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Iranians hold a funeral procession, also attended by President Masoud Pezeshkian and other senior officials, to bid farewell to 110 unknown soldiers fallen during the 1980s Iraq-Iran war in Tehran on November 13, 2026.
president.ir

The UN Charter under fire: Why US attacks on Iran violate int'l law



By Abbas Araghchi
Iranian foreign minister

OPINION

If states were free to attack one another based on their own assessments of possible future threats, what would be left of the international legal order? This question goes well beyond the political dispute between Iran and the United States. It concerns one of the fundamental principles on which the international order established after the Second World War rests: the use of force is governed by law, and no state, however powerful, is entitled to place its own judgment above binding rules of international law.

The military attacks launched by the United States and the Zionist regime against Iran constitute a clear violation of the prohibition on the use of force and an infringement of Iran's sovereignty. Their legality must be assessed against the UN Charter and established principles of international law, not against political arguments or justifications advanced after military operations have begun.

The UN Charter sets clear limits on the use of force

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. This prohibition is not merely a treaty obligation. It is also a fundamental rule of customary international law, as the International Court of Justice confirmed in its 1986 judgment in the Nicaragua case.

International law permits the use of force only in narrowly defined circumstances, including the exercise of the right of self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter. The US military attack

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on Iran had no authorization from the Security Council, nor can allegations of possible future threats, in themselves, provide a sufficient legal basis for invoking self-defense.



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US miscalculates Iran's strength by comparing it with others: *Pezeshkian*



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) shakes hands with his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on the sidelines of the 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Turkey on November 12, 2026.
president.ir

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said the United States miscalculated Iran's capabilities and strength by comparing the country with others, stressing that Iran will not surrender in the face of oppression and aggression.

Pezeshkian made the remarks in a meeting with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on the sidelines of the 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Turkey on Thursday.

Pezeshkian said the Israeli regime deceived US President Donald Trump and pushed him toward war, stressing that Iran is not responsible for the current situation in the region.

"The Israeli regime has played the role of a fire-starter in this crisis and, by deceiving Trump, has pushed him toward war," Pezeshkian told Lula.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is not responsible for the current situation in the region. For what purpose and on what basis has the United States entered this region and imposed a naval blockade?"

Pezeshkian said the era of unilateralism has come to an end, stressing that no country can impose its preferred order on others through force and coercion.

"War is in no one's interest, but the Islamic Republic of Iran will not surrender in the face of oppression and aggression and will deliver a firm response to any attack," Pezeshkian stated.

The president said Washington has sought to break the resistance of the Iranian nation, pointing to its terrorist assassination of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, military commanders, scientists, schoolchildren and other civilians.

"Nevertheless, these actions have produced the opposite of what the enemy intended, and national unity and internal cohesion have increased significantly compared to the pre-war period."

Pezeshkian also said the United States is seeking to restrict Iran's maritime and air routes and is now attempting to block its land routes, but stressed that such measures will not achieve their intended objectives.

For his part, Lula condemned the US military aggression against Iran, saying Brazil had never imagined that Washington would attack the Islamic Republic.

Recalling his 2010 meeting with the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the Brazilian president said he had been explicitly assured that Iran's nuclear activities were exclusively peaceful.

"The bombing of Iran was carried out under false pretexts, and this was a very difficult and bitter development for us," Lula said.

He expressed Brazil's solidarity with Iran, noting that the war has also caused serious economic difficulties for countries around the world, including Brazil, through rising gas, gasoline and oil prices.

Lula said Brazil is prepared to take the necessary steps to help restore peace and stability in the region and offered to facilitate efforts toward that goal.

He also expressed readiness to participate in regional security arrangements aimed at strengthening peace.

Criticizing Western efforts to portray Iran negatively in international relations and negotiations, Lula said Western governments repeatedly seek to present a distorted image of the Islamic Republic.

Iran targets US radar system in Bahrain in response to attack on Sirik

International Desk



Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Friday that it targeted a US early warning radar system in Bahrain in response to the US attack on a telecommunications tower in Iran's southern port city of Sirik.

"A few hours ago, IRGC Aerospace Force fighters targeted and destroyed the US aggressors' early-warning radar on the island of Bahrain in response to the enemy's air aggression against a telecommunications tower in Sirik," the IRGC said in the statement.

"This is a serious warning to the aggressor enemy to stop its aerial provocations and oil smuggling in the Strait of Hormuz," it added in the statement.

It added that should violations and acts of aggression recur, the IRGC Aerospace Force "stands in full readiness to engage without limits." Offending companies "that allow themselves to be deceived by the aggressor enemy will face even more severe punitive measures."

The operation comes amid the ongoing US-Israeli war of aggression against the Islamic Republic, launched on February 28 with the assassination of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and senior military commanders.

Iranian forces have responded with repeated waves of deadly missile and drone strikes on US military bases and assets across the Persian Gulf, including facilities in Bahrain, repeatedly targeting early-warning radars and air-defense systems.

Previous Iranian operations have degraded US surveillance and defensive capabilities in the region, while American forces have continued strikes on Iranian territory, including civilian and infrastructure sites.

Iranian officials have repeatedly warned that any further aggression will be met with expanded retaliation without geographical restriction, particularly in defense of the Strait of Hormuz.

Most Persian Gulf Arab countries host major US military installations and were targeted in Iranian retaliatory attacks in the weeks after the US-Israel war on Iran began on February 28.

During the recent acts of aggression against Iran, some regional countries allowed the US to use their territories to launch attacks on Iran. Tehran had repeatedly warned the countries about the issue.

Violating LPG carrier hits mine in Strait of Hormuz: *IRGC*

International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Friday that a ship passing through an unauthorized route in the Strait of Hormuz suffered a massive explosion after hitting a naval mine.

"A few hours ago, a ship carrying liquefied natural gas east of the Strait of Hormuz tried to cross an unauthorized passageway south of the strait, but was hit by a naval mine and exploded violently," the IRGC said on Friday.

In recent weeks, Iran's Armed Forces have repeatedly reported fires or explosions on board ships in the strait after hitting mines.

The US military, however, claims to have cleared the main routes through the waterway of mines.

The IRGC said that the vessel failed to "learn from the fate of previously destroyed oil tankers" and chose to rely on the support of US fighter jets to exit the waterway.

It further stated that the Strait of Hormuz is being managed with the supervision of Iranian forces, adding that any vessel attempting to violate Iranian sovereignty over the strait and ignore warnings issued by the IRGC Navy's Strait of Hormuz traffic control center by entering unauthorized routes would "meet the same fate as previous vessels."

On Thursday, two other oil tankers violating the regulations also caught fire while attempting to take the illegal route and exit the strait with their radar systems switched off. The offending vessels struck naval mines despite repeated warnings.

The IRGC has repeatedly stated that the unauthorized route near Omani waters is unsafe and that vessels risk striking naval mines while passing through it. The route has been encouraged by the US, which has claimed that it is safe.

Iran imposed restrictions on the Strait of Hormuz on February 28, following the US-Israeli attacks on the country. Since then, the strategic waterway has been managed under the control of Iranian naval forces.

Tehran has made clear that the restrictions will remain in place until its demands, including the lifting of the US blockade on Iranian ports, are met.

Iran rejects UK's claims of involvement in violent, espionage acts

International Desk



Iran dismissed as "unacceptable" British authorities' accusations about the Islamic Republic's involvement in acts of violence and espionage activities in the UK.

The Iranian Embassy in the UK released a statement on Thursday, after a British court convicted two Iranian men of spying for Tehran by carrying out surveillance on anti-Iran journalists and a lawyer, Press TV reported.

The Embassy said that it "categorically rejects the British judicial authorities' destructive actions in attributing the direction or support of acts of violence in the United Kingdom, as well as any alleged links between the individuals concerned and Iranian institutions, to the Government of Iran, or alleging that they were engaged in espionage activities."

It also condemned "the instrumental use of security-related allegations and judicial proceedings to advance political agendas," noting that such practices "create a climate conducive to hostile narratives" against Iran and "foster suspicion" towards Iranians residing in the United Kingdom.

Meanwhile, the diplomatic mission urged British authorities to handle sensitive matters professionally and in full accordance with the law.

British authorities, it added, should "safeguard the rights of Iranian nationals, including access to legal counsel, the right to pursue legal remedies and appeals, and consular access, in accordance with the United Kingdom's international obligations."

Following a six-week trial at Woolwich Crown Court in south London, the two Iranian nationals were found guilty of purportedly monitoring targets who worked for the media network "Iran International" and the chief executive of UK Lawyers for Israel.

Frank Ferguson, chief prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service's special crime and counter-terrorism division, claimed that the pair were promised rewards in exchange for sending intelligence, while one of them intended to go beyond surveillance to commit serious violence against his targets.

The defendants are expected to be sentenced at London's Central Criminal Court, better known as the Old Bailey, on December 17.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Minister urges ITU follow-up on war damage assessment request

Economy Desk

Iran's communications minister has urged the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to follow up on Tehran's request for a comprehensive assessment of damage to the country's communications and broadcasting infrastructure and technical recommendations for its reconstruction, while stressing the need to preserve the organization's nonpolitical and technical mandate.

Sattar Hashemi made the appeal during a meeting with ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin on the sidelines of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 in Doha, IRNA reported.

Highlighting Iran's active participation in the ITU's activities, meetings and study groups, Hashemi called for continued technical cooperation and exchanges of experience among member states.

He also strongly condemned US and Israeli military attacks on Iran during the 40-day war that began in late February, saying they had resulted in civilian deaths and damage to communications infrastructure and other civilian facilities.

Hashemi stressed the need to respect national sovereignty and territorial integrity and comply with international humanitarian law, calling on the international community to take a responsible stance to prevent similar actions and protect civilian lives and security.

He said preserving the nonpolitical nature of specialized international organizations, including the ITU, was essential to maintaining technical and scientific cooperation among countries, warning that politicizing their mandates would undermine their effectiveness and credibility.

Referring to the ITU secretary-general's responsibility to safeguard the organization's neutrality and technical mandate, Hashemi emphasized the importance of maintaining channels for technology diplomacy and addressing issues through professional and specialized engagement.

Hashemi also recalled Iran's Aug. 10, 2026, letter to the ITU concerning damage to the country's information and communications technology (ICT) and broadcasting infrastructure and called for continued follow-up on the request until it was addressed.

He said Iran expected a comprehensive assessment of the damage, identification of reconstruction priorities and technical recommendations for restoring damaged infrastructure. Noting that the matter had been referred to the ITU's Asia-Pacific regional office, he called on the organization's secretariat to pursue it actively.

Bogdan-Martin welcomed Hashemi's views and proposals, emphasizing Iran's active participation in the ITU's activities and programs. She said the secretariat was ready to examine the issues raised within the organization's technical mandate.

Regarding Iran's request for an assessment of damage to its communications and broadcasting infrastructure, she also stressed the importance of pursuing the matter through expert and technical channels, expressing hope that engagement between Iran and the ITU secretariat would strengthen bilateral cooperation and advance agreed issues.

The ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, the organization's highest decision-making and policymaking body, is being held in Doha, Qatar, from Nov. 9 to 27, 2026. Convened every four years, the conference brings together representatives of member states to set the ITU's future strategies and priorities.

On Friday, Hashemi also met Kazakhstan's deputy prime minister and minister of artificial intelligence and digital development. The two officials emphasized expanding bilateral and regional cooperation in communications and information technology, digital infrastructure and emerging technologies.

Hashemi also held talks with Sid Ali Zerrouki, Algeria's minister of post and telecommunications, on prospects for expanding bilateral cooperation and coordination between the two countries in international forums.



Iranian Minister of Information and Communications Technology Sattar Hashemi (R) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin exchange commemorative gifts during a meeting on the sidelines of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 in Doha, Qatar, on November 13, 2026.
IRNA

Tehran Stock Exchange leads global markets with 150% annual gain in August

Economy Desk

The Tehran Stock Exchange recorded the world's highest annual growth in August 2026, with its price index rising 150% from a year earlier, outperforming 74 major stock markets worldwide, according to the latest report by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE).

The index reached 1,091,379 points, putting Tehran ahead of South Korea's stock market, which ranked second with a 114% gain, and Ghana's exchange, which placed third with a 105% increase, Eqtesad-e Moaser reported.

The performance came despite wartime conditions in Iran and followed a period of pressure on the market amid political uncertainty and an extended trading suspension that prompted investors to adopt a more cautious approach.

Trading on the TSE resumed on May 19 after an 80-day suspension, with Iranian equities ending the session higher than expected and showing early signs of stability following the prolonged halt caused by the 40-day US-Israeli war that began in late February.



IRNA

The country remains on a war footing, with its southern ports under a US naval blockade.

Meanwhile, stock markets in several Arab countries in the region recorded declines or only modest gains during the same period, amid the economic fallout from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Dubai's stock market fell 3.8% in August, while Abu Dhabi's benchmark declined 0.9%. Bahrain's market rose just 0.4%, compared with gains of 4.7% in Kuwait and 4% in Saudi Arabia. Oman's Muscat Stock Exchange, however, posted a 69% increase.

In the United States, the Nasdaq index gained 22%, while the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) rose 19%.

Indonesia's stock market recorded the steepest decline among the 75 major exchanges, falling 23.7% during the month.

Iran, Uzbekistan step up transport cooperation to boost regional trade, transit

Economy Desk

Iran and Uzbekistan are working to expand rail and road transport cooperation, improve transit flows and strengthen logistics and trade ties through regional corridors, with Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq calling for the implementation of previous agreements and closer coordination during talks with her Uzbek counterpart in Tashkent.

Sadeq met Uzbek Minister of Transport Ilkhom Makhkamov in Tashkent on Thursday to discuss ways to expand bilateral transport and transit cooperation, with both sides stressing the need to remove obstacles and facilitate trade and transit along regional routes, IRNA reported.

Bilateral trade between the two countries exceeded $280 million in the first five months of the current Iranian year, which began on March 21, according to Rahmatollah Khormali, Iran's commercial attaché in Uzbekistan.

Sadeq described her visit to Tashkent and talks with Uzbek officials as reflecting the strategic importance of political, economic, transport and transit relations between the two countries.



Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq (1st R) meets with Uzbek Minister of Transport Ilkhom Makhkamov (1st L) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on November 12, 2026.
IRNA

Referring to her previous talks with Makhkamov on the sidelines of the 14th meeting of transport ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Astana, Kazakhstan, she called for continued efforts to follow up on the agreements reached and put them into practice.

Describing bilateral cooperation in road, air and rail transport as positive, Sadeq proposed holding a trilateral railway meeting involving Iran, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to improve coordination and accelerate rail cooperation among the three countries.

She also highlighted the potential of both countries in logistics and transit, describing Iran's northern and southern ports as valuable assets for expanding regional trade.

Sadeq said the imminent connection of the southeastern port of Chabahar to Iran's national railway network would enhance transit capacity, expand logistics cooperation and facilitate regional countries' access to open waters.

She also welcomed the development of corridor-based ties and multilateral cooperation, emphasizing the need to capitalize on the two countries' complementary capabilities to strengthen their positions in regional transport and transit networks.

Makhkamov, for his part, stressed the importance of expanding comprehensive transport cooperation with Iran and expressed Uzbekistan's readiness to broaden engagement and implement joint programs in the sector.

He also highlighted existing road and rail cooperation between the two countries and called for continued consultations, follow-up on agreements and efforts to create the conditions for further expanding bilateral ties.

The UN Charter ...

Article 51 recognizes the right of self-defense in the event of an armed attack. To treat a potential future threat as grounds for military action would be to accept preventive war based on the unilateral judgment of individual states. Such an interpretation would seriously undermine, if not altogether empty, the prohibition on the use of force of its practical meaning.

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The legality of the US attack has also been challenged within the American legal community. In a statement issued on March 6, 2026, the president of the American Branch of the International Law Association described the attack on Iran as unlawful, stressing that speculative threats concerning what might happen in the future cannot justify the use of military force.

The attacks on schools, sports stadiums, civilian infrastructure, and Iranian nuclear facilities subject to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards raise further questions under international law. Apart from the prohibition on the use of force, these attacks must also be examined in light of the rules of international humanitarian law. Parties to an armed conflict are required to distinguish between military targets and civilians, refrain from disproportionate attacks, and take all feasible precautions to minimize harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Military aggression carries international legal responsibility

UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, which sets out the Definition of Aggression, identifies acts such as attacks by one state's armed forces against the territory of another and the blockade of a state's ports or coasts as acts of aggression. In the absence of a valid legal justification for the use of force, the US military attack on Iran constitutes an internationally wrongful act for which the United States bears responsibility.

Under the law of state responsibility, a state incurs international responsibility when conduct attributable to it breaches an international obligation. That responsibility entails specific legal consequences: the state must cease the wrongful conduct if it is continuing, offer appropriate assurances and guarantees that it will not be repeated, and make full reparation for the injury caused. Political or security considerations cannot, by themselves, relieve the United States of the legal consequences of its actions.

Serious breaches of obligations arising under peremptory norms of international law, or jus cogens, also have implications for other states. International law requires states to cooperate through lawful means to bring such breaches to an end, refrain from recognizing as lawful situations created by them, and withhold aid or assistance that would help maintain those situations.

Iran, for its part, retains the right of self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter in response to an armed attack. It may exercise that right subject to the conditions and limitations imposed by international law.

This is about more than Iran

The significance of this case extends far beyond Iran's security or the balance of power in the Middle East. What is ultimately at stake is the credibility of an international legal order designed to prevent states from resorting to force at will. If military strength is allowed to take precedence over legal obligations, and states responsible for aggression can escape accountability, no country's security can be taken for granted.

The prohibition on the use of force is not a concession that powerful states make to weaker ones. It is a binding obligation that applies equally to all states. Ending US aggression, respecting Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and providing reparation for the damage caused by unlawful military action are matters of legal obligation, not political goodwill.

If power is permitted to prevail over law, Iran will not be the only casualty. The foundations of the international legal order, and the authority of the UN Charter itself, will also be at risk.

The article first appeared on Kyodo News on November 13.

Africa an ‘economic paradise’ but entering its markets takes work: *Businessman*



dhl.com



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

With its vast consumer market, natural resources, and considerable potential in agriculture, food industries, mining, and technical and engineering services, the African continent has become a major arena of economic competition among regional and extra-regional powers. In recent years, the expansion of trade relations with African countries has also received attention in Iran’s economic policies. At the National Conference on Iran-Africa Agricultural Cooperation, held late last month, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljeh referred to a 66% increase in Iran-Africa trade, with the volume of exchanges reaching approximately $940 million during the first nine months of the previous Persian calendar year of 1404 (March–December 2025). He described this as an indication of expanding economic engagement with the continent, although experts consider this figure relatively modest compared with the potential of the African market.

Experts believe that the expansion of economic relations with Africa cannot be achieved merely through conferences and the signing of memorandums of understanding. Realizing the potential of this market requires a thorough understanding of opportunities, the removal of financial transfer and transportation barriers, the establishment of trade infrastructure, and the organized presence of economic stakeholders in African markets. In this regard, South Africa, owing to its economic and commercial standing on the continent, its shared membership in BRICS, and its trade connections with countries across Southern Africa, can occupy a distinctive position in expanding Iran’s economic presence on the continent.

Against this backdrop, Iran Daily spoke with Babak Hedayati, Chairman of the Iran-South Africa Joint Commercial Committee, about the state of Iran’s trade with African countries, opportunities for cooperation in agriculture and extraterritorial cultivation, the potential of the South African market, and the obstacles hindering the effective presence of Iranian companies on the continent. He believes that Africa remains an unfamiliar market for many Iranian economic stakeholders and that, while commercial competitors maintain a planned and organized presence in this market, a substantial proportion of Iran’s economic activities still depend on the scattered efforts of the private sector.



Babak Hedayati

IRAN DAILY: According to announced statistics, Iran-Africa trade increased by 66% to approximately $940 million during the first nine months of the previous Persian calendar year of 1404 (March–December 2025). Given that these figures concern officially recorded transactions, how would you assess the actual and informal volume of Iran’s trade with African countries?

HEDAYATI: Because of the sanctions and restrictions affecting Iran’s trade relations with certain target countries, a considerable proportion of our transactions do not take place directly from Iran to African destinations. In many cases, Iranian exporters are compelled to use routes through countries such as Turkey and, in the past, the United Arab Emirates and Jebel Ali Port. In some instances, even commercial documents are altered, and goods manufactured in Iran, whose entire production costs and efforts have been borne domestically, are registered under the name of the intermediary country in international documentation.

This issue applies both to maritime shipments and bulk commodities, and it also arises in certain other transactions. Consequently, obtaining accurate and documented statistics on the actual volume of Iranian exports to African countries is difficult because changes in the declared origin and commercial documentation also alter the goods’ actual provenance in official statistics.

Accordingly, a distinction must be drawn between official customs statistics and the actual volume of goods and services of Iranian origin that reach Africa through other countries. Some of our actual transactions are not registered under Iran’s name in official statistics, and further studies and investigations are necessary to obtain a more accurate picture.

More specifically, what is your assessment of trade between Iran and South Africa? What goods are exchanged between the two countries?

At present, numerous exchanges take place between Iran and South Africa, particularly in agricultural products and related industries. For instance, in previous years, Iran had included imports of fresh mutton from South Africa in its procurement plans. Imports of products such as soybeans and corn have also been among the areas of interest. At the present juncture, however, flight-related difficulties and certain other restrictions have affected the course of these exchanges.

Nevertheless, because of the aforementioned issue of changes in declared origin and commercial documentation, I would prefer not to cite precise figures for bilateral trade that might lack documentary substantiation. Instead, it would be more appropriate to discuss the actual potential and areas that could provide the foundation for expanding Iran-South Africa economic cooperation.



Iran’s Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri-Qezeljeh (C) speaks to reporters at the National Conference on Iran-Africa Agricultural Cooperation held on October 31, 2026.

dolat.ir

What agricultural potential does South Africa possess that could be attractive to Iran?

South Africa possesses considerable capacity in agricultural and horticultural production. The country is among the major exporters of products such as oranges, particularly Valencia oranges, mangoes, and grapes, and exports a substantial proportion of its output to West Asian and Middle Eastern markets.

This demonstrates that favorable opportunities exist for Iranian companies to cooperate with South African producers and economic stakeholders. Iranian companies can enter negotiations concerning the importation of required products, investment in agriculture, and the establishment of joint ventures with South African counterparts.

One important area of cooperation is the supply of animal fodder. Owing to its limited water resources, our country is compelled to import certain products to meet part of its agricultural and livestock requirements. Fodder is among the commodities whose production requires considerable water resources, and part of the country’s demand could be met through South Africa’s production capacity. Forage corn is another product that could be considered within this framework.

One issue raised in recent years in connection with expanding Iran-Africa cooperation is extraterritorial cultivation. What opportunities does this model of cooperation offer Iran, and is its implementation also feasible in South Africa?

In my view, extraterritorial cultivation is one of the important avenues for economic cooperation between Iran and African countries. Under this model, Iranian companies can establish relations and conclude contracts with African counterparts to produce required commodities in the destination country, in accordance with its climatic and agricultural capacities.

In effect, this method combines Iranian expertise, human resources, experience, and part of the country’s facilities and capital with the water resources, land, and local capacities of the host country. The final output is then distributed between the Iranian market and other markets, in accordance with agreements between the two parties. Such a model can help meet part of Iran’s agricultural requirements while simultaneously creating opportunities to export products manufactured in the host country to third countries. Thus, in addition to meeting domestic demand, the economic benefits derived from production and trade are apportioned between the parties in accordance with their contractual agreements.

> Extraterritorial cultivation is one of the important avenues for economic cooperation between Iran and African countries. Under this model, Iranian companies can establish relations and conclude contracts with African counterparts to produce required commodities in the destination country, in accordance with its climatic and agricultural capacities. The final output is then distributed between the Iranian market and other markets, in accordance with agreements between the two parties.

Other countries, such as China, have made considerable progress in this field, and their presence in Africa’s extraterritorial cultivation sector is far more extensive than Iran’s. Iranian companies also conduct activities in this area in certain African countries. For example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo possesses the capacity to produce various agricultural commodities, including cotton and corn, and some activities have already been undertaken in this regard.

Regarding South Africa, negotiations have been conducted on implementing extraterritorial cultivation projects. However, to the best of my knowledge, no extensive and organized activity has yet materialized in this field. Nevertheless, capacities such as the production of fodder and forage corn could be prioritized for assessment and negotiation.

Given South Africa’s agricultural potential, is there also scope for expanding Iranian exports to this country? What goods and services are currently supplied from Iran to this market?

Yes, Iran’s exports to South Africa encompass various products. In the food sector, a range of products, including biscuits, chocolate, and other Iranian food products, are supplied to this market. Some Iranian companies have operated in South Africa for years and have established their own business partners and economic networks.

Iranian activities, however, are not confined to food products. Iranian companies are also present in South Africa’s technical and engineering services sector. In particular, companies operating in the railway sector have performed satisfactorily and are expanding their activities.

Overall, considerable potential exists for cooperation between the two countries across various sectors, including railways, mining, agriculture, food industries, and general trade. If the relevant authorities in Iran demonstrate greater commitment to providing facilities and practical support for economic stakeholders, Iranian companies can establish a more extensive presence in this market. The important point is that trade must be reciprocal. We can meet part of our requirements through South Africa while supplying this market with Iranian products, services, and industrial and technical capabilities. Naturally, however, the production cost and competitive advantage of each product must be carefully assessed, since importing certain goods may not be economically viable because of production or transportation costs.



Iranian and South African delegations, headed by President Masoud Pezeshkian (C-R) and President Cyril Ramaphosa (C-L), respectively, meet on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in New Delhi, India, on September 13, 2025.
SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT

For years, Africa has been described as one of the most significant untapped opportunities in Iran's foreign trade and even as a paradise for economic cooperation. Nevertheless, there appears to be a considerable gap between this potential and Iran's actual performance. What accounts for this discrepancy?
The point you have raised is extremely important. Unfortunately, expressions such as "Africa, a paradise of economic opportunities" have been repeated so frequently that they have sometimes become ends in themselves. Numerous conferences and meetings on Africa are held in our country, and considerable sums are expended on them. Ultimately, however, the outcomes of many of these programs remain confined to the same appealing statements, banners, posters, and memorandums of understanding.
Africa remains an unfamiliar territory for many of our economic stakeholders, whereas countries that have properly understood this market have been capitalizing on its potential for years.
The reality is that many Iranian economic stakeholders who have succeeded in Africa have attained their positions through their own personal efforts and initiative, rather than as a result of an organized program and sustained government support. Our activities on the continent remain fragmented, and the degree of coordination necessary for an effective presence in a large and competitive market is still insufficient.

Of course, this does not mean that no positive measures have been undertaken. The Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, the Iran Chamber of Commerce, provincial chambers of commerce, and trade centers have made efforts in recent years to introduce the respective capacities of both sides and establish connections among economic stakeholders. Constructive interactions have also developed with the embassies of African countries in Iran and with African businesspeople.
Nevertheless, all these measures must culminate in practical support, the facilitation of corporate activities, and ultimately the conclusion of commercial contracts. The objective should not merely be to hold conferences and sign memorandums of understanding. Rather, we must establish conditions under which every economic stakeholder, commensurate with their capabilities and business scale, can identify a suitable market in Africa or meet part of their requirements through the continent.
An economic paradise cannot be attained without effort and planning. Merely declaring Africa a paradise of opportunities changes nothing. Capitalizing on these opportunities requires knowledge, investment, organization, and sustained follow-up.

Which countries are Iran's competitors in the African market, and how have they managed to consolidate their positions?
Because we lack an effective and organized presence in this market, virtually any country can be considered a competitor to Iran in Africa. We should not assume that we face only a handful of competitors in this market. Various countries, including those from China, Turkey, and other economies active in international trade, are present in Africa and are striving to expand their market shares.
Allow me to cite an example. Bitumen is one of the products that Iran has the capacity to manufacture and export to African markets. Nevertheless, Turkey is extremely active in supplying bitumen to this market, despite not being a major bitumen producer itself and procuring part of its supplies from Iran and Iraq. However, owing to its commercial networks and marketing capabilities, it can supply the product to African customers through more effective commercial mechanisms.
This example demonstrates that possessing resources and production capacity alone is insufficient for success in international trade. We may be the manufacturer of a product, but our competitor can use its commercial network, superior services, and more effective mechanisms to supply that same product to the destination market and secure a larger market share.
One major difference between Iran and certain countries that have succeeded in Africa concerns the organization of trade delegations. In some countries, when government and political delegations travel to Africa, a considerable proportion of their accompanying members consists of economic stakeholders and businesspeople. This demonstrates that trade development occupies a priority position in those countries' agendas. In Iran, however, economic delegations sometimes assume a predominantly ceremonial character, and the outcomes of their visits remain confined to meetings, commemorative photographs, and the signing of memorandums of understanding. Some members of Iranian delegations also have no direct role in commercial interactions. Economic stakeholders, however, must occupy a central position in these visits, and negotiations must culminate in executable contracts and substantive cooperation.

In your view, what measures should Iran undertake in its trade policymaking to change this situation?
The first measure is to establish a coherent and operational program for entering African markets. We must move beyond the stage of introducing potential and develop specific plans for each country, economic sector, and even target product.
The second issue is facilitating private-sector activities. Government agencies must assume a facilitating role and establish conditions under which economic stakeholders can enter negotiations and expand their activities with sufficient knowledge of the destination market.
In this process, trade centers, the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, the Iran Chamber of Commerce, and provincial chambers can play an important role. These institutions must introduce Iran's economic capacities to African counterparts while also familiarizing Iranian economic stakeholders with the opportunities available in African countries.
Support must also extend from major corporations to small and medium-sized enterprises. Not every economic stakeholder is expected to undertake projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars. A small company might identify a suitable opportunity in exporting a food product or supplying an industrial commodity. What matters is establishing the necessary mechanisms to facilitate the participation of all such stakeholders.
Alongside these considerations, issues such as transportation, financial transfers, insurance, financing, and familiarity with the regulations of destination countries must also receive attention. Without resolving these issues, translating even substantial economic potential into sustainable trade will remain difficult.

> Bitumen is one of the products that Iran has the capacity to manufacture and export to African markets. Nevertheless, Turkey is extremely active in supplying bitumen to this market, despite not being a major bitumen producer itself and procuring part of its supplies from Iran and Iraq. However, owing to its commercial networks and marketing capabilities, it can supply the product to African customers through more effective commercial mechanisms.

Given that South Africa is one of the continent's major countries and a member of BRICS, what position can it occupy in Iran's trade strategy for establishing a presence in Africa?
South Africa and Iran are both core members of BRICS, and this alone creates numerous opportunities for defining trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. We must capitalize on the existing capacities within the BRICS framework to expand economic relations.
Another important consideration is South Africa's position within the economic and commercial structure of the Southern African region. South Africa is one of the major economies on the African continent and is, in effect, the leading country in its southern region. In addition to its considerable domestic market, its membership in regional economic cooperation arrangements provides access to neighboring countries' markets as well. Our estimate is that, through production and economic activity in South Africa, it is possible to gain access to the markets of approximately 15 to 16 countries by capitalizing on regional trade agreements and, in certain cases, benefiting from preferential or zero tariffs. Naturally, the conditions for enjoying these advantages depend on the type of commodity and applicable rules of origin.
From this perspective, South Africa is not merely an export destination; it can also serve as a base from which Iranian companies can expand their operations and gradually enter broader African markets. Accordingly, a company that successfully establishes its production or economic activities in South Africa can explore opportunities to access regional markets in addition to the South African market itself.
This advantage can be extremely important for Iranian companies because, rather than concentrating exclusively on South Africa's domestic market, they can use the country as a point of departure for expanding their commercial activities into other countries across the region.

What infrastructure and facilities are available to Iranian economic stakeholders in South Africa to facilitate their presence in the market?
One of the important capacities available to Iranian economic stakeholders in South Africa is the Iran Trade Center, established through the efforts of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran. This center can assist Iranian companies in understanding the market, establishing connections with commercial counterparts, and expanding their economic activities.
Furthermore, the Iran Chamber of Commerce in South Africa has an Iran-South Africa Joint Commercial Committee, whose capacities traders and economic stakeholders can utilize.
Alongside these facilities, the presence of a commercial counselor and the establishment of a BRICS trade center in the country are additional instruments that can serve the expansion of economic relations.
The important point is that these facilities should not be regarded merely as administrative structures and organizational bodies. Rather, they must become instruments for resolving companies' actual problems, identifying commercial partners, introducing products, and establishing enduring business relationships.

Given these facilities and capacities, can South Africa be regarded as one of Iran's principal gateways into the African market?
Yes. In my view, South Africa can serve as one of the gateways for Iranian companies into the vast African market. However, I do not intend to claim categorically that this country is more suitable for Iran than every other African country since each African country possesses its own particular capacities and characteristics, and decisions must be made in accordance with the nature of the economic activity concerned.
Nevertheless, owing to its economic standing, regional connections, shared BRICS membership, and the facilities established there for Iranian economic stakeholders, South Africa can constitute a suitable starting point for expanding commercial activities in the region.
A company that succeeds in consolidating its commercial position in this country and establishing appropriate relations with local partners can have multiple avenues of cooperation with other African countries at its disposal. Therefore, South Africa should be viewed not merely as a consumer market, but also as a platform for expanding Iran's economic activities in parts of the African continent.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Iran coach Qalenoei blasts move to prevent team's flight to Basra

Sports Desk

Iran head coach Amir Qalenoei strongly criticized the decision to prevent the national team from flying directly from Tehran to Basra ahead of a four-nation friendly tournament in Iraq, saying his team would not have taken part in the competition had it known political considerations were behind the move.

The team's flight to Basra was scrapped only hours before its scheduled departure due to U.S.-imposed aviation sanctions on Iranian airlines, which went into effect in September. The decision forced the Iranian squad to fly from Tehran to Abadan before completing the journey to the Iraqi city by road.

Speaking at a press conference in Basra on Thursday, Qalenoei said the team had initially assumed security concerns were behind the decision, stressing that the safety of human lives was paramount. However, he said Iran would have reconsidered its participation had it known the decision was politically motivated.

"We thought the decision was due to security concerns because human life matters to us. But had we known political issues were involved – and we are still not sure whether they were – we would never have come to Basra, because the dignity of Iran and the Iranian people is more important to us than anything else," he said.

"We want the people of our country and those across the region, particularly in Iraq, to live together in strength and peace, away from war and other problems," he added.

"Many people say football is not political, but the treatment we received in the United States [during the World Cup] suggested otherwise," added Qalenoei, whose team's training base for June's global showpiece was moved to the Mexican city of Tijuana amid the military conflict involving Iran, the U.S. and Israel, despite the team's three group-stage matches being scheduled to take place on U.S. soil.



Iranian players take part in a training session in Basra, Iraq, on November 12, 2026. FFIRI

"Iran is a powerful country with thousands of years of civilization and culture, and we hope the countries and people of the region can live alongside one another in peace and tranquility."

The Iranian coach also expressed gratitude to the Iraqi people for standing alongside Iran during difficult times, recalling the support extended by the Iranian people and government to Iraq in challenging circumstances.

Turning to football matters, Qalenoei said the tournament, which will see Iran take on Palestine on Saturday before facing Iraq three days later at Basra International Stadium, would provide a valuable opportunity to assess younger players and build a team for the future.

The tournament was originally intended to form part of Iran's preparations for next January's AFC Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia, before the flagship continental event was postponed by 11 months due to security concerns following an escalation in the conflict involving Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Ansarullah.

Growing scrutiny of Iran's aging squad, which was the second-oldest at the World Cup, in recent months has prompted Qalenoei to inject fresh blood into the national team, with Al Wasl striker Mahdi Taremi and Tractor goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand among the high-profile absentees from the revamped 29-man squad for the November international break.

"We have made several changes to the squad and tried to give more opportunities to younger players. Asian football is progressing, with considerable investment being made, and some countries are even granting citizenship to foreign players to represent them," he said.

He also praised Iran's tournament opponents, particularly Palestine, describing them as a strong side with several players competing abroad.

Qalenoei also underlined the similarities between Iranian and Iraqi football, saying: "Having worked with Iraqi players such as Emad Mohammed Ridha and Karrar Jassim, I can say Iranian and Iraqi players share similar characteristics. They are physically strong and technically gifted."

Asked whether Basra could serve as a future venue for Iran's home matches, Qalenoei said the decision rested with the Iranian Football Federation and clubs.

Iran have not played a home international match on their own soil for around 500 days, he noted, adding that his experience in Basra had been a positive one.

"Hopefully, the war will end soon, because health and peace are the most beautiful things in the world. But if one day we are unable to play in Iran, we could choose Basra, because we have not felt like strangers here since the moment we arrived," Qalenoei said.

Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics:

Soltanian breaks gold drought as Iran finishes with eight medals

Sports Desk

Benyamin Soltanian ended Iran's gold drought at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics by claiming the top prize in the men's +73kg taekwondo event on Thursday.

Having beaten opponents from Bulgaria and South Korea without dropping a single round, the young Iranian capped his dominant campaign with a 2-0 (15-8, 4-4) victory over Spain's Iván Lysenko in the final, taking the country's medal haul to eight, including four silvers and three bronzes.

His triumph also completed Iran's two-medal haul in taekwondo after Asal Goltappeh settled for silver in the women's 63kg category following a defeat to Germany's Luna Fellinger in the final on Wednesday at the Complexe Iba Mar Diop.

Elsewhere on the final day of Iranian action at the multi-sport event, the country claimed an impressive bronze medal in women's futsal.

Tannaz Baqeri scored a hat-trick as the Iranian girls, having suffered a 3-2 extra-time defeat to Venezuela in the semifinals, bounced back from a 2-1 halftime deficit to beat Italy 5-2 in the third-place match. It was Iran's second victory over the European side, following a 3-1 win on the final day of the group stage.

The first of Iran's four silver medals came in swimming, where Parsa Shahshahani clocked 2:02.74 to finish runner-up to New Zealand's Ariel Muchirahondo in the men's 200m backstroke final.

Iranian judoka Sobhan Hakimi also claimed silver in the men's -81kg category. A gold medalist at July's Asian Cadet Judo Championships, Hakimi opened his campaign with a victory over Sierra Leone's Shaku Kargbo, followed by a semifinal win against Egypt's Aly Ealramly, before being denied gold by Slovenia's Maks Cebulj in the final.

In beach wrestling, meanwhile, Iran's Amirali Domirkolaei suffered a 4-0 defeat to Venezuela's Wilfredo Grabiel Rodriguez Gonzalez in the men's 60kg final.

Iran also collected a beach wrestling bronze through Reza Jalalian in the men's 80kg class, while Arash Pahali won bronze in men's wushu, finishing third in the changquan combined event in taolu.

The medal haul in the Senegalese capital marked Iran's lowest tally in the four editions of the Youth Olympics since the event was first introduced at Singapore 2010. The country was represented by 29 athletes across two team events and 12 individual sports.

At Singapore 2010, Iran secured two gold, two silver and one bronze medal. The country collected three gold and three bronze medals at Nanjing 2014 before achieving its best performance to date with seven gold, three silver and four bronze medals at Buenos Aires 2018.



taekwondo.ir



WTT

WTT Contender Istanbul 2026:

Rahimi's historic run ends in last 32

Sports Desk

Iranian table tennis player Elina Rahimi's historic campaign at the WTT Contender Istanbul 2026 came to an end in the round of 32 after she suffered a 3-1 (11-6, 6-11, 11-9, 11-8) defeat to second seed and world No. 17 Joo Cheonhui of South Korea on Thursday.

Rahimi became the first Iranian woman to reach the main draw of a WTT Contender event after battling through three rounds of qualifying at the tournament in Istanbul.

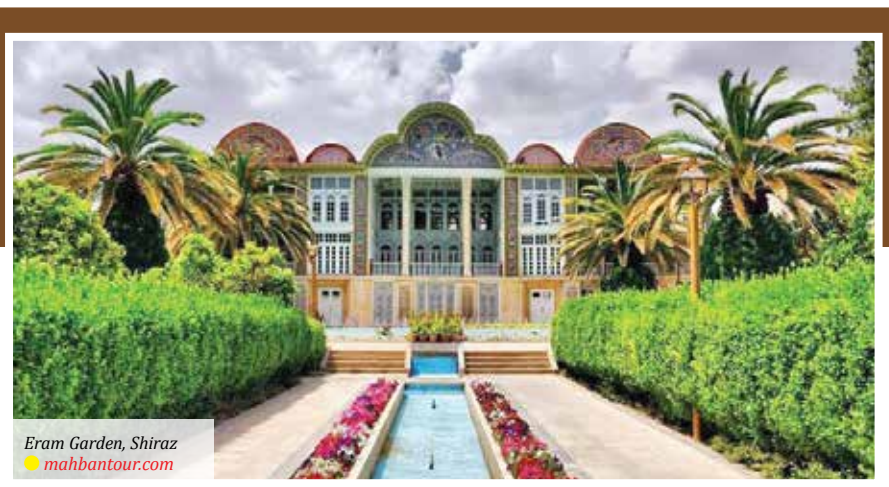
Her achievement was particularly significant as she became only the second Iranian woman to reach the main draw of a WTT Series event, following Neda Shahsavari, who made the last 32 through qualifying at the WTT Star Contender Doha II in 2021.

Ranked No. 650 in the world, Rahimi was the fourth-lowest-ranked player in the women's singles qualifying draw. She beat world No. 691 Katarina Strazar of Slovenia in the first round (11-7, 5-11, 11-7, 11-6) before pulling off an impressive straight-games victory over Swedish sixth seed and world No. 122 Filippa Bergand (11-6, 11-9, 11-6).

The 21-year-old then sealed her place in the main draw with a victory over Russia's Valeriia Kotsiur (11-6, 11-7, 7-11, 5-11, 11-5).

The official World Table Tennis website hailed Rahimi's achievement in Istanbul, describing it as "a landmark moment for Iranian table tennis."

Persian gardens evolved while preserving tradition



Eram Garden, Shiraz
mahbantour.com

Iranica Desk

Persian gardens have long been an integral part of Iran's cultural and architectural identity, reflecting a distinctive vision of harmony between nature, architecture and human life.
In an article, Hossein Mahmoudi, Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization of Markazi Province, examines how this centuries-old tradition entered a new phase during the Qajar era (1789-1925), as established principles of garden design encountered changing artistic tastes and growing European influences.
While traditional features such as geometric layouts, symmetry and elaborate water systems remained central, new approaches to architecture and landscape design gradually found their way into garden complexes. These developments make Qajar-era gardens particularly valuable for understanding the evolution of Iranian landscape architecture and the relationship between cultural continuity and artistic change, according to chtn.ir.
One of the defining characteristics of Persian gardens during the Qajar period was the preservation of the fundamental principles of traditional garden design, including geometric order, axial planning, symmetry, the presence of water and the carefully considered use of vegetation. Water, as one of the principal elements organizing the space, flowed through the gardens via channels, pools and fountains. In addition to creating a sense of freshness and providing climatic comfort, it played an essential role in shaping the landscape and enhancing the visual appeal of the garden complex.



Fin Garden, Kashan
mahbantour.com

Shade trees, pathways, surrounding walls and garden pavilions worked together to create a coherent spatial arrangement that met functional requirements while embodying aesthetic and cultural values.
During the Qajar era, gardens also held considerable functional and social significance. Royal, governmental and aristocratic gardens served not only as places for relaxation, recreation and seasonal residence, but also as venues for official ceremonies, entertaining guests and displaying the political power and social standing of their owners. In Tehran, as the capital gradually expanded and government complexes and residences associated with the royal court took shape, numerous gardens were established or developed, becoming part of the city's spatial structure and historical identity. The Golestan Palace complex stands out as a notable example of the relationship between Persian garden design, royal architecture and the artistic developments of the period.
Another notable aspect of Qajar-era garden design was its gradual adoption of European architectural and artistic influences. In certain complexes, these influences became apparent in pavilion design, decorative details, spatial arrangements and the relationship between buildings and their surrounding grounds. However, these developments did not mean the complete abandonment of traditional Persian garden principles. Rather, in many cases, new elements were introduced alongside established structures, creating a synthesis of indigenous characteristics and emerging design trends. Qajar gardens should therefore be understood as part of the historical evolution of the Persian garden, reflecting the simultaneous continuation of tradition and acceptance of change.
From the perspective of cultural heritage conservation and restoration, Qajar gardens are far more than collections of trees, pathways and historic buildings. They are interconnected systems comprising architectural, natural, historical and cultural elements. Their significance lies in the relationships between their various components, including pavilions, perimeter walls, water-supply networks, vegetation, circulation routes and designed vistas. Accordingly, any conservation or restoration intervention in these gardens must be based on a thorough understanding of their historical background, examination of archival documents and historical photographs, field studies and an assessment of their current condition.
One of the major challenges in preserving historic Qajar gardens is the change of land use, inappropriate construction, gradual deterioration of architectural features, disruption of traditional water-supply systems and loss of original vegetation.
Urban expansion and climate change can also undermine the integrity of historic landscapes and weaken the relationship between gardens and their natural and urban settings. Under such circumstances, effective conservation requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond the restoration of buildings and the improvement of green spaces. It must also prioritize the preservation of historic layouts, the rehabilitation of water systems, the protection of plant species consistent with each garden's historical character and the regulation of new interventions.
Ultimately, Persian gardens of the Qajar era can be regarded as living records of Iran's landscape architecture, embodying the cultural, social and artistic values of an important historical period. Their systematic preservation and restoration would not only prevent the loss of an important part of the country's architectural heritage, but also help transmit traditional garden-design knowledge and reinforce the historical identity of cities. Achieving this objective requires thorough documentation, the application of scientific conservation and restoration methods, the involvement of specialists and greater recognition of the cultural and social potential of these historic complexes. Such an approach can help ensure that historic gardens continue to thrive while responding to the needs of contemporary society.

Handicraft houses offer new opportunities for artisans in Kerman

Iranica Desk

Kerman is stepping up efforts to preserve its traditional arts and turn handicrafts into a driver of employment and tourism growth through the expansion of dedicated handicraft houses.
Moving beyond the conventional model of production workshops and handicraft shops, these centers are intended to serve as multifunctional spaces for production, training, direct sales and interaction between artisans and younger generations. More than 10 handicraft houses have so far been established across the province, with plans to increase the number to between 30 and 40 high-quality centers in the provincial capital.
Under the emerging model, handicraft houses are more than places where traditional products are made or displayed. They are multifunctional centers designed to safeguard traditional crafts, pass on the skills of master artisans, support local craftspeople and create markets for locally made products. Visitors can observe the creative process firsthand and learn about the techniques and cultural heritage behind the region's traditional arts.
These centers are expected to bring together live production workshops, galleries, direct-sale outlets, training facilities and supplies of raw materials. Visitors, for instance, can watch the transformation of clay into pottery, follow the process of spinning and dyeing wool before it is woven into carpets, or observe the making of Pateh, a traditional form of embroidery distinctive to Kerman. They may also take part in practical workshops and training courses.
Direct sales and the elimination of intermediaries are among the key functions of these centres. This approach can help ensure the authenticity of products, offer them at fair prices and allow artisans and producers to retain a greater share of the proceeds. Organizing access to high-quality, standardized raw materials at affordable prices is another important need of local craftspeople that handicraft houses could help address.
Beyond their economic and educational roles, these centres can become cultural meeting places for artists, young people and enthusiasts. Specialist discussions, artistic gatherings and forums addressing the challenges facing the handicrafts sector, alongside café-style spaces, can encourage younger generations to reconnect with their cultural and artistic heritage.
Despite their potential, the expansion of handicraft houses faces several challenges, including weak marketing and branding, an overreliance on face-to-face sales, limited access to online and export markets, and the need for product standardization and quality grading. Addressing these shortcomings could improve the competitiveness of locally made handicrafts and strengthen the sector's value chain.



yjc.ir



hamshahrionline.ir

Speaking to ISNA, Gholamreza Farrokhi, deputy director of handicrafts at Kerman Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, said that completing the handicrafts value chain and developing the necessary infrastructure were essential to unlocking the province's considerable potential in traditional arts and tourism.
He said Kerman, with its remarkable diversity of handicraft disciplines, ancient cultural heritage and exceptional natural attractions, had the potential to become one of Iran's leading tourism hubs.
However, he added, achieving this goal would require completing the handicrafts value chain, expanding transport infrastructure and establishing specialized handicraft houses and museums. These objectives, he said, would depend on national commitment and the participation of government agencies and the private sector.
Farrokhi described handicrafts as a bridge between a community's past and present, adding that innovation, provided it does not compromise authenticity, could bring traditional products into everyday household consumption, generate employment and stimulate economic growth.
Referring to recent efforts to establish privately run handicraft houses across the province, he said significant steps had been taken in recent months to develop centres that would go beyond basic production workshops and become cultural gathering places for artisans, young people and those interested in traditional arts.
He identified engaging younger generations and introducing new attractions while preserving artistic authenticity as key strategies for developing the handicrafts sector.
Combining production workshops and retail displays with café-style spaces and cultural gatherings, he said, could provide an effective setting for young people to become more familiar with the arts and traditions of their ancestors.
Farrokhi said more than 10 handicraft houses had so far been established across Kerman Province, most of them in the provincial capital, Rafsanjan and southern parts of the province.
In addition to selling artisans' products directly, these centres play an important role in skills training, providing affordable raw materials and familiarizing schoolchildren with the production process, he said.
He added that the province's target was to establish between 30 and 40 high-quality handicraft houses in different neighborhoods and streets across Kerman city.
Turning to the province's tourism infrastructure, Farrokhi stressed that developing tourism in Kerman could not be the responsibility of a single government department and required coordinated efforts across multiple agencies, including the departments responsible for roads and urban development and road, rail and air transport.
Road conditions, roadside service facilities, flight connections, hotels and the cost of services all have a direct impact on how long visitors stay in the province, he said.
Improving the culture of hospitality and ensuring that visitors are treated with respect by local residents could also help strengthen the local economy and create lasting memories for tourists visiting Kerman throughout the year, he added.
Farrokhi also highlighted the potential contribution of the province's industrial sector and mineral resources to the development of cultural infrastructure.
He said industries and mining companies could play a significant role in establishing specialized stone and mining museums as part of their corporate social responsibility programs.
The expansion of anthropology and regional museums, he noted, would not only strengthen younger generations' sense of historical identity but could also create independent tourist attractions and provide additional cultural and recreational opportunities.

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Iran seeks three new UNESCO heritage listings

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran is seeking to add three elements to UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage lists, a move that would raise the number of its registered entries to 30 if all are approved.

The nominations cover Tirgan, a tradition honoring water and rain; lullabies and singing traditions for children; and traditional felt-making.

They will be considered at the 21st session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, scheduled for November 30 to December 5 in Xiamen, China, Hassan Fartousi, secretary-general of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, said.

Iran and Armenia jointly prepared the Tirgan nomination, while Iran and Turkmenistan submitted the lullaby file. The felt-making nomination focuses on a traditional craft passed down through generations.

A delegation representing Iran's national UNESCO commission, foreign ministry and cultural heritage ministry will attend the meeting, alongside officials and experts who helped prepare the files.

Iran currently has 27 elements and programs recognized under UNESCO's intangible heritage mechanisms, ranking fourth worldwide, Fartousi said.

Approval of all three nominations would bring the total to 30.

Iran's registered heritage includes Nowruz, the Persian New Year; Mehregan and Sadeh festivals; Yalda Night; traditional wrestling; Tazieh; Naqqali storytelling; Persian classical music; carpet weaving; miniature painting; Chogan; and traditional boatbuilding in the Persian Gulf.

The latest Iranian inscription, added in 2025, was the art of mirror-work in Persian architecture. In 2021, UNESCO also registered Iran's national program to safeguard traditional calligraphy. Naqqali storytelling and traditional Iranian sailing and boatbuilding skills are also included on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.



Fertility rate drops to 1.34 as aging accelerates



Social Desk

Iran's fertility rate has fallen to 1.34 children per woman, well below the 2.1 needed to maintain its population, secretary of Iran's National Population Headquarters said.

Marzieh Vahid Dastjerdi announced the figure at the 24th International Conference of the Iranian Society of Reproductive Medicine.

She said that rate compares with six to seven children per woman in 1986. Iran's population is currently estimated at about 87 million.

Dastjerdi said more than 75% of the decline was linked to rising education and social development without corresponding economic progress.

Inflation, high housing costs, individualism and the difficulty of balancing employment and motherhood were also major factors.

Iran has about 7.3 million unmarried men aged 20 to 54 and between 6.5 million and 7 million unmarried women aged 15 to 49.

"The average age of mothers at their first birth is 27.6 nationwide and 30.8 in Tehran. Annual marriages fell from 900,000 in 2010 to 431,000 in 2025," she added.

The share of people aged over 60, currently 13% of the population, is projected to reach 32% by 2051.

Dastjerdi warned that Iran's population could shrink to 31 million within 75 years if current trends persist.

The government launched a Mother Hope Card program in March 2026, providing mothers with 20 million rials a month for two years.

Officials have also proposed full insurance coverage for infertility treatment. Iran currently has 79 secondary-level and 130 tertiary-level infertility treatment centers.

Despite the demographic challenges, Deputy Health Minister Shahin Akhondzadeh said Iran ranked fourth globally in infertility research, alongside the United States, India and Italy.

The country's average citation count per paper in the field stands at 9.1.

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Sirjan Jahan Steel Company is pleased to announce the sale and export of 10,000 tons **STEEL BILLET** (Size 150 x 150 mm), with the possibility of increasing the contract amount to 20,000 tons on basis of FOB Bandar Abbas according to INCOTERMS 2020. Interested applicants are hereby invited to obtain the tender documents by visiting the official website of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at sjsco.ir, through the Sales and customer portal, Tender and Foreign Tender section. Alternatively, interested bidders may collect the physical tender documents in person from the head office of Sirjan Jahan Steel Company at the following address: 2nd FLOOR, No. 2, JOOBIN ALLEY, SHAHIDI STREET, JAHAN KOODAK JUNCTION, TEHRAN, IRAN

All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than **Monday, November 23, 2026**.

For more information, please contact us at:

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Iranians bid farewell to unknown soldiers fallen in 1980s Iraqi war

Social Desk

A funeral procession was held in Tehran and other Iranian cities for hundreds of unidentified martyrs of Iraq's 1980-88 war on Iran on Friday.

The event held on the occasion of the martyrdom anniversary of Lady Fatima (PBUH), the daughter of Islam's Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian also attended the ceremony.

Mourners gathered in front of the University of Tehran to carry the remains of the newly-recovered martyrs to their final resting place.

In addition to Tehran, other Iranian cities bid farewell to 240 other unknown soldiers fallen in Iraqi-imposed war.

The war began on September 22, 1980, when Iraq attacked Iran, and a ceasefire took effect on August 20, 1988, after nearly eight years of fighting.



People in Tehran attended funeral procession of 110 unknown soldiers fallen in 1980s Iraqi war, which was held on November 13, 2026.
AKBAR TAVAKKOLI/IRNA

Tehran, Ankara discuss war's environmental toll at COP31

Social Desk

Iran and Turkey discussed the environmental damage caused by two wars waged by the United States and Israel against Iran, in June 2025 and late February 2026, at the COP 31 climate summit. COP31 is the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference and is underway in Antalya from November 9 to 20, 2026. They discussed pollution from fuel storage explosions and greenhouse gas emissions and Tehran called for regional stability to support environmental protection, Iran's environmental chief said after meeting Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz at the summit.

Shina Ansari thanked Ankara for its stance on two imposed wars, highlighting the environmental consequences of military action, particularly explosions at fuel storage facilities and the resulting release of pollutants and greenhouse gases. She said effective environmental protection depended on security and stability in the region.

Yılmaz cited longstanding cultural ties between the two countries and said Turkey was ready to expand cooperation with Iran in various fields, including environmental protection. He pointed to the activation of a joint environmental committee following last year's Zero Waste Summit and stressed the need to sustain cooperation to protect natural resources and habitats.

Regional developments had once again underscored the importance of peace and stability, Yılmaz said, adding that the two countries would continue to pursue their shared responsibilities in tackling climate change alongside regional issues.

Environmental cooperation between Iran and Turkey is pursued under a bilateral memorandum of understanding through a joint committee.



Head of Iran's Department of Environment Shina Ansari (L) and Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz poses for a photo at COP31 summit in Antalya, on November 12.
IRNA