and expand the presentation of the research. The second volume, meanwhile, completes a wider account of the region's history by following developments through the politically decisive years leading up to the 1953 coup.

Looking ahead, Nouri is considering the possibility of preparing a third volume. Potential subjects include the period of Reza Shah's rule and the years between the 1953 coup and the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Such a project could extend the historical account and provide further insight into the political and social transformations that shaped northern Iran during the twentieth century.

Taken together, Years of Turmoil and Years Without Refuge offer a documentary-based account of more than a decade of upheaval in Mazandaran and Gorgan. By connecting international developments and national political events with their local consequences, the books seek to give greater visibility to the experiences of communities in northern Iran and contribute to a fuller understanding of the country's contemporary history.

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Italian-made Shahnameh facsimile arrives in Iran

Arts & Culture Desk

An Italian-made facsimile of one of the most complete known copies of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh has arrived in Iran on November 8, 2026.

As a separate Armenian translation of the epic was unveiled in Armenia on Sunday, underscoring efforts to promote the Persian literary heritage abroad.

Mohammad Taghi Amini, director general for Europe and the Americas at Iran's Culture and Islamic Relations Organization and a former cultural attache in Italy, presented the volume to Ali Darabi, deputy minister of cultural heritage, in Tehran on Sunday.

Amini said three specialist teams from an Italian institute had traveled to Tehran to examine the original manuscript at the historical Golestan Palace in the heart of the capital.

Shahnameh, the celebrated epic by Persian poet Ferdowsi (c. 935–c. 1020–1026), comprises nearly 60,000 verses. It recounts the history of Persia's kings, from mythical times to the 7th century, drawing on accounts preserved in Pahlavi (Middle Persian).

For nearly 1,000 years, it has remained one of the most popular works in the Persian-speaking world.

They studied its illustrations, portraits, gilding and other artistic details to ensure the reproduction closely matched the original.

The manuscript, preserved at the palace, contains 700 pages and 22 rare illustrations.

"It is a uniquely complete copy among known versions worldwide. The project required considerable time and expense and was intended to strengthen cultural ties between Iran and Italy," Amini said.

A collection of scholarly articles on the project is also planned.



Iranian cultural official Mohammad Taghi Amini (L) and Deputy Cultural Heritage Minister Ali Darabi pose with an Italian-made facsimile edition of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh in Tehran, Iran, November 8, 2026.
IRNA

The facsimile will be unveiled in Italy after its presentation in Iran.

Darabi called the Shahnameh, a cornerstone of Iranian cultural and historical identity.

"The words 'Iran' and 'wisdom' appear more than 1,200 and 650 times, respectively, in the epic, which opens with the phrase 'In the name of the Lord of life and wisdom'," Darabi said.

The facsimile will be transferred to the Golestan Palace World Heritage complex for an official unveiling.

Separately, an Armenian translation of the Shahnameh was unveiled at a meeting between Iranian Budget and Planning Organization chief Hamid Pourmohammadi and a group of Iranologists in Armenia.

Composer Loris Tjeknavorian was honored for adapting the epic into an opera.

Pourmohammadi described the work as a source of wisdom, ethics and guidance for good governance, citing tragedies including the stories of Rostam and Sohrab and Siavash.

Iranian documentary wins top award at Africa festival



A scene from 'Throne of Wood' directed by Sadegh Kazemi

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian short documentary 'Throne of Wood' has won the award for best short documentary at the 15th Africa International Film Festival (AFRIFF), held in Lagos, southwestern Nigeria.

Directed by Sadegh Kazemi, the film is a production of Iran's Documentary House. It received the award at the festival, which ran from November 1 to 7, 2026, bringing together films from around the world.

Locally named 'Soghra Rais' (chief Soghra in Persian), the social documentary tells the story of a woman around 100 years old whose determination to maintain her independence remains central to her life, despite having dozens of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

At the heart of the film is her insistence on continuing her distinctive habit of collecting firewood, a choice that reflects her determination to live on her own terms.

'Throne of Wood' previously won the Best Documentary Award at the seventh Kobani International Film Festival, strengthening its profile on the international festival circuit.

The festival was held in Lagos over seven days in early November.

Karachi Culture Festival to screen Iranian films

Arts & Culture Desk

Three Iranian films, one feature and two shorts, have been selected for the third Karachi International Culture Festival, running from October 29 to November 22 in Karachi, Pakistan.

The selected films are the feature 'Call Me Ziba' by Rasoul Sadr-e Ameli and the shorts 'Minab' by Marziyeh Jafari and 'Bang Bang' by Pouya Shahjahani, ILNA reported on Monday.

'Call Me Ziba' follows Khosrow, who has been forcibly hospitalized in a psychiatric institution and has spent years thinking of his daughter Ziba. Today is Ziba's sixteenth birthday, and Khosrow refuses to let the day pass like any other.

'Minab' is a short film in memory of 168 children killed in the attack on Shajareh Tayyebeh School in Minab, southern Iran, which was hit by a US missile strike on February 28, the first day of the US-Israeli war against Iran.

It follows children in a classroom drawing pictures of their future careers, only for their imaginative world to be shattered by the sound of aircraft and a sudden explosion during a devastating attack on a school in Minab, paying tribute to young lives cut short.

'Bang Bang' is about a young child sitting in the back seat of a car, desperately trying to find a way out of their world as their parents relentlessly quarrel during the drive.



Hosted by the Pakistan Arts Council, the 25-day festival covers music, theater, dance, visual arts and cinema, including film screenings. More than 1,000 artists from over 150 countries are taking part this year, alongside more than 500 Pakistani artists.

Iran's participation with three films provides an opportunity to showcase a selection of its cinematic productions alongside works from around the world.

Iran's ancient water systems offer lessons for climate adaptation



Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System in Khuzestan province, southwestern Iran

Social Desk

Iran's traditional water systems, including underground qanats (ancient underground water networks) and community-based irrigation, could help inform efforts to tackle water scarcity and adapt to climate change, cultural officials and experts said on Monday.

Speaking at a ceremony marking the World Day for Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Hassan Fartousi, secretary-general of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, said generations of Iranians had developed ways to manage scarce water in the country's arid and semi-arid regions.

"Qanats were not merely historic engineering structures but embodied technical skills, cultural beliefs and social practices developed around managing limited water resources," he said.

The head of the UNESCO office in Tehran said traditional irrigation, rainwater harvesting and community-led water management could support more sustainable and equitable approaches to water use. He called for these skills to be passed on to younger generations.

Mahmoud Golabchi, an Iranian architecture and engineering scholar, said the country's historic water infrastructure reflected the integration of engineering, architecture and environmental knowledge.

He cited the Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System in Khuzestan province, southwestern Iran, and the country's qanats as examples of advanced water management.

The Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System in southwestern Iran dates back to the 5th century BC, during the reign of Darius the Great. Built around two diversion canals on the Karun River, the system combined dams, bridges, tunnels, mills and water channels to supply the city and irrigate farmland across the Mianab Plain.

"Historic bridges in Isfahan, in central Iran, and traditional ice houses in Yazd, also in central Iran, showed how builders adapted structures to local climate conditions and made use of natural resources," he added.

The speakers said intangible cultural heritage should be seen not simply as a legacy of the past, but as a living body of knowledge that could help communities address current and future environmental challenges.