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Mourners look on as a Palestinian woman rests her head on the flag-draped remains of one of 70 Palestinians, including women and children, recovered from under the rubble of buildings destroyed in Israeli strikes, in Jabalia, northern Gaza, during their mass funeral on November 15, 2026.
AFP

Iran seeks an agreement that would prevent another war: *Araghchi*

By Maryam Salari
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

"We are seeking an agreement that would ensure there is no more war afterward." The remark captures Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi's approach to the confrontation between Tehran and Washington, as the line between diplomacy and conflict grows increasingly blurred.
Araghchi made the comment on his flight back to Tehran this week after visits to Pakistan and Oman. In an interview with Iran Daily, he discussed Tehran's initiative to end the state of "neither war nor peace", the US use of blockades and pressure, the prospects for an agreement, Iran's enriched uranium stockpile and debate over its nuclear doctrine.
He described a two-day proposal that followed the compression of an initial seven-day plan. Under it, the United States would fulfill its commitments on the first day and Iran would reopen the Strait of Hormuz on the second, when negotiations on a final agreement would begin. Washington did not accept the proposal.

IRAN DAILY: **What part of Iran's seven-point proposal was unacceptable to Washington? Was the disagreement over the commitments or their sequence? Was the United States expected to act within 48 hours, with nuclear talks beginning on the third day? If so, why was Washington unwilling to wait even 48 hours for negotiations to begin?**

ARAGHCHI: We drew up a seven-day plan combining US commitments under the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding with new issues, including additional US sanctions and Iran's demand that they be lifted.
The plan, also known as Iran's seven conditions for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, contained slightly more than seven requirements. The United States was to fulfill its commitments during the first five or six days. We would reopen the Strait on the sixth day, and negotiations on a final agreement would begin on the seventh.
We sent the plan indirectly to the Americans through Qatari intermediaries during our visit to New York in September. For about two months, the intermediaries carried proposals between the two sides. The Americans said they accepted Iran's demands provided that some of their own requests were added. Those were issues we had agreed to discuss as part of a final agreement.
After extensive discussions, one or two US requests were added. As the US elections approached, the intermediaries proposed shortening the timetable to speed up implementation. We agreed, turning the seven-day plan into a two-day proposal.

Under the two-day plan, would the United States act on the first day and Iran on the second, with nuclear negotiations starting afterward?

No. The Americans would fulfill their commitments on the first day. On the second, we would reopen the Strait and negotiations between Iran and the United States on a final agreement would begin. The talks were to start that day, not conclude then.
Under the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, we had allowed 60 days for negotiations, with the possibility of an extension. The two-day plan set no deadline: talks would begin immediately and continue for as long as necessary. It was a practical proposal that incorporated both sides' demands and opened the way for negotiations.
We presented it about 10 days before the US elections. Had Washington accepted it, subsequent events might have unfolded differently.
The two-day plan is no longer on the table. But if the Americans are serious about an agreement, it can still provide a basis for one.
Our position is clear: the seven conditions must be met before the Strait reopens.
We are ready to discuss US proposals on how to implement them, including at the expert level. But the United States must first correct its position and take the necessary confidence-building measures.

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اعلان تمدید مزایده صادراتی بیلت آلیاژی ریخته گری مداوم

شرکت فولاد آلیاژی ایران

شماره مرجع مزایده: IASCO-EXPT-1405-08 مورخ: 1405/08/27

شرکت فولاد آلیاژی ایران (IASCO) در نظر دارد نسبت به فروش بیلت آلیاژی صادراتی در گرید منتخب و مطابق مشخصات ذیل از طریق برگزاری مزایده عمومی اقدام نماید. از علاقه‌مندان به شرکت در مزایده مزبور دعوت به‌عمل می‌آید که از تاریخ ۱۴۰۵/۰۸/۲۷ لغایت ۱۴۰۵/۰۹/۰۳ برای دریافت اسناد مزایده و اطلاعات تکمیلی با واحد صادرات به شماره تماس‌های ۳۱۲۲۲۶۷۵-۹۸۳۵+ و ۹۱۰۰۹۰۰۱-۹۸۲۱+ و نشانی ایمیل Salesexp@iasco.net تماس حاصل فرمایند. مهلت ارائه پیشنهاد قیمت مزایده یادشده حداکثر ساعت ۱۴:۰۰ به وقت جمهوری اسلامی ایران، روز سه‌شنبه مورخ ۱۴۰۵/۰۹/۰۳ می‌باشد.

Iran Alloy Steel Company

Tender Announcement for Export of CC-Alloy Steel Billet

Tender Ref. No.: IASCO-EXPT-1405-08 Date: 11/18/2026

Please be informed that *Iran Alloy Steel Company (IASCO)* intends to conduct a public Tender for the export of ***CC-Alloy Steel Billets*** under the following terms and conditions:

1. Product Specifications and Commercial terms:

Main Tender Grades & Quality	Acc. to attached specification No.
9403I	*C07KU9403I40411A042*

❊ *Other Grades may also be considered By Customer Request with related premium price. (Please clearly specify the desired grade, analysis and etc).*

- **Size & Dimensions:** (130*130) * 12,000 mm
- **Quantity:** 20.000 MT (±10%).
- **Delivery Time:** approximately Forty-five (45) days days from the date of Proforma Invoice confirmation.
- **Delivery Term:** FOB Bandar Abbas.

Note: Other delivery ports including BIK, Parsian and Chabahar may be considered upon buyer's request, subject to amended delivery time and mutual agreement.

2. Tender General Conditions:

a. The offer must remain valid for at least **seven (7) working days in Iran** from the submission deadline.
b. Vague, conditional or incomplete offers will not be considered.
c. The buyer's company must be legally registered outside the Islamic Republic of Iran.
d. **IASCO** reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to accept, reject, negotiate, or cancel any or all offers without assigning any reason or incurring any liability.
e. All payments shall be deemed valid only upon the Seller's receipt of official bank confirmation.
f. Submission of offer implies full acceptance of all tender terms and conditions.

3. Offer Submission:

For instructions and further information, kindly contact the Export Department using the following details:
Tel: +9835-31222675 & +9821-91009001.
Email: Salesexp@iasco.net (For registration only, not to send any offer).

4. Closing Date:

Deadline for Offer Submission: Tuesday, Nov 24, 2026 - by 2:00 p.m. (Tehran Local Time)

Iran warns US chemical arms claims copy Iraq's 2003 invasion scenario

International Desk

Iran rejected the latest wave of US allegations that the Islamic Republic is developing biological or chemical weapons, describing the claims as a familiar and deliberate attempt to manufacture a pretext for further aggression.

In a statement posted on X on Thursday, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei noted that after the long-running narrative of an "Iranian nuclear threat," American officials are now asserting that there are "indications" that Iran is pursuing biological or chemical weapons capabilities.

"The allegations keep changing, but the underlying narrative remains disturbingly familiar," he said. "Once again, the world is apparently expected to suffer a bout of collective amnesia."

Baqaei explicitly recalled the infamous 2003 appearance of then-US secretary of state Colin Powell before the UN Security Council, in which Powell held up a small vial as supposed evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

That presentation, Baqaei stressed, has since become a lasting symbol of one of the most consequential intelligence failures and political deceptions in modern history.

He warned that the current allegations appear to be following "the same fraudulent script," and asked whether the world had learned anything from the disastrous lessons of 2003 or was once again prepared to allow public deception on a grand scale.

Iran has consistently rejected such claims as baseless. The Islamic Republic is a state party to both the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

'Dirty bomb' allegation

The Iranian response came after US President Donald Trump accused Iran of exploring chemical and biological weapons, reigniting allegations that Tehran may be planning a "dirty bomb" attack.

Speaking to Fox News on Thursday, Trump said Iran was "looking at gases, looking at bio", without providing evidence to support his claims.

Trump claimed Tehran has pivoted away from developing nuclear capabilities given that "we've shut them out". "We'll see what happens after January 1," he said.

His comments follow a report by CNN on Tuesday citing US intelligence indicating that Iran may be developing plans to target senior officials in Trump's administration with a chemical weapon in Washington, DC.

On Wednesday, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio dismissed concerns about a possible Iranian attack, saying the US does not face an "imminent threat". Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin echoed Rubio's conclusion, confirming there was no indication of an upcoming attack.

The allegations about chemical weapons also came days after a report by The New York Times about possible connections between Iran's water infrastructure and military installations. The newspaper suggested that some dams and water-transfer projects might have been constructed to provide water and electricity to underground missile facilities. Citing "several experts," it raised the possibility of such connections, but did not present conclusive evidence establishing that the projects were linked to missile installations.

Iran's UN mission categorically dismissed reports by The New York Times and CNN, describing them as fabricated narratives intended to create pretexts for further aggression against Iran.



Esmaeil Baqaei
IRNA

Tehran calls for urgent action by Muslim nations to stop Israel's genocide of Palestinians

International Desk

Iran condemned Israel's continued crimes against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, calling for immediate action by Muslim nations to stop the regime's genocide of Palestinians.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry in a statement stressed the need for urgent and effective international action to stop the ongoing genocide and bring those responsible to justice.

The ministry condemned attacks by Israeli forces and settlers against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, including the latest arson attack on Al-Ihsan Mosque.

It said Israeli forces have launched their latest invasion of central Gaza at a time when the territory has been reduced to rubble by extensive bombardment and displaced Palestinians are struggling to survive harsh winter conditions without even having access to tents to protect themselves from the cold and rain.

The ministry blamed the continued international inaction, particularly pressure exerted by the United States on international institutions, for emboldening Israel and enabling its persistent violations of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also in a post on X called for an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation foreign ministers over Israel's genocide in Gaza.

His call came as a renewed Israeli ground onslaught in the central part of Gaza has displaced more than 6,000 Palestinians in a single day.

Araghchi described the ongoing genocide, forced displacement and denial of humanitarian assistance in Gaza as "a stain on humanity's conscience," urging immediate international action to lift the Israeli siege and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The diplomatic calls came as Israel intensified its military assault on the Nuseirat and Bureij refugee camps in central Gaza, triggering another wave of mass displacement.

The Israeli onslaught on, launched on October 7, 2023, has killed nearly 75,000 Palestinians, most of them women and children.

China casts trilateral meeting as a summit for peace

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

REPORT EXCLUSIVE

The presidents of China, Russia and the United States held in-depth exchanges on major issues concerning global peace, security and stability during their meeting in Shenzhen, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said, describing the gathering as a "peace summit."

Speaking to reporters on November 19, following the conclusion of the 33rd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, Wang said the meeting was the first of its kind among the leaders of the three countries, making it a significant event with far-reaching implications.

The meeting comes at a time when both the United States and Russia are engaged in major military conflicts, with Washington continuing its involvement in the war in Iran and Moscow pursuing its military campaign in Ukraine.

Against this backdrop, the trilateral gathering carries added diplomatic significance, bringing together the leaders of two countries on opposing sides of a major international conflict with China's president at a time of heightened global tensions.

Wang told reporters that the talks had taken place in an atmosphere of frankness, friendship and constructive engagement, and had produced a series of shared understandings.

The three leaders also issued a declaration addressed to the international community, reaffirming their commitment to safeguarding world peace and promoting strategic stability among major powers, according to him.

Wang said China, Russia and the United States, as major world powers and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, had an important responsibility to uphold global peace and security.

He described the meeting as a new model for interaction among major powers, saying relations among them had a direct bearing on the evolution of the international order and global strategic stability.

"It could be regarded as a major innovation in the history of international relations," he said.



Wang Yi
IRAN DAILY

Responding to questions about the significance of the meeting, Wang said it reflected the trends of the times and the expectations of the international community.

He cited President Xi Jinping as saying that when major powers maintain harmony, the world enjoys peace, but when they engage in confrontation, the world falls into turmoil.

Wang said the three leaders had conveyed their respective strategic intentions directly and expressed their willingness to prevent confrontation and conflict, uphold peaceful coexistence, and work toward overall stability and balanced development.

"Such a relationship would benefit not only the three countries themselves but also the wider world," he said.

Asked how the understandings reached at the meeting would be put into practice, Wang said China would work with Russia and the United States to implement them comprehensively and effectively.

"The three sides will also maintain communication and coordination at the working level and make sustained efforts toward building a better world," he said.

After their meeting, the three leaders issued the China-Russia-US Heads of State Declaration toward Peace, which outlined four areas of cooperation: reforming the United Nations, ensuring stable energy supplies, respecting state sovereignty and officials' immunities, and reducing nuclear risks and preventing nuclear proliferation.

'World no longer a safe haven' for Iran's enemies: *IRGC chief*

International Desk

Chief Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), Major General Ahmad Vahidi, warned that those responsible for crimes in Iran will find no safe haven anywhere in the world.

Addressing the closing ceremony of the "Pioneers of Liberation" conference in Tehran on Friday, Vahidi described the US-Israeli aggression against Iran since February 28 as a battle whose outcome has frustrated the aggressors.

"The world will no longer be a safe haven for the murderers and criminals who have committed crimes in Iran," he said, referring to numerous crimes by the US-Israeli axis, including the assassination of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the massacre of schoolchildren in Minab on the first day of the aggression.

"They must tremble with fear over the crimes they have committed, because... retribution is our right."

"We have passed a large part of the battle and have a large part ahead of us," he stated, adding, "What we have accomplished so far has resulted in a sense of defeat, hopelessness, despair, disarray, and confusion within the enemy camp."

"The adversaries began the war arrogantly, believing they could bring Iran down within days," Vahidi said, adding that they had initially promised Persian Gulf countries an assessment within 72 hours.

He recalled that the adversaries subsequently predicted Iran's political system would collapse within two weeks, but their expectations were not fulfilled.


Ahmad Vahidi
TASNIM

The IRGC chief also described Iran's military reach as extending beyond the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, saying the operational presence of Iran's naval forces had expanded to 500 kilometers and farther into international waters.

IRGC spokesman Brigadier General Hossein Mohebi also on Thursday warned the US against attempting to revive military confrontation, declaring that it will not accept a prolonged war of attrition or an indefinite state of neither war nor peace.

Mohebi said Iran is fully prepared for all possible scenarios, stressing that the country's military capabilities have improved considerably and that its forces are continuously monitoring American military movements.

"We do not accept a situation of neither war nor peace," he said, rejecting the prospect of an extended war of attrition.

"We will settle the matter of the war once and for all. This will either be determined on the battlefield, or the United States must accept Iran's conditions."



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Reports point to possible resumption of Iranian oil exports

Economy Desk

Reports of ship-to-ship transfers in the Persian Gulf and preparations at Iran's main oil export terminal have raised the prospect of renewed crude shipments, as tensions between Tehran and Washington run high.

TankerTrackers co-founder Samir Madani told Reuters on Thursday that a tanker was receiving Iranian crude from another vessel through a ship-to-ship (STS) transfer operation in the Persian Gulf. He said the receiving vessel was not on the US Treasury Department's sanctions list and that, if it successfully passed through restrictions on Iranian shipping, it would mark Iran's first successful seaborne crude oil export since mid-July.

Iranian officials have not publicly commented on the reported tanker preparations or confirmed plans to resume crude oil exports. However, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran would make every effort to export its oil and break the US blockade.

Speaking to the Iranian Labor News Agency (ILNA) on the sidelines of the International Exhibition of Exchange, Bank and Insurance, Araghchi was asked about reports that Iranian oil had been loaded for export.

"We will make every effort to export our oil and pursue negotiations, and the blockade must be broken," he said.

Since late February, when a US-Israeli coalition launched a 40-day war, Iran has faced wartime conditions and a maritime blockade aimed at halting its oil exports and depleting government revenues, alongside decades of Western sanctions over its nuclear activities.

Separately, the United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI) organization reported that about 200,000 barrels of Iranian crude were transferred between two tankers near Kharg Island on Nov. 17. According to the organization, the oil was transferred from the tanker OLYM to the smaller vessel HAO FAN. The report did not establish the cargo's final destination.

Reports have also emerged about preparations for a possible convoy of Iranian oil tankers bound for China. Fars news agency and Saberin News, a media outlet close to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, have referred to the possibility of multiple tankers sailing together.

A separate Euronews report, citing satellite imagery and vessel-tracking data, said more than 14 tankers were present at Kharg Island and were reportedly being prepared for possible departures in the coming days. However, there has been no independent confirmation that a convoy has been dispatched or that the vessels have begun sailing toward China.

Kharg Island, in the northern Persian Gulf, is Iran's main crude oil export terminal and handles most of the country's seaborne crude exports. Any disruption to operations there or restrictions on tanker movements can affect Iran's ability to deliver oil to international buyers.


AP

Data from oil-tracking firms Kpler and Vortexa, cited in recent reports, indicate a sharp decline in Iranian crude oil and condensate loadings in recent months. However, loading figures do not necessarily reflect the volume of oil successfully delivered to buyers, as shipments may remain aboard tankers or be transferred between vessels.

The reported tanker movements come amid tensions between Tehran and Washington and uncertainty over diplomatic efforts between the two countries. It remains unclear whether the reported movements will lead to a sustained resumption of shipments or remain limited to individual transfers and tanker operations.

Armenia ready to pursue refinery project using Iranian crude, Pashinyan says

Economy Desk

Armenia is ready to move forward with a project to build an oil refinery using Iranian crude, provided the plan does not expose it to the risk of sanctions, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said, according to the Fars News Agency.

Pashinyan said the Armenian government would begin developing the project if the issue could be resolved through negotiations with the United States and the European Union.

Already under Western sanctions over its nuclear program, Iran has faced wartime conditions and a naval blockade since late February, when a US-Israeli coalition launched a 40-day war. The blockade is aimed at halting the country's oil exports and cutting off a major source of government revenue.

Armenia had previously sought to secure the equipment and technology needed to expand its oil refining capacity and meet domestic energy demand.

Pashinyan said the government held talks with Western equipment manufacturers in 2023 and 2024 on purchasing machinery and facilities required for the project.

Details of the proposed refinery, including its processing capacity, crude oil requirements, investment costs and implementation schedule, have not been announced.

Iran has also expressed readiness to cooperate with Armenia on refinery construction. Acting Oil Minister Hamid Bovard said Tehran was prepared to use its technical and engineering capabilities to build a refinery in Armenia and expand bilateral energy trade.

Speaking at a meeting with Armenian Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Davit Khudatyan in Tehran on Tuesday, Bovard said the two countries had discussed expanding cooperation in energy, infrastructure and cross-border transportation.

He added that discussions had been held on the participation of Iranian private companies in the refinery project and that Tehran was ready to consider proposals from the Armenian side.


Nikol Pashinyan
APA

Iran seeks an ...

Is dilution or another solution still possible for Iran's 400 kilograms of uranium enriched to 60%, even if the stockpile remains in the country?

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I believe a formula can be found, but we have clear red lines. The material will not be taken out of the country, and the stockpile will be used according to our needs, however those needs are defined. A fair solution that serves our national interests and meets the country's needs is possible. But this issue cannot be decided in isolation from the others.

Calls to review Iran's nuclear doctrine and change its approach have become more prominent, particularly among members of the intellectual and policy community. What is your view?

Those calling for a change have serious and thought-provoking arguments. Those who favor maintaining the current doctrine also have strong arguments. This is a major strategic debate, and there is nothing wrong with examining it seriously because it directly concerns national interests and security.

Supporters of change argue that the current doctrine has failed to protect Iran's nuclear facilities. They point to the country's membership in the on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the placement of its nuclear facilities under safeguards and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) supervision, and its adherence to existing monitoring arrangements. None of these prevented attacks and the bombing of the facilities. They argue that if these mechanisms cannot guarantee their security, other ways of protecting the nuclear program must be considered.

But another reality must also be considered. Our Leader, the strongest opponent of nuclear weapons, who had issued a fatwa against them, was himself targeted and martyred. This event has profound significance and must be taken into account in any assessment of the country's nuclear doctrine.

Changing the doctrine would have far-reaching consequences. Even Russia and China oppose such a move. For now, our doctrine has not changed, and our official position remains the same.


Abbas Araghchi
IRNA

With the state of "neither war nor peace" continuing and US forces building up in the region, is Iran's priority still to manage tensions and prevent conflict, or could other options emerge if pressure increases?

This situation is undesirable, and there is agreement at the highest levels that it must end. There are only two ways out: war or peace. War is not desirable and no one supports it. Our solution is a negotiated settlement.

But we are not seeking just any agreement. We want one that is good, honorable and dignified, and that preserves our dignity. No one wants an agreement that undermines it.

A war may end in one side's outright victory. Negotiations, however, involve give-and-take: both sides make concessions and gain something in return. The challenge is to manage that process in a way that protects the country's interests and dignity.

To end this state of "neither war nor peace", we must be confident that war will not break out again and that we will not return to the same situation. We must wait for the necessary conditions to achieve a successful outcome. What is the point of reaching an agreement today if it is violated two months later and war resumes?

Qatar has launched extensive diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions and mediate. Could countries such as the UAE, by contrast, see the continuation of the current situation as serving their interests?

All countries in the region oppose war. Their experience during the 40-day war showed them its consequences.

[US President Donald] Trump has claimed that some regional countries, including those he named, asked him to stop the war but continue pressure and sanctions against Iran. I believe this is a narrative the United States is trying to promote. Regional countries do not want war, but do they also want a blockade, economic pressure and further sanctions against Iran? If so, that would be a strategic mistake. They want lasting peace, not recurring war.

We have repeatedly told them that one part of the region cannot be at peace while another is at war. One side cannot pursue development and prosperity while the other faces sanctions, pressure and insecurity. Lasting peace must be comprehensive and inclusive, involving all countries in the region. Economic progress and prosperity must extend to all of them. Only then can peace endure. I believe many countries, including the UAE, share this view.

The region has also learned important lessons from the war. Perhaps the most important is that countries cannot rely on outside forces to guarantee their security. US military bases, or those of any other country, cannot necessarily protect their host nations and may instead become sources of insecurity. If these bases were not in the region, they would not have been attacked. More importantly, they failed both to protect their host countries and to defend themselves. One key lesson, therefore, is that security must be homegrown.

I want people to 'laugh, cry with me' through my music: *Indian virtuoso*



By Alireza Sepahvand
Freelance journalist

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE

Shujaat Husain Khan belongs to a distinguished musical lineage deeply rooted in the history of Indian classical music. As a celebrated sitar player, vocalist and composer, he has built an international career while remaining committed to the expressive depth and traditions of Indian classical music.

For Khan, music is not merely a performance or a technical accomplishment. It is a deeply personal language through which musicians communicate their emotions and connect with audiences across cultural boundaries. His musical collaboration with Iranian kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor brought together two rich musical traditions and created a memorable chapter in his artistic journey.

In the interview that follows, you find the renowned Indian sitar maestro speaking to Iran Daily about the expressive power of the sitar, the importance of improvisation, the integrity of Indian classical music, his musical partnership with Kalhor, and his long-held dream of performing in Iran, a country whose culture and musical sensibilities he deeply admires. Shujaat Husain Khan also reflects on the importance of traditional music education, the challenges of international performance, and why he would rather be remembered as a good human being than simply as a famous musician.



SEPAHVAND: You were born into a family whose name is deeply intertwined with the history of Indian classical music. How challenging is it to establish an independent artistic identity while carrying such a rich legacy? How have you developed your own musical signature in terms of tone, phrasing and improvisation, while remaining faithful to tradition?

KHAN: I know the sitar has gone through many changes throughout its history. I think the biggest change was introduced by my father, who changed the instrument from seven strings to six, making it more conducive to his style of playing. He also started pulling from one note to second and fifth. And we play three notes in our family. It is easier to play and closer to the vocal style.

With its resonant, bell-like timbre, sympathetic strings and remarkable capacity for melodic nuance, the sitar is one of the most distinctive instruments in Indian music. In your view, what are the instrument's most important technical characteristics that make it such a powerful vehicle for emotional expression? How do techniques such as meend (glissando), melodic ornamentation and tonal control help a sitar player shape a musical narrative?

You are absolutely right. The sitar has a unique sound and extraordinary expressive potential. Its timbre is remarkable and highly distinctive. I cannot say that this is all there is to it; it is a complete instrument, and there are so many things you can do with it.

One of its distinctive features is meend, which allows you to move through three, four or even five notes from a single note. This is something that sets the sitar apart from many other instruments.

Combined with the beauty of the instrument itself, these possibilities allow a musician to communicate a wide range of emotions.

In Indian classical music, improvisation within the framework of a raga requires both a deep theoretical understanding and a strong sense of intuition and creativity. During a live performance, how do you develop the musical journey of a raga and decide when to remain in the meditative atmosphere of the alap and when to move towards rhythmic momentum and greater rhythmic complexity? Is every performance a different interpretation of a familiar raga?

Improvisation is extremely important in Indian classical music because most of our music is based on it.

A raga gives you the notes you can use and the notes you cannot touch when performing that particular raga. But even when using those notes, you have to approach them in a certain way, with a particular character and emotion that must continue throughout the musical piece.

Improvisation is what allows your own personality to emerge. It is about the character you bring to the music and the way different emotions come together.

Rhythm is also very important. We have beautiful rhythmic cycles of 16, 12, 10 and eight beats, as well as other rhythmic structures. These cycles offer different possibilities for musical expression and allow a musician to convey different emotions.

Performing in the United States, with its cultural diversity and broad spectrum of audiences, offers a unique opportunity to introduce Indian classical music to new listeners. How has your experience performing in different American cities and concert halls compared with performing in India? Have the responses of American audiences, particularly those unfamiliar with raga and Indian musical traditions, influenced your choice of repertoire or the way you structure your concerts?

For me, performing in the United States, Europe or anywhere else in the world is no different from performing in India. I specifically want to present my music in the same way I would if I were sitting in my own country. I have no interest in diluting my music to suit what people call the temperament, mood or understanding of my listeners. They have come to listen to Indian classical music, and I believe they should experience it as it is.

Indian classical music has gained a stronger presence at international festivals and prestigious concert halls over recent decades. In your view, what has enabled this tradition to find audiences across such diverse cultural environments? Is the global appeal of Indian music primarily driven by collaborations with Western and popular music, or does it stem more fundamentally from the intrinsic power of raga, improvisation and its emotional depth?

Indian classical music is deeply researched, and I think one of the most important factors is that it is highly respected in our country. That encourages younger people to become involved in it, research it, enjoy it and present it to others. This makes a significant difference to the development of a musical culture. When people support music, it grows. When they do not support it, the situation becomes very different.

In Pakistan, for example, there are many good musicians, and I am not suggesting otherwise. However, classical music is not sufficiently respected in some circles, and this has affected its development. When music is respected, people want to discover it, experience it and understand it. That support makes a real difference.

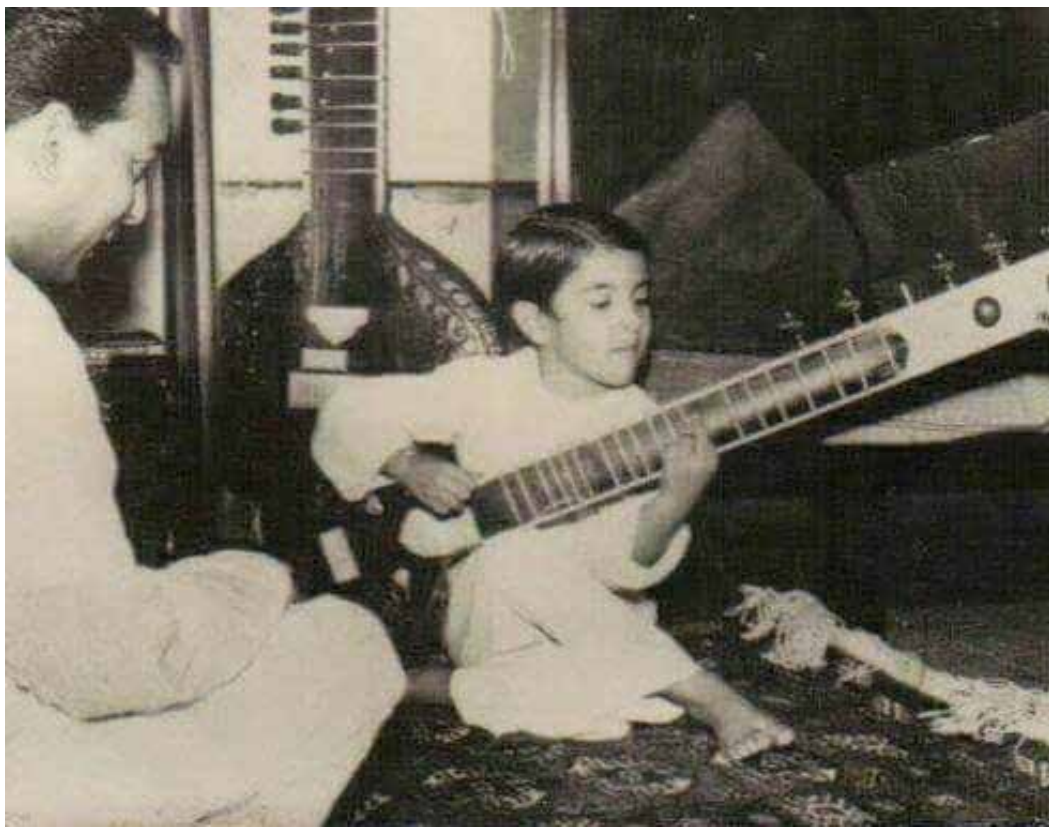
Indian classical music has found audiences in different parts of the world. Its journey has taken many forms, but the respect a society gives to its music and the willingness of people to explore it are essential to its continued development.

Your collaboration with Kayhan Kalhor, the distinguished Iranian kamancheh player, represents a remarkable encounter between two rich Asian musical traditions. How did you establish a connection between the melodic and rhythmic structures of Indian music and the distinctive nuances of Iranian music? Did this experience help you discover new expressive possibilities in your own playing or change the way you approach improvisation?

My time with Kayhan was a wonderful moment in my life. We connected when we met, developed mutual respect for one another and enjoyed the entire experience. We performed together and developed a huge following. People followed us around the world to hear our music.

The instruments are very different, of course, and Kayhan is an extraordinarily gifted musician. Playing with him was a great honour and a wonderful experience for me. We spent many memorable moments together.

The photo shows the cover of Dil, an album by Indian sitar virtuoso Shujaat Hosain Khan, released in 2011.
mysticamusic.com



A rare photo of young Shujaat Husain Khan getting lessons from his illustrious father Vilayat Khan about sitar
SOCIAL MEDIA

> For me, performing in the United States, Europe or anywhere else in the world is no different from performing in India. I specifically want to present my music in the same way I would if I were sitting in my own country. I have no interest in diluting my music to suit what people call the temperament, mood or understanding of my listeners. They have come to listen to Indian classical music, and I believe they should experience it as it is. I want people to understand what our music is, whether they like it or not.



Indian sitar virtuoso Shujaat Hosain Khan plays sitar during a performance.
SOCIAL MEDIA

It was one of the most rewarding and beautiful periods of my musical life.

Some believe that classical music should remain faithful to its historical frameworks, while others argue that innovation and collaboration with different musical styles are essential to keeping it alive. Where do you stand in this debate? Have your international collaborations, including those with Western musicians, influenced your personal musical language, or do you prefer to explore the sitar's identity primarily within its own traditional context?
I have seen many musicians use computer-generated loops, keyboards and big drums in their performances. On rare occasions, I have performed with a very respected and interesting classical guitarist who accompanies me with some chords and provides a musical background. But it is not a duet or anything of that kind.
I want people to understand what our music is, whether they like it or not. It is their choice to enjoy it or not, but they should at least have the opportunity to experience the tradition in its authentic form. Diluting music to suit what we think other people might like is not something I do. Other musicians may choose to do that, but it is not my interest.

Today, young musicians can access an enormous wealth of music through the internet, historical recordings and online tutorials. Yet Indian classical music education has traditionally relied on a close teacher–student relationship and the direct transmission of practical experience. Can modern technology replace some aspects of this traditional relationship? What is the most important skill a sitar student cannot acquire simply by watching videos or studying written material?
This is a wonderful question. We have so many choices and so much access to information nowadays that people are spoiled by the abundance of material available to them. At the same time, I believe this can make people lazy.
I have particular beliefs in this regard, and I am sorry, but perhaps that is because I am old-fashioned. I live according to what I believe. One of my beliefs is that if you want to learn music or any other fine art, you need to sit with your teacher. Sitting in front of a screen does not work for me. This is only my personal opinion. I have nothing against people who choose a different approach. I am not on social media myself, specifically because of my personal beliefs.
For me, learning face to face is the most important thing in music. You need to be in touch with your teacher and understand their feelings. You need to understand why and when they make certain musical decisions, what is happening in their life, how they compose, and how they put music together. You learn about the teacher's personality and emotions, whether the teacher is a man or a woman. All these things are part of the learning process.
Watching videos and studying written material cannot replace that experience. In my opinion, technology will never, by itself, make you a musician. Thousands of people watch YouTube, but watching someone perform is not the same as learning music from a teacher.

Given your collaboration with Kayhan Kalhor and the interest Iranian audiences have shown in Indian classical music, there have been discussions in recent years about bringing you to Iran, including a possible performance at the Fajr International Music Festival. However, these plans have not materialised. Are you still interested in performing in Iran? What conditions would help make a concert or collaborative project with Iranian musicians possible?
The simple answer is yes. I would love to perform in Iran. Iran is one of the countries with the most beautiful, wonderful and profound cultures in the world. Your country has given so much to the world, and there is such wonderful emotional depth in the way Iranian people connect with music.
It is my loss that I have not been able to perform in your beautiful country. There have been discussions about my coming to Iran, but for various reasons, these plans have not materialised. Sometimes the obstacle is financial. I do not perform too many concerts, and I am trying to reduce my schedule further. I therefore need to receive a certain fee for my performances, and sometimes that amount is not available.
Another issue is visas. Musicians from our countries need specific visas that allow them to travel internationally without complications. International politics can also become an obstacle, and these circumstances sometimes prevent us from bringing our music and feelings to another country.
Nevertheless, I very much hope that one day I will have the opportunity to come to Iran, perform for all of you and enjoy the experience. It is one of my unfulfilled dreams.

The Grammy-nominated Ghazal Ensemble, the brainchild of Iranian kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor (L) and Indian sitar master Shujaat Husain Khan, performs at Pace University's Michael Schimmel Center for the Arts in New York, the US, in 2015.
straight.com



When you look back on your professional journey and your experiences performing in different countries, what would you most like audiences to remember about your music? Is a great musician's legacy primarily about preserving and passing on the tradition inherited from their teachers, or does it also lie in opening new artistic pathways for future generations?
People often ask me how I would like to be remembered as a musician and what kind of legacy I want to leave behind. To be honest, I do not pay too much attention to these questions. My legacy will happen naturally through what I leave behind: my music, my personality and everything associated with my life.
I have always craved the love and affection of my listeners, and that is the greatest blessing. When I perform somewhere and see people smile and open their hearts to the music, I feel that I have received something truly special.
I would rather people remember me as a good human being than simply as a famous musician. I hope they will remember me as someone who enjoyed life, smiled a lot, laughed a lot and was genuinely happy to live a simple, relaxed life surrounded by friends. That is what I have always strived for.
I believe that my destiny will take care of my professional standing, popularity, position, money and luxuries. All these things will happen as they are meant to happen. What matters most to me is being regarded as a thorough professional in my work and a nice gentleman.
I have never asked anyone for work throughout my professional life. If there is one person who can stand up and say that I have asked them for work during the past 50 years, I would like to know about it. I believe in the grace of God, and the affection and love I have received from people have been far greater than anything I could have expected from my music alone.
I already feel that I have received everything I need. I am simply enjoying a beautiful life and enjoying the people I meet, including people like you who reach out to me. I am extremely grateful.
I am not very good at talking about myself. I am just a simple musician who wants to get up on stage and play. I hope people enjoy my music and laugh and cry with me through it. Explaining my feelings and emotions in words is difficult, but I have tried my best. Ultimately, I want to enjoy my music and my life, and I hope people will enjoy that journey with me.

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AFC Awards:

Beiranvand hopes to inspire next Iran generation after historic success

Sports Desk

Since the AFC Awards were introduced in 1994, no goalkeeper had ever clinched the Asian Player of the Year award – but that changed on Thursday night in Bangkok when Iran's Alireza Beiranvand became the latest winner of the prestigious accolade.
The Iranian, who was shortlisted in 2019, took home the coveted trophy on his second nomination and became the fifth player from his country to win it, following Khodadad Azizi (1996), Ali Daei (1999), Mahdi Mahdavikia (2003) and Ali Karimi (2004).
Beiranvand, who beat Saudi Arabian duo Feras Al Brikan and Salem Al Dawsari at the 30th edition of the gala at the Aksra Theatre King Power, could not hide his delight and hailed the award as a recognition that went beyond himself.
"Since I was nominated for the same award back in 2019, it has been seven years of hard work and consistent performances up until this evening here in Bangkok," he said at the post-event press conference.
"I would like to reiterate that this is such a great and unforgettable moment – not just for me but also for football in Asia that a goalkeeper has won. This was such a great wish and ambition for me, which I have achieved and fulfilled today – especially taking into consideration that no player from Iran had won this award for 22 years.
"I am sure that people in my country are very thrilled with this... and this is an honor that we can take pride in for many coming years in the future. It is a great honor for me and for everybody in my country, specifically for my family. I would like to extend my gratitude to everyone who has helped me through the years to come to this stage and lift this trophy."
Since leaving home at the age of 12 to pursue his footballing dreams and subsequently making his professional debut in 2011, the 1.95-meter shot-stopper has established himself as one of Asia's finest goalkeepers and proved that he remains at the top of his game at 34.
The most-capped goalkeeper in Team Melli history, Beiranvand produced brilliant displays during the FIFA World Cup 2026 and also shone at club level with Tractor FC, both domestically and in the AFC Champions League Elite 2025/26.



Iranian goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand (C) poses with his AFC Player of the Year award alongside FIFA president Gianni Infantino (R) and AFC president Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa at the AFC Awards in Bangkok, Thailand, on November 19, 2026.
AFC

With the gleaming AFC Player of the Year trophy now added to his collection, Beiranvand wants to inspire the next generation to achieve more and showcase their abilities to the world.
"In my point of view, the young players who wish to join the national team later on may be (more) motivated after seeing me lift this trophy," he said. "So, in terms of motivation and giving them an incentive, I think this is very influential. And my message to the young generation of football players in Iran is to keep themselves away from social media and controversies, and only remain fully focused on the game and continue to dream of what they wish to achieve.
"I believe that, taking into account the great potential of Iranian players, we will hopefully not have to wait too long to see another Iranian player win this award."

Jafari retains prize

While Iran missed out on a fourth successive AFC Futsal Player of the Year award, with international teammates Hossein Tayyebi and 2023 winner Saied Ahmadabbasi – who scored nine goals between them to help Iran secure a record-extending 14th Asian Cup title in January – losing out to Thailand's Muhammad Osamanmusa, there was further glory for the country elsewhere at the ceremony.
After making history as the first-ever Iranian recipient last year, Marziyeh Jafari has become only the second person to claim back-to-back AFC Coach of the Year (Women) awards.
In taking home the honor, the 44-year-old follows in the footsteps of Japan's record seven-time winner Asako Takakura, who clinched the award between 2012 and 2015 and again from 2017 to 2019.
Jafari was recognized for her achievements at both club and international level in 2025/26, having served as head coach of Bam Khatoon FC and the Iran women's national team.
She guided Bam Khatoon through the group stage of the AFC Women's Champions League (AWCL) and also led the team to a fifth consecutive league title and 12th overall – both records. The league triumph secured the club a place in the preliminary stage of the 2026/27 AWCL, where they have since advanced to the group stage to secure a fifth appearance in the continental finals – the most of any women's club in Asia.
A native of Bam who began her coaching journey at 17 and has been with Bam Khatoon since 2008, Jafari has also made her mark on the international stage, leading Iran at the 2026 AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia. Having spearheaded the team's qualification for a second consecutive edition of the showpiece, she oversaw a respectable campaign as the Iranian Lionesses bowed out in the group stage.
She said: "I am very happy to win this title once again. This award highlights the potential of football in Iran, and I am confident that we can continue this momentum for years to come, as women's football in our country still has so much more to achieve."

World Para Taekwondo Championships:

Iran strikes women's gold, silver on Day 1

Sports Desk

The opening day of the World Para Taekwondo Championships proved prolific for Iran, with the country collecting a gold and a silver medal in the women's competition in Muju, South Korea, on Friday.
Ailar Jami picked up where she had left off at October's Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games, claiming the gold medal in the K44 -47kg division.
The 18-year-old sensation opened her campaign with a 2-1 victory over Georgia's Lia Chachibaia before defeating Thai second seed Khwansuda Phuangkitcha by the same scoreline in a repeat of their Asian Para Games final to advance to the semifinals.
The teen prodigy then overcame Australia's Shrijana Ghising in straight rounds (2-0, 4-0) to set up a final clash with Naoual Laarif, before defeating the Moroccan in successive rounds without conceding a single point to claim gold.
Later in the day, Zahra Rahimi – a silver medalist at the Paris 2024 Paralympics and October's continental showpiece – had to settle for silver in the K44 -52kg division after losing the final to China's Li Yujie, who had also beaten the Iranian in the Paralympic final.
Featuring 407 athletes, the 11th edition of the World Championships, which also forms part of the qualification pathway for the LA28 Paralympics, will run until Sunday at the iconic Muju Taekwondowon venue.
Iran's men's team will be without 2024 Paralympic bronze medalist Hamed Haqshenas, who has been ruled out with a knee injury, but the squad still features several medal hopefuls, including Alireza Bakht – also a Paralympic bronze medalist who will look to build on his gold-winning campaign in the -80kg division at the Asian Para Games – as well as Amir-Mohammad Haqiqatshenas, Amirhossein Alizadeh and Mohammad-Taha Hassanpour.
Asian Para Games bronze medalist Maryam Abdollahpour, meanwhile, will look to add to Iran's medal tally when she takes to the mat in the K44 -57kg event.

Iran's Ailar Jami won the gold medal in the women's K44 -47kg division at the World Para Taekwondo Championships in Muju, South Korea.
ISNA



AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup:

Iran off to emphatic start with Afghanistan rout

Sports Desk

Iran opened its title defense at the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup in Phang Nga, Thailand, in emphatic fashion, cruising to a 9-2 victory over Afghanistan in Group B on Thursday.
Reza Dayeri netted a hat-trick for the record four-time champions at Ban Nam Khem Beach Arena as Afghanistan struggled to match their opponents' speed and attacking prowess.
Played in wet conditions, the match saw Iran skipper Mohammadali Mokhtari open the scoring in the third minute, latching onto a pass from Movahed Mohammadpour and finishing with an overhead kick that rolled past a diving Mohammad Osmani.
Sobhan Faleh then beat Osmani three minutes later and fired home from the right before Dayeri, connecting with a lob from goalkeeper Seyedmohammad Dastan, headed in from the right to give Iran a three-goal lead heading into the second period.
Dayeri's close-range overhead effort, which the Afghanistan goalkeeper managed to get a fingertip to, made it 4-0 in the 16th minute, with Mokhtari rattling the crossbar moments later.
Afghanistan pulled one back in the 21st minute when Qmid Homani's strike hit the right post and Mohamad Bahaduri pounced on the rebound.
Bahaduri struck again moments later with an overhead kick to reduce the deficit, but Dayeri restored Iran's three-goal cushion with an acrobatic effort in the 23rd minute to complete his hat-trick.
Mohammadpour converted a penalty on the half-hour mark, while Ali Mirshekari shrugged off two Afghanistan players two minutes later before directing an overhead kick into the left corner to make it 7-2.
Faleh then turned Mirshekari's attempt past Osmani in the 34th minute, before goalkeeper Seyed Mahdi Mirjalili rounded off the scoring with a strike into the top-left corner.
"We are happy to pass the first step, but this is just the beginning," Dayeri said after the game. "There is a long road ahead, but we will get better as we go along."
The start of the match was delayed due to inclement weather, but the wet conditions did little to dampen Iran's spirit or their dominance.
"We are Iran and used to all types of situations, so it made no difference to us," the 25-year-old defender said.
Dayeri is confident of repeating his three-goal feat when the Central Asian side face Vietnam today.
"My teammates helped me and with their support, I will do it again. We have special plans for all our opponents and are hopeful of continuing winning."
Vietnam also got off to a losing start in the competition on Thursday, falling to a 7-4 defeat against Lebanon.



Iranian skipper Mohammadali Mokhtari (9) attempts an overhead kick during a 9-2 victory over Afghanistan at the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup in Phang Nga, Thailand, on November 19, 2026.
FFIRI

Minister highlights Yazd's potential to attract tourists

Iranica Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, has described Yazd as a destination that brings together a wide range of the country's tourism attractions, from desert landscapes and ancient civilization to traditional arts and handicrafts.

Speaking to reporters during a visit to Bafq, Salehi-Amiri said Yazd forms part of Iran's golden triangle of tourism, alongside Isfahan and Shiraz, Mehr News Agency reported.

"We consider these three provinces to be on an equal footing and the main pillars of this triangle," he said, adding that Yazd has been designated one of Iran's major tourism hubs in both domestic and international tourism development plans.

The minister also highlighted the role of elected representatives in addressing local concerns, noting that Yazd's parliamentary representatives regularly follow up on issues affecting their constituencies.

He said one parliamentary constituency covers six cities, along with numerous cities, towns, villages and rural municipalities, making it a substantial responsibility.

During his visit to the region, Salehi-Amiri toured several significant historical and cultural sites, including an area containing historic structures where experts from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage have conducted preliminary research and assessments. He said archaeological excavations are now set to begin at the site.

Describing the area as historically and archaeologically significant, the minister said officials would refrain from releasing further details until the excavations and final studies had been completed and their findings were ready to be made public.

Salehi-Amiri also praised the Afarinesh Museum in Bahabad, which he visited during his trip. "Having traveled to various provinces across the country and visited numerous museums, I have rarely encountered a collection of this quality and beauty," he said, describing it as a commendable achievement.



mehrnews.com

He added that the model could be replicated in other parts of Iran and said he would pursue efforts to support, expand and promote the initiative.

Turning to the region's desert tourism potential, Salehi-Amiri said Yazd Province, particularly Bafq, possesses the natural assets needed to become a major destination for both domestic and international tourists.

He said the area's sandy terrain and distinctive natural landscapes, which he had observed firsthand during the visit, offered considerable opportunities for tourism development.

Realizing this potential, however, would require addressing existing obstacles. Some issues fall under the responsibility of local officials, others require action by provincial authorities, while some must be addressed at the national level.

The minister said he would pursue matters requiring action by the central government after returning to Tehran.

Salehi-Amiri also stressed the importance of supporting tourism businesses and encouraging local investment.

He said the tourism assets identified during his visits, particularly in Bafq, deserved greater attention and called for financial assistance for local operators and the removal of barriers to their activities. He announced that the ministry would allocate a special support quota for handicraft artists in Bafq.

He added that Bahabad and other parts of Yazd Province would also receive priority, particularly areas within the six-district parliamentary constituency that face greater economic and development challenges.

Salehi-Amiri also called on industrial and mining companies operating in Yazd Province to assume greater responsibility for supporting local communities.

He said these companies should play a more active role in addressing economic hardship and local development challenges through their corporate social responsibility programs.

The minister also highlighted Bafq's architectural and historical attractions, particularly the historic tower at Baqerabad, which is registered as a national heritage site in Iran.

He described the tower as one of the most beautiful structures he had visited in Iran, stressing the need to promote such attractions more effectively and create opportunities for more domestic and international tourists to visit the area.

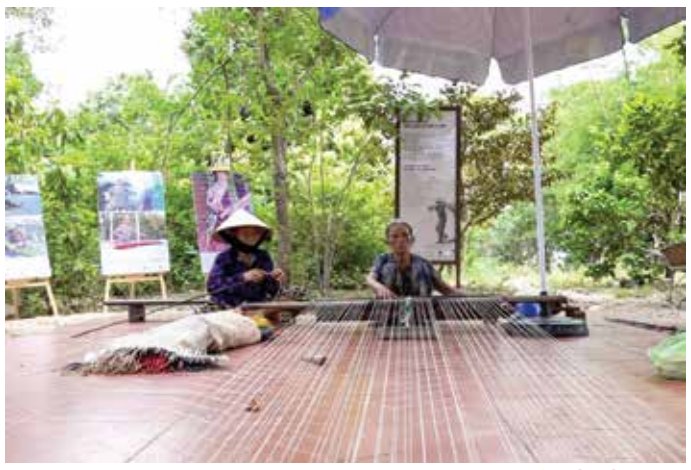
Salehi-Amiri said several proposals aimed at achieving this goal had already been discussed with ministry officials, the local parliamentary representative and the Governor of Yazd Province.

Iranian handicrafts gain international recognition at Hanoi festival

Iranica Desk

Iran's participation in the Global Festival for the Conservation and Development of Craft Villages in Hanoi, Vietnam, held from November 13 to 16, 2026, resulted in several notable achievements, including an international artist residency award for an Iranian artisan, representation on the jury of a global handicrafts competition, and the presentation of proposals aimed at strengthening the country's handicrafts education and development programs.

Narges Rajaei, Director-General of Education and Promotion Department at the Ministry's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, described the festival as a valuable opportunity to showcase Iran's capabilities and cultural heritage on the international stage. Held under the theme "Converging Craft Village Cultural Identities – Connecting Global Excellence," the event brought together 200 artisans from 57 countries, according to chtn.ir.



en.baodanang.vn

In her report, Rajaei highlighted the participation of an Iranian representative as a member of the jury for the 2026 World Handicrafts Competition. She noted that this provided an opportunity to become familiar with international judging standards and exchange professional expertise. She also highlighted Fatemeh Alipour Yousefi's achievement in receiving the VIETCRAFT (Vietnam Handicraft Exporters Association) Artist Residency Award, describing it as recognition of the standing of Iran's traditional arts internationally.

Rajaei further referred to field visits to specialized craft villages in Vietnam, where woodworking, marquetry, pottery and basketry are practiced. She described the integration of production workshops and sales exhibition spaces within these villages as a successful model for establishing direct links between producers and consumers.

She also highlighted the establishment of strategic connections with international institutions, including the Cultural Tongyeong Foundation in South Korea, with a view to future cooperation in research and artist exchange programs.

Drawing on official data from Hanoi on employment generation and handicrafts exports, Rajaei said the visit had provided valuable insights into approaches to safeguarding traditional knowledge and transferring skills to younger generations.

Among the proposals she put forward were the development of an international educational cooperation program, the organization of Iran's first international handicrafts event dedicated to young people, the documentation of master artisans' knowledge in crafts at risk of disappearing, and the adoption of modern technologies.

She emphasized that developing a comprehensive program for handicraft villages, integrating education, production, tourism and sales, reviewing the structure of festival awards, and expanding cooperation with universities and international designers were among the key proposals for strengthening Iran's handicrafts sector.



Narges Rajaei

She added that, given Iran's rich cultural and artistic heritage, implementing these initiatives could help unlock the country's existing potential and create greater opportunities for the development and international recognition of Iranian handicrafts.

Restored Safavid-era bathhouse reopens in Isfahan

Iranica Desk

Shah Bathhouse, a historic bathhouse in Isfahan's traditional bazaar district near Mukhles Bazaar, has officially reopened following a restoration project supported by public participation and private investment.

The opening ceremony was attended by Mehdi Jamalinejad, Governor General of Isfahan Province; Ali Asghar Shalbafian, head of the Investment Center at Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts; Mojtaba Shokri, Head of the Fund for the Development and Revitalization of Historic Buildings; and Amir Karamzadeh, Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization in Isfahan Province.

Dating to the Safavid era, the bathhouse is considered a notable example of Persian architecture. The historic complex covers approximately 2,000 square meters and features domed chambers and traditional vaulted ceilings.

The restored property has reopened as a traditional Iranian bathhouse offering hygiene and therapeutic services, as well as a cultural complex featuring a museum. The project has created 30 direct jobs.

Speaking at the ceremony, Jamalinejad praised the investor's efforts to restore and revitalize the historic property. He said protecting and preserving the country's valuable heritage depends on the commitment of individuals willing to safeguard its historic assets.

Jamalinejad also pledged the provincial government's full support for historic preservation and revitalization projects, emphasizing the need to streamline procedures and facilitate private-sector participation in such initiatives.

Shokri also praised the investor's role in restoring the property, saying the commitment demonstrated throughout the project had brought the historic landmark back into active cultural and tourism use in Isfahan.

He noted that the restoration had not only preserved an important example of Safavid architecture but also created 30 direct jobs, highlighting the potential of historic properties to support tourism and local economic growth.

Shokri praised the cooperation of Isfahan's cultural heritage officials and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage's handicrafts division, stressing the importance of continued coordination between government agencies and private investors to restore other historic properties.

He also reported significant private-sector investment in the restoration and revitalization of historic buildings across Isfahan Province.

Of the 34 historic properties transferred to investors through the Fund for the Development and Revitalization of Historic Buildings, 26 are now operational, while eight remain under restoration, Shokri said.

He added that the fund plans to hold a dedicated auction of historic properties in Isfahan in the near future. The historic Vasiq and Bajoghlu buildings are among the properties expected to be included in upcoming transfers.

Shokri also discussed plans to revitalize the historic Risbaf Factory, saying the fund had been appointed by the minister of cultural heritage, tourism and handicrafts to serve as the secretariat overseeing the property's transfer process.



IRNA

Three specialized meetings have been held by the project's working group, he said.

The secretariat's first report on progress and actions taken is expected to be released in the coming weeks.

The project is intended to reflect Isfahan's industrial heritage and historic identity while bringing together the city's cultural, economic and heritage resources in a unified development plan.

The historic Risbaf Factory is one of the last surviving remnants of Isfahan's wool-spinning industry. Located along the city's historic Chahar Bagh-e Bala corridor, the complex covers approximately 74,000 square meters, with a built-up area of about 54,000 square meters.

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Advertising Dept. Tel/Email: +98 21 88500601/irandaily@iranagahiha.com
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Veteran Iranian voice actress Nahid Shashaani dies at 77

Arts & Culture Desk

Nahid Shashaani, a veteran Iranian dubbing artist whose voice featured in generations of animated films and television series, has died at the age of 77 after months of illness, Iranian media reported.

Shashaani died on Thursday, November 19. Born in Tehran in 1948, she began her professional dubbing career in 1969 and became known for bringing a range of characters to life in Persian-language versions of foreign productions.

Her best-known roles included the mother of Hutch in the anime series 'The Adventures of Hutch the Honeybee', aunt in an anime series 'Katri, Girl of the Meadows', and Aunt Martha in Japanese anime television series 'Princess Sara'.

Shashaani also worked as a dubbing director, overseeing the Persian versions of 'Spider Man', 'Batman' and 'Woody Woodpecker'. She directed the Persian dubbing of the Australian medical drama television series 'All Saints' for more than 12 years.

She was married to dubbing artist Mehdi Azhir, who died in 1987. The couple married in 1968-1969 and had two daughters, Shila and Sheyda.

In an interview with ISNA in 2018, Shashaani said Shila had followed in her father's footsteps and become a dubbing director, while Sheyda worked as a translator for dubbing productions.

Azhir was known for his ability to voice multiple characters, including animals, in children's cartoons. Shashaani said he could perform as many as 12 characters in a single cartoon, giving each a distinct voice.

The couple also worked together on the Japanese-American animated film 'The Last Unicorn'. Shashaani voiced Molly Grue, while Azhir provided the voice of the talking skeleton. She described the film as their last joint project in cartoon dubbing.

Their work formed part of a long tradition of Persian dubbing that helped introduce international films and animated series to Iranian audiences.



Iranian dubbing artist Nahid Shashaani wears headphones during a voice recording session.
ROKNA

Pezeshkian weighs limits on subsidized energy use



File photo shows gas processing facilities in Asaluyeh, southern Iran, on the Persian Gulf coast.
AP

Social Desk

Iran is considering setting limits on subsidized energy consumption and charging higher rates for usage above those thresholds, President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Wednesday.

"The government seeks to curb abuses of public subsidies and redirect savings toward household welfare, healthcare and production," he added.

Speaking at a meeting on energy and fuel consumption management, Pezeshkian said sectors that have benefited from very cheap or free energy should face clearly defined limits on subsidized consumption.

Usage within normal consumption patterns would remain eligible for subsidies, while excess consumption would be charged at higher rates under approved tariffs. He said any tariff changes must be based on expert assessments of their economic and social consequences, with safeguards to protect vulnerable households. "The government would prioritize public awareness, changes in consumption habits and improved efficiency rather than relying primarily on price increases," he added.

Pezeshkian estimated that cooperation between the government, households, industries and public institutions could save between $30 billion and $40 billion annually by reducing waste and inefficient energy use.

The funds could then be directed toward improving living standards, providing medicines and medical services, and supporting domestic production.

To illustrate the scale of subsidy abuse, he cited cases including people repeatedly collecting fuel from filling stations in a single day, using subsidized electricity to operate cryptocurrency mining equipment, and individuals buying as much as 18 tons of subsidized bread per month.

The president also pointed to a decline in gasoline consumption and an 18% increase in demand for compressed natural gas (CNG) as results of existing conservation measures. The government has yet to announce specific consumption limits, the sectors covered or a timetable for implementing the proposed changes.

Polymer science puts Iran among global top ten

Social Desk

Iran ranked seventh globally in polymer science by scientific publications in 2025, according to Web of Science data, as researchers seek to turn academic advances into industrial applications despite war and international sanctions.

Mehdi Nekoomnesh, head of the Iranian Polymer Society, announced the ranking at the opening of the 17th International Seminar on Polymer Science and Technology (ISPST 2026) at Amirkabir University of Technology in Tehran.

Iran ranked 10th in polymers and plastics in the SCImago rankings and 12th in total polymer science publications tracked by Web of Science. Another recent report placed it fifth globally.

The three-day conference received 737 papers across 15 subject areas. Of these, 163 were



HASSAN JABI/IRNA

accepted for oral presentations and 495 for posters, following reviews by 278 experts. Around 300 faculty members served on the scientific committee.

Morteza Ebrahimi, head of the university's Faculty of Polymer Engineering and Color Technology, said four technical sessions involving industry executives and specialists were included in the program for the first time.

Researchers from Iraq and Oman supported the event, while some Iranian researchers based abroad could not attend because of the war and sanctions. Others took part as keynote speakers.

The conference highlighted artificial intelligence applications in polymer science, the circular economy and advanced polymers with high added value.

Other topics included polymers and composites, nanocomposites, elastomers and polymer synthesis. Submissions included 121 papers on polymers and composites, 88 on polymer synthesis and 33 on artificial intelligence.

Scientific secretary Mehdi Rafizadeh said about 2,800 students study polymer science annually in Iran and more than 24,000 have graduated in the field.

Nekoomnesh said maintaining Iran's scientific standing would depend on sustained investment in research and development and stronger ties between universities, research centers and industry, alongside greater international cooperation.

Italian composer finds bridge between cultures in Iran's music

By Neda Sijani
Staff Writer

INTERVIEW

Italian composer Antonio Papalardo is drawing on Iran's traditional instruments and melodies for a new symphonic work, following an emotional Tehran performance of his oratorio 'Petrus Eni' that left him in tears and reinforced his belief in music's power to bring different cultures and faiths closer together.

The work, performed by the Tehran Symphony Orchestra under conductor Nasir Heydarian at Vahdat Hall, gave Iranian musicians the opportunity to perform the composition in the presence of its creator.

The concert was organized as part of a joint cultural project involving the Rudaki Foundation, the Islamic Culture and Communications Organization and Iran's cultural attaché office in Italy.

The initiative aimed to strengthen artistic and cultural exchanges between the two countries and promote dialogue across religious and cultural traditions.

Composed in 2006 to mark the 500th anniversary of the start of construction of the new St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, 'Petrus Eni' is a symphonic oratorio that traces the life and mission of the Apostle Peter through orchestral and choral music. Its Tehran performance coincided with the 400th anniversary of the basilica's consecration in 1626.

"I have selected some of these instruments and incorporated them into the 'Iran Symphony', which I am now completing," he said. "I have tried to capture and express, through symphonic music, some of the movements, emotions and spiritual qualities of the Iranian people."

The composition will also feature what he described as an unusually beautiful dance, which he has named the 'Dance of the Pistachios'.

The Iran Symphony is part of a collection of 14 works inspired by different nations, including Venezuela, Argentina and Portugal.

Papalardo said he believes local instruments and melodies are essential to capturing the character of a country before translating its musical identity into the symphonic form.

Reflecting on hearing 'Petrus Eni' performed in Tehran, Papalardo said he deliberately refrains from interfering with conductors' interpretations of his scores, allowing each one the freedom to bring their own understanding to the work.



Italian composer Antonio Papalardo holds a decorative vase after the performance of his symphonic oratorio at Vahdat Hall in Tehran on November 18, 2026.
AMIN JALALI/IRNA

"I was deeply moved yesterday. I cannot hide it; I even had tears in my eyes," he said. "I saw that the conductor had understood the genuine Christian emotions I had expressed in my symphony and had conveyed them successfully to the audience."

He said he had been anxious before the concert because he arrived late and had missed the orchestra's final rehearsal.

Unsure what to expect, he was relieved and pleased by the performance of the conductor, choir and professional musicians.

For Papalardo, the concert carried a message that extended beyond music itself.

Recalling a meeting with Iran's ambassador in Rome, he said the ambassador had told him that words were less important than music because musical messages were universal and could be understood by everyone.

"The more we talk, the less we can make ourselves understood; but the more music we create, the better we can communicate with one another," Papalardo recalled the ambassador saying.

He said the message had shaped his own efforts to use music to build connections between nations.

Performing a major work of the Catholic Christian tradition in Tehran, a city in a predominantly Muslim country, was intended to demonstrate the closeness between Muslim and Christian communities.

Papalardo pointed to the Quran's reverence for Jesus Christ as a great prophet and Mary, his mother, as one of the women held in the highest esteem by God.

"There is no reason for separation, distance or estrangement," he said. "We must all stand together and live in peace, respect and solidarity."

Criticizing what he described as the world's war-oriented approach, he contrasted the concert's message with the pursuit of nuclear weapons.

"Trump wants to ride atomic bombs, but with this performance in Iran, we launched a bomb more powerful than the atomic bombs of the experts," he said.

Papalardo also invited Iranian poets, composers and musicians to collaborate with him, saying he was ready to draw inspiration from the country's musical traditions.

"Poets who want to make their homeland, Iran, immortal through their verses can send me their poems, and I will compose music for them," he said.

"I am ready to discover the character of Iranian music, draw inspiration from it and create works that can introduce Iran and its culture to the world."

He said the Iran Symphony was still unfinished and that he was considering making authentic Iranian music an integral part of the composition.