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Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi speaks at the 31st Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 23 November 2026.
IRNA

Iran's economic recovery hinges on reviving production, investment

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Economy Minister has recently said that Iran's economy has moved beyond the resilience phase and entered a new stage focused on reconstruction and production. Achieving this goal, however, requires addressing immediate constraints, including electricity shortages, access to raw materials and payroll costs, while also laying the groundwork for future investment, economic expert Seyyed Mohammad Abbasnia told Iran Daily. He said the first step should be an accurate assessment of the specific needs of each production unit.



Seyyed Mohammad Abbasnia

IRAN DAILY: Given the economy minister's remarks that Iran's economy has moved beyond the resilience phase and entered a new phase focused on reconstruction and production, what should be the country's main economic priorities to achieve this goal?

ABBASNIA: The clearest sign of that transition would be businesses planning several years ahead. A manufacturer preoccupied with electricity supplies, raw materials and payroll has little room to modernize. Reconstruction must address those immediate constraints while creating conditions for future investment. The starting point is an accurate diagnosis. A factory facing power shortages needs a different response from one struggling to sell its products. Lending to the first may simply increase its debt; expanding the second may leave it with larger inventories. Working with the private sector, the government should identify each industry's bottlenecks and assign clear responsibilities, deadlines and funding. Projects should then be assessed by how much sustainable output they can generate and how many other businesses they can support. Completing electricity infrastructure could bring several factories back into operation, delivering greater benefits than launching scattered new projects. Even substantial progress on an existing project does not automatically justify completion: its future benefits must warrant the remaining costs. This requires a realistic budget and coordinated monetary, exchange-rate and energy policies. Inflationary financing could drive up equipment and working-capital costs, eroding the support provided. Progress reports should show how much productive capacity has actually been restored, and at what cost.

How can the government channel idle capital and excess liquidity in society toward productive activities and investment in the manufacturing sector?

Policy must begin with understanding savers' choices. Households buying gold or foreign currency are often protecting years of earnings against declining purchasing power. Productive investment becomes attractive when they can assess its returns, their legal protections and their ability to sell their investment. That starts with the underlying business. Prices that fail to cover costs, overdue customer payments and abrupt regulatory changes undermine reliable earnings. Reducing these uncertainties can make investment attractive without additional subsidies: investors generally require a lower return when they face less risk. The next step is to offer investment-ready projects with clear land rights and permits, independently assessed costs, credible procurement plans and identifiable markets. Households can participate through project funds and professional investment institutions, provided they know how their money is used, who is accountable and what rights they have if delivery slips. Promises of liquidity also need credible backing: an investment in a multiyear project cannot always be sold immediately. Precision about liquidity matters, too. Buying shares or bonds generally transfers money between accounts. The objective is to turn financing into real investment. Stock-market trading supports investors' ability to buy and sell, but policymakers must separately measure how much fresh funding from new shares and bonds actually reaches equipment, infrastructure and production.

What roles should banks and capital markets play in financing reconstruction and restoring productive capacity?

Financing should match a project's economic timetable. A factory needing three months' funding for raw materials has different requirements from a project that will generate revenue in three years. Repayments falling due before revenue begins can create a cash crisis even for an otherwise profitable project. Banks can play a central role in working capital, receivables financing and supply-chain finance. A manufacturer awaiting payment for goods already sold, for example, could borrow against a verified receivable. Lenders must distinguish temporary cash shortages from a fundamental inability to repay. Repeatedly extending loans to businesses with insufficient earning capacity postpones the problem. Long-term projects require a suitable mix of owners' equity, project funds, bonds and bank loans.

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Iran says will use 'all available means' to break US blockade

International Desk

Iran said Monday it would use all means at its disposal to counter a US naval blockade that was imposed on Iran on April 13 as there are reports suggesting that Iran is preparing to deploy a large convoy of oil tankers to break the blockade.

"We will certainly not tolerate these actions and will use all available means to counter US aggression," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei in a weekly press briefing.

"You should bear in mind that what the Americans have described as economic sanctions, an economic blockade and a naval blockade undoubtedly constitutes an act of military aggression against Iran," said Baqaei.

"Under these circumstances, Iran is entitled, pursuant to Article 51 of the UN Charter, to use any means at its disposal to defend itself."

Baqaei said rejected reports about Iranian ships loading oil ad "speculations".

War broke out between Iran and the United States on February 28 when US-Israeli strikes assassinated the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The conflict has since expanded after Iran retaliated with missile and drone strikes across the region.

The Strait of Hormuz has become the focus of the conflict, with Iran continuing in its efforts to blockade the waterway, vital to global energy supplies.

In response, the US imposed its own counterblockade of Iranian ports. It later announced a raft of economic sanctions, and launched a task force to disrupt land routes into Iran.

The blockade was imposed on April 13, lifted in June after Washington reached a draft understanding with Tehran, then restored on July 14 after the agreement collapsed.

Iranian forces have made multiple announcements in recent weeks of ships catching fire attempting to use routes that Tehran considers off-limits.

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis remain stalled, especially since the collapse of a June deal that laid out a pathway to a permanent settlement.

Iran has said Hormuz could be open within two days but only if Washington agreed to its list of demands which include the lifting of the blockade.

"If the American side fulfils its commitments under the Islamabad memorandum of understanding, security can be restored to the Strait of Hormuz and the region in the shortest possible time," said Baqaei.

Baqaei said the Islamic Republic remains committed to its obligations and is ready to implement them swiftly if the other side meets the agreed conditions.

Baqaei said Iran's conditions are not extraordinary demands but its legitimate rights, including the lifting of unlawful and oppressive sanctions, the end of the maritime blockade, and the implementation of all commitments Washington accepted under the June 28 Islamabad understanding.

"These are neither new preconditions nor demands outside the framework of Iran's rights; they are an inseparable part of the rights of the Iranian people," he said.

According to the spokesman, Tehran remains serious about securing its rights and will not compromise on its interests.

Vessels are anchored in the Strait of Hormuz in this picture taken from the port city of Bandar Abbas, Iran, on November 16, 2026.
IRNA

Pezeshkian says US cannot topple Iran unless ruling system ignores people

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday that the United States and other adversaries could not bring down Iran unless the establishment itself weakened the country by ignoring its people.

"If we stand together, no power is greater than the power of the people, and the United States and other enemies can never topple us," Pezeshkian said in a meeting in Tehran. "Unless, by ignoring the people, we ourselves create the conditions for the country's weakening."

Pezeshkian's comments come as relations between Iran and the United States remain strained, with no clear resolution to their standoff and uncertainty over the prospects for renewed diplomatic engagement.

The Iranian president also condemned the killing of Iranian scientists and other prominent figures, describing the attacks as crimes committed by countries that claim to uphold democracy.

He said the scientists and military commanders killed in attacks were dedicated to serving Iran and that their deaths were intended to deprive the country of their expertise and contributions.

Regional cooperation

Pezeshkian also called for closer ties with neighboring Muslim countries, describing cooperation with them as essential for Iran.

He said US sanctions and restrictions are intended to force Iran into submission, but argued that stronger regional economic and transport links could help ease some of the country's difficulties.

Iran could make greater use of land routes through neighboring countries as part of efforts to expand trade and reduce its reliance on other routes, he said.

Tehran and Washington remain at odds over a range of issues, including Iran's nuclear program and US sanctions.

The US has imposed a naval blockade on Iran's post following its aggression against Iran in February and imposed more sanctions on the country. It has also targeted Iran's aviation industry with new sanctions and other countries have responded by suspending Iranian airlines from their airports.

Washington has also pressured Iran's neighbors including Pakistan, Turkey and Iraq to close their land routs with Iran.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a meeting in Tehran, Iran, on November 23, 2026.
president.ir

Peace cannot come through surrender*: Deputy FM*

International Desk

Iran on Monday vowed not to give in for peace, saying it would defend itself against attacks but would not seek war.

"Iran is not war-mongering, but it will not welcome a peace that sacrifices the independence of the Iranian nation," Kazem Gharibabadi, deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs, told the 31st Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention in The Hague.

"Peace that is based on threats is not peace. Peace that emerges from surrender is not peace," Gharibabadi added, according to IRNA.

Gharibabadi said around 60 petrochemical complexes, 44 pharmaceutical factories and seven facilities linked to drug production had been hit during a war the US and Israeli waged against the country in late February.

"The damage had disrupted the safe and sustained operation of the facilities, as well as the production, supply and export of chemicals and related products," he said.

The senior diplomat expressed particular concern over strikes on facilities subject to verification under the Chemical Weapons Convention, saying such attacks could have implications for the implementation of the treaty and the achievement of its objectives.

Gharibabadi called on Israel to join the Chemical Weapons Convention and place all its chemical-related facilities and activities under the verification system of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).



He said Israel's weapons of mass destruction arsenal, which remains outside international verification frameworks, posed a threat to regional and international peace and security.

The diplomat also raised concerns about the impact of US sanctions on Iranian survivors of chemical attacks during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, many of whom still require essential medicines, specialized treatment and continuous medical care.

"Unilateral sanctions and financial and trade restrictions had made it difficult to import essential medicines, medical equipment and pharmaceutical raw materials needed by the patients," he said.

"Victims who once survived a chemical attack should not be deprived of essential treatment a second time, this time as a result of political decisions and economic restrictions," Gharibabadi said.

He also called for governments, individuals and companies that had supplied materials, equipment or technology for Iraq's chemical weapons program under Saddam Hussein to be held accountable.

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0240004
Second Announcement
N.I.S.O.C
NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity
1	CASING, API GRADE L-80, SEAMLESS, "VAM","NEW VAM" THREAD, R-3 API 5CT/ISO 11960, PSL: 2, AS PER API 5CT/ISO 11960, SIZE(OD), WEIGHT(PPF), AS SPECIFIED, MARKING: COLD DIE STAMPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT, NOTE: LEVEL OF INSPECTION: 1 (L.O.I: 1) "QCP/MPS DOCUMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO REVIEW & CONFIRM", "ITP DOCUMENTS IS ESSENTIAL FOR TECHNICAL EVALUATION", OD: ACC. TO CLAUSE 8.11.1 API5CT 10 ED. (TABLE 13 & 14 & 15), WT: ACCORDING TO CLAUSE 8.11.2 API5CT 10 EDITION, MASS: ACC. TO CLAUSE 8.11.3 API5CT 10 EDITION (TABLE 16), ID. ACCORDING TO CLAUSE 8.11.4 API5CT 10 EDITION, 5-1/2 IN., 20 PPF	2,200LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of **33,092/00 EURO** or **66,906,560,790 RIAL**, in favor of NISOC.

THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS CFR, BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.A.D. INCLUDING AN ADVANCE PAYMENT, SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex, Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
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Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



Eurasian group recognizes Iran's FATF progress, pledges continued technical support

Economy Desk

The Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) has recognized Iran's progress in implementing its Financial Action Task Force (FATF) action plan and pledged to continue providing technical assistance to help the country address remaining shortcomings, according to a statement issued at the group's 45th plenary meeting.

The meeting was held in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, with Iran attending as an observer through a delegation led by Hadi Khani, deputy economy minister and head of the country's Financial Intelligence Center, IRNA reported on Monday, citing the center.

According to the meeting's public statement, the EAG will continue providing technical assistance to Iran to address shortcomings in its efforts to comply with the 2016 ICRG action plan.

The statement said the EAG had recognized Iran's progress in its latest report to the FATF.

Of the 21 measures envisaged under the EAG's technical assistance program, to which member states had committed, eight have been implemented, the statement said.

The assistance has included providing supervisory and methodological documents and guidelines, as well as exchanging experience in areas such as supervisory activities, operational and strategic analysis, international cooperation and the implementation of targeted financial sanctions.

The meeting's participating delegations welcomed the support provided by EAG member states to Iran and the country's efforts to implement the 2016 FATF action plan, the statement said.



centralasianlight.org

Iran's active participation in the group's activities was also highlighted, while a representative of the FATF secretariat welcomed the country's recent progress at the closing session.

Speaking at the meeting on Saturday, Khani thanked the EAG secretariat and member states for their technical cooperation, saying their support had helped strengthen Iran's framework and reforms to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

"Despite the particular challenges that the imposed war has placed on Iran's institutional capacities, the country's commitment to combating money laundering and terrorist financing remains firm," he said.

"We are determined to strengthen our anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing system, fulfill our international commitments and complete the remaining items of the FATF action plan to facilitate Iran's removal from the list of high-risk countries," Khani added.

Khani described combating money laundering and terrorist financing as a national priority, citing Iran's ratification of the Palermo and CFT conventions last year, amendments to the executive regulations on combating terrorist financing to bring them into line with international standards, including those on targeted financial sanctions, and the upgrading of two other FATF action plan items in the latest ICRG assessment.

He said the measures demonstrated the continuation of reforms in Iran and stressed the importance of sustained technical engagement and capacity-building.

The EAG plenary meeting was held from Nov. 16 to 20, and was attended by representatives of member states, as well as delegations from the FATF, the New Development Bank, the World Bank, the United Nations monitoring team, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United States, the European Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and several other countries and international organizations.

Government approves measure to facilitate border imports of industrial raw materials

Economy Desk

Iran has approved a measure to facilitate the import of raw materials needed by factories through the shared borders of its frontier provinces, including through porter trade and maritime trade using small vessels, Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak said on Monday.

Speaking at a nationwide meeting of the ministry's provincial directors, Atabak urged officials in border provinces to coordinate with the central government to identify manufacturers' actual needs and use legal border trade channels to secure raw materials and spare parts, IRNA reported.

He praised the preparation of a foreign trade atlas for the provinces, saying it outlined each province's export and import capacities, the goods it could export, the raw materials and products it needed, and ways to benefit from its geographic position and proximity to neighboring countries.

Atabak said managing the country's conditions and maintaining economic activity during difficult times were the result of collective efforts and coordination among the government, the Industry Ministry, business operators, trade associations and manufacturers.



Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak speaks at a nationwide meeting of the ministry's provincial directors in Tehran on November 23, 2026.
IRNA.

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.

"Production is a national issue, and no government body should make decisions based on a narrow institutional mandate that could harm manufacturers. Protecting production must be treated as a national responsibility by all government agencies," Atabak said.

He also pointed to the government's limited financial resources, saying production generated value added, tax revenues, insurance contributions and employment.

"If a production unit is forced to suspend operations because of financial pressures and demands beyond its capacity, not only will government revenues decline, but employment will also suffer, imposing greater social and economic costs on the country," he said.

"Conditions must be created to enable manufacturers to continue operating, preserve production chains and prevent employees at industrial units from facing difficulties," Atabak added.

The minister also referred to damage sustained by several major industrial facilities during the 40-day war, saying three of the country's major steel complexes had been hit.

Through the efforts and coordination of the relevant entities, some of these facilities returned to production within a short period, while petrochemical plants were rapidly pursuing reconstruction and a resumption of operations, he said.

Steel and petrochemicals are among Iran's major industries and sources of foreign currency earnings, Atabak said. He added that the Economy Council had discussed and decided on allocating 50% of the foreign currency needed to repair the damage from the companies' own foreign currency resources, with the aim of facilitating reconstruction and essential projects.

Iran's economic recovery ...

Owners should bear an appropriate share of construction risk, while debt repayments should follow the project's expected cash flow. Properly structured long-term financing reduces dependence on repeated loan renewals. Before committing funds, lenders and investors should test difficult scenarios: delayed completion, higher equipment costs or weaker sales. Would enough cash remain to cover principal and interest? Funding should be released in stages against independently verified progress. Where government guarantees are necessary, they should cover defined risks, have explicit limits and be disclosed. A contingent commitment today can become a budgetary expense tomorrow.

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What measures are needed to ensure regulatory stability and reduce investment risks in order to encourage greater private-sector participation in investment and economic reconstruction?

Investors commit money today in anticipation of future earnings. Sudden policy decisions that undermine those calculations raise the cost of subsequent investment. Businesses demand higher returns or postpone their decisions; either response leaves fewer projects going ahead. Regulation must be predictable while allowing necessary reform. Changes to foreign-exchange rules, energy tariffs or export requirements should involve an assessment of their effects, advance notice and reasonable adjustment periods. Emergency measures also need a defined scope and duration so that temporary interventions do not become permanent practice. Government contracts are a practical test of credibility. Payment dates, price-adjustment mechanisms, responsibility for delays and dispute-resolution procedures should be clear from the outset. When the government buys a project's output, late payment can jeopardize its ability to service debt. Reliable public-sector payment is therefore itself a way to reduce financing costs. Risk should sit with the party best placed to manage it. Investors should remain responsible for execution and commercial performance; government should be accountable for its contractual commitments and the consequences of its own decisions. Private and public enterprises also need equal access to credit, permits and information. Success should be measured through shorter permitting times, more reliable contract performance, faster payment and higher realized investment. Confidence grows when businesses see those improvements and lasts when they continue.

Iran seeks to expand maritime cooperation with Malaysia, Cyprus

Economy Desk

Iran is seeking to expand port and maritime cooperation with Malaysia and Cyprus, including through the proposed establishment of joint maritime committees, technology transfers and greater opportunities for joint investment, the head of the country's Ports and Maritime Organization said.

Mohammad Shakibi-Nasab, a deputy transport minister and head of the organization, discussed ways to strengthen port, trade and transport ties with Abolfazl Abdoli, Iran's newly appointed ambassador to Malaysia, and Mohsen Shamsizadeh Ravandi, its newly appointed ambassador to Cyprus, IRNA reported.

The talks also covered the use of international opportunities to develop Iran's maritime economy and coordination of positions at international organizations, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO), IRNA said, citing the Ports and Maritime Organization.

Shakibi-Nasab stressed the importance of maritime transport to the country's trade and ports' role in expanding economic exchanges, calling for stronger maritime diplomacy and greater use of Iranian diplomatic missions abroad to facilitate technical, commercial and investment ties.

One of the main proposals was the establishment of joint maritime and port committees with Malaysia and Cyprus to identify areas of cooperation and follow up on technical issues in the sector.

Holding joint technical meetings, including virtual sessions, was also proposed as an initial step toward assessing the two sides' capacities and expectations and developing ongoing cooperation and joint plans.

The discussions also focused on expanding educational and technological cooperation, particularly in port management, maritime transport, engineering and new technologies.

The two sides highlighted opportunities for exchanging technical expertise, sharing experience in port management and operations, holding scientific and training meetings, and arranging technical visits.

Joint investment and creating opportunities for greater participation by Iranian private-sector companies in international port and maritime markets were also discussed.

Other topics included expanding trade and transport ties, making use of the two countries' port capacities and reviewing and updating existing cooperation agreements and memorandums of understanding.

The talks also addressed redefining the roles of different participants in the North-South Corridor, with an emphasis on Iran's role as a facilitator, as a way to create new opportunities in international transport and trade.

The meetings were part of Shakibi-Nasab's ongoing consultations with Iranian diplomatic representatives abroad and aimed at strengthening international maritime ties, addressing obstacles to port and shipping cooperation, and creating new opportunities for investment and maritime trade, the report said.

We should 'move beyond Eurocentrism' in int'l relations theories



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

CONFERENCE

The first pre-conference session of the 5th National and 4th International Conference on Regional Studies, titled "The Global South and Western-Centric Theorizing in International Relations," was held with the participation of Homeira Moshirzadeh, a faculty member at the University of Tehran, and Jalal Dehghani Firoozabadi, a faculty member at Allameh Tabataba'i University.

At the session, the distinguished speakers examined the state of international relations theories and critiqued dominant epistemological frameworks, emphasizing the need to reconsider the foundations of knowledge production and create opportunities for non-Western intellectual traditions to participate in theoretical development. The central focus of the discussions was how to move beyond Eurocentrism in international relations scholarship and whether theories grounded in the historical, cultural, and intellectual experiences of Global South societies could emerge.

Eurocentrism regards modern world as exclusively product of Europe's internal developments



Homeira Moshirzadeh

Homeira Moshirzadeh, a professor of international relations at the University of Tehran, noted that the majority of international relations theories, including both mainstream theories and critical approaches, have been developed at Western universities and academic institutions. Western researchers and theorists, she said, have developed within particular economic, social, and cultural contexts, and it is natural that their historical and cultural experiences have influenced their perspectives and theoretical work.

Emphasizing that this does not mean Western theories are homogeneous, she added, "Theories developed in different countries and within various schools of thought differ considerably in terms of content and even in terms of their geographical origins. Nevertheless, the principal issue is not simply whether their authors are Western or where the theories were developed; rather, a theory can be Eurocentric regardless of whether its author is Western or non-Western. For this reason, one of the principal contemporary criticisms of international relations theories concerns their Eurocentrism."

Moshirzadeh described Eurocentrism as a worldview and epistemological framework according to which the values and achievements of the modern world are presented as predominantly the products of Europe's internal developments, independent of the influence of other regions of the world. Within this narrative, modernity, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, technological advancement, and the emergence of institutions such as the modern state, democracy, citizenship, human rights, and civil society are regarded as European phenomena that originated within the internal dynamics of the continent. According to her, the problem with this approach is that, on the one hand, it overlooks the role of other regions and civilizations in shaping global developments and, on the other, transforms Europe's particular historical experience into a universal model that other societies are also expected to follow. Elaborating on the implications of this narrative, the professor pointed to the marginalization of non-Western civilizations' contributions to historical developments. She maintained that in Eurocentric narratives, the role of other regions of the world in shaping modern achievements receives insufficient attention, whereas many of Europe's economic and commercial developments emerged through its connections with other regions of the world.

"For example, when examining the history of financial and commercial systems, one cannot overlook the role of the Abbasid Empire, money-changing traditions and financial transactions, and the Silk Road trade routes. These routes passed through East Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa and played a role in transmitting knowledge and civilizational achievements to Europe. Africa's role in the history of global trade and the slave trade is also part of the historical reality that receives insufficient attention in one-sided narratives."

Moshirzadeh further emphasized that being Western and being Eurocentric are not necessarily synonymous. Theorizing may take place in the West, but its author may consciously seek to distance themselves from the Eurocentric framework by recognizing the limitations of that perspective. Conversely, a perspective may emerge outside the West, even from an explicitly anti-Western standpoint, yet continue to reproduce the same Eurocentric assumptions. Therefore, the geographical location in which a theory is produced cannot, by itself, serve as an appropriate criterion for determining its degree of epistemological independence.



Homeira Moshirzadeh (C-R) and Jalal Dehghani Firoozabadi (C-L), faculty members at prestigious Iranian universities, speak at the first pre-conference session of the 5th National and 4th International Conference on Regional Studies, at the University of Tehran, Iran, on November 16, 2026.
SOCIAL MEDIA

Global South transcends geographical divisions

Moshirzadeh also described the concept of the Global South as one requiring further reflection and examination, referring to the evolution of terminology used to describe non-Western countries. According to her, the use of expressions such as underdeveloped countries, developing countries, backward countries, and the Third World has, in many cases, positioned non-Western countries as societies expected to follow the West's path of development.

The term Global South, meanwhile, has brought non-Western countries into focus within a different conceptual framework. However, this concept also encounters geographical limitations since many countries classified as part of the Global South, including countries in East Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa, are located in the Northern Hemisphere. Therefore, the Global South cannot be regarded merely as a geographical concept; rather, the term primarily refers to a constellation of historical, political, and economic positions and experiences in relation to the prevailing global order.

> The principal issue is not simply whether their authors are Western or where the theories were developed; rather, a theory can be Eurocentric regardless of whether its author is Western or non-Western. For this reason, one of the principal contemporary criticisms of international relations theories concerns their Eurocentrism.



NICHOLAS REGLI/UCSD GUARDIAN

Moshirzadeh subsequently outlined two broad approaches to confronting Western-centrism and Eurocentrism in international relations theorizing, the first of which is the production of indigenous theories. According to her, one avenue for indigenous theorizing is to return to religious, literary, and historical sources and extract and update the concepts contained therein to understand the modern world. The potential of literary and historical texts, including Iran's Shahnameh, can also be harnessed to derive concepts and ideas relevant to theorizing in international relations.

The professor of international relations identified another approach as examining the ideas and perspectives of contemporary leaders and political thinkers in non-Western countries. "The perspectives of figures such as Sukarno, Gandhi, and Imam Khomeini on the international system and the developments of the modern world can be examined, and new theoretical foundations for understanding international relations can be derived from their thought," Moshirzadeh added.

She also identified the use of existing Western theories and their reconstruction in accordance with the cultures and conditions of non-Western societies as another avenue worthy of examination, an approach that could lead to the emergence of a form of hybrid theorizing.

Postcolonialism doesn't mean end of colonial era

In another part of her remarks, the professor addressed postcolonial approaches and emphasized that postcolonialism does not mean the end of colonialism or a return to the precolonial condition. According to her, colonialism continues to exist in various forms, but the contemporary world is one that exists after the onset of colonialism, and a return to the conditions that preceded it is no longer possible.

Referring to perspectives within certain postcolonial approaches, Moshirzadeh explained that within these perspectives, identities and social and historical relations are not regarded as fixed and immutable entities; rather, they take shape amid historical developments and reciprocal interactions. Accordingly, one cannot speak of an entirely authentic and untouched identity to which one could return in order to discard all the consequences of historical interactions and developments.

Referring also to thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha, she discussed the role of postcolonial studies in critiquing power relations, the representation of the Other, and the reciprocal influence of colonizer and colonized.

Decolonizing int'l relations knowledge goes beyond adding non-Western theories



Jalal Dehghani Firoozabadi

Continuing the session, Jalal Dehghani Firoozabadi, a professor of international relations, focused on the nature of knowledge in international relations and the requirements of indigenous theorizing, emphasizing the need for the epistemic decolonization of the discipline.

Noting that any discussion of indigenous theorizing must begin with an examination of whether local and indigenous knowledge and theories can emerge, he stated, "This issue has long been debated in the philosophy of science. The question has consistently been whether science and theory possess a universal character or whether they can take shape in accordance with the historical, cultural, and geographical contexts of different societies."

Distinguishing between the epistemological possibility of indigenous theorizing and its practical realization, Dehghani Firoozabadi added that the fact that an indigenous theory has not emerged so far or has not attained an appropriate position does not necessarily mean that its emergence is impossible. He identified acceptance of the influence of colonial structures on knowledge and international relations theory as one of the important premises of this debate.

"Classical colonialism and economic and political domination may have ended in their traditional forms, but epistemic colonialism continues. One of its most significant manifestations is Western-centrism in the structures governing the production, validation, and dissemination of knowledge. This means that knowledge produced in the West is presented as valid and universal, while other systems of knowledge are either disregarded or marginalized."

According to the professor, the issue is not merely what theories have been produced, but also who determines which forms of knowledge are valid, which subjects

merit academic investigation, and which methods should be accepted as scientific. In fact, the structures responsible for academic validation can also contribute to reproducing existing epistemic hierarchies.

Emphasizing the need to reconsider the dominant historical narrative, Dehghani Firoozabadi referred to the concept of "provincializing Europe" and stated: "According to this concept, Europe must relinquish the exceptional and universal position it has constructed for itself and be studied as one of the world's regions and historical experiences. This perspective does not mean denying Europe's achievements; rather, it emphasizes the need to examine the continent's developments in connection with its historical interactions with, and influences from, other regions of the world."

He nevertheless warned that criticism of Eurocentrism should not lead to the emergence of a simplistic dichotomy between the West and the non-West since the criticism of Eurocentrism may still employ the same intellectual tools and frameworks that are themselves products of European intellectual traditions. Therefore, the objective should not be to replace one hegemony with another, but to create the conditions for reconsidering the standards and frameworks governing knowledge production.

Epistemic decolonization requires reassessment of definitions, methods

Elaborating on the concept of epistemic decolonization, Dehghani Firoozabadi stressed that decolonization does not merely mean adding non-Western theories and perspectives to existing frameworks; rather, the frameworks, assumptions, and criteria that determine what constitutes valid knowledge and what qualifies as a desirable theory must themselves be questioned.

"If we merely add several non-Western theories to the existing body of theories while continuing to use the same dominant criteria and frameworks as the basis for validation, no fundamental change has taken place. Epistemic decolonization requires a reassessment of the definitions of knowledge and theory, the methods of acquiring knowledge, and the ways in which international relations are studied." The professor of international relations referred to the potential of non-Western thinkers' ideas to generate new concepts in the discipline, citing Farabi, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Khaldun, and Rumi as examples of intellectual sources worthy of examination. He emphasized that the ontological and epistemological potential of these ideas must be examined for the purpose of conceptualization in international relations. For example, Rumi's philosophical foundations and ideas can be utilized to formulate new questions and concepts in this field.

Dehghani Firoozabadi, too, emphasized that an indigenous theory should not be equated with a theory produced merely within a particular country or geographical region. A researcher in the West may present a theory grounded in the philosophy, history, and experience of Iranian society, while a researcher in Iran may, conversely, produce a thoroughly Western-centric theory. Therefore, what matters is the epistemological content and theoretical foundations of a theory, not merely the geographical location of its production.

He subsequently distinguished between three interpretations of non-Western theorizing: first, universalizing non-Western approaches and theories within existing frameworks; second, studying the issues and problems of the Global South through prevailing theories and metatheories; and third, replacing existing approaches and theories with non-Western theoretical frameworks and foundations.

In his view, the first two approaches can be useful starting points, but they do not, in themselves, constitute the production of indigenous theory since they may ultimately lead to the endorsement and reinforcement of dominant theories.

Global South must become active theorists: *Researcher*



ANNA PARINI/FOREIGN POLICY

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

The 5th National and 4th International Conference on Regional Studies, themed "Iran and the Global South: Rethinking the Emerging Global Order," will be held on February 3, 2027, at the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the University of Tehran, Iran. The conference will take place amid developments in the international system and the emergence of new powers, which have made the need to reassess prevailing theories of international relations and pay greater attention to the role of Global South countries more pronounced than ever. *(The Global South, also referred to as "the South", is a term used in transnational and postcolonial studies to refer to what is sometimes called the Third World.)*

Against this backdrop, questions have arisen concerning the possibility of developing theories independent of Western-centric approaches, the contribution of different civilizations and regions to the production of knowledge in international relations, and Iran's position in this process. In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Parham Pourramezan, the executive secretary of the conference and a researcher in political affairs, outlined the event's main themes and discussed the importance of strengthening theoretical development in the Global South and the need to formulate theories suited to the particular characteristics of societies such as Iran.



Parham Pourramezan

IRAN DAILY: What are the main themes of the 5th National and 4th International Conference on Regional Studies, and what issues will be addressed in this edition?

POURRAMEZAN: The principal themes of this edition of the conference include conceptual and theoretical issues concerning the Global South; developments in the international system and the Global South; the international economic order and the Global South; historical, civilizational, and cultural issues concerning the Global South; media, communications, and public opinion in relation to the Global South; and a special panel on Iran and the Global South. Complete information about the conference and its themes is available at icrs.ut.ac.ir. The conference is being organized by the Regional Studies Department of the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of Tehran, in cooperation with the Iranian Regional Studies Association. To date, numerous researchers and academics from various countries have submitted their paper abstracts to the conference secretariat. Following the peer-review process and the selection of papers presenting novel ideas and fresh perspectives, these works will be presented on the day of the conference.

Which countries and regions have submitted papers or abstracts for participation in the conference so far?

At this stage, we have received abstracts from Southeast Asian countries, Latin America, the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). We hope that, as this process continues, we will witness broader participation by researchers and the presentation of papers from different regions of the world.

Why did you select the Global South and the reconsideration of the world order as the theme for this edition? What is the significance of this subject in the current international relations landscape?

In recent years, a new interpretation of the nature of power dynamics in international relations has been taking shape, within which the Global South has attracted attention as an emerging concept and a constellation of potential future actors on the world stage. For this reason, we also sought to place this subject at the center of the conference's agenda. Our objective is not merely to strengthen and promote the idea of the Global South, but also to bring it into the realm of criticism and critical theories, thereby creating the conditions for the emergence of new perspectives. Indeed, this concept must transcend the level of general discourse and undergo theoretical and academic examination and assessment.

It appears that greater attention is being devoted to this subject in different parts of the world, including among BRICS member states. Admittedly, certain individuals are currently engaged in theoretical work in this field on an isolated basis, but it remains unclear to what extent these efforts can lead to the emergence of a coherent and influential idea. We must wait and follow future developments to assess the outcome of this process.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (bottom 2nd-L) poses hand in hand with BRICS Members, Partners and Outreach invitees during a group picture at the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on July 7, 2025.
ANI

> Our objective is not merely to strengthen and promote the idea of the Global South, but also to bring it into the realm of criticism and critical theories, thereby creating the conditions for the emergence of new perspectives. Indeed, this concept must transcend the level of general discourse and undergo theoretical and academic examination and assessment.

Are prevailing theories of international relations predominantly products of Western and European thought? To what extent have other civilizations and regions of the world contributed to the development of theories in this field?

Theories associated with the Global South have largely emerged from approaches that differ from Western strategic theories, and, in some cases, they also exhibit slogan-driven tendencies. These two movements are inherently in conceptual conflict with one another, and their differences can be examined from the perspectives of ontology, epistemology, research methodology, and other approaches within international relations. Ultimately, studying the dialectic between these two movements can provide a basis for more precise assessment and conclusions. What I observe as a researcher in international affairs is the decline of Western international relations; however, we have yet to witness the rise and consolidation of Eastern international relations. This movement has largely remained passive, although signs of dynamism and growth are now becoming apparent. This passivity has multiple causes, but it appears that Eastern international relations is emerging, and we can expect it to bring about positive developments in the future.

How decisive is the role of power in the formation and expansion of theories of international relations? Has the limited political and economic power of Global South countries caused their theories to receive less attention?

Power is one of the most important factors in the formation and structure of the discipline of international relations. One of the principal reasons Global South societies have failed to attain their rightful position in this field is that they have never been effectively represented within the mainstream structures of power. These societies have largely occupied the position of actors upon whom power is exercised; in other words, they have been influenced by power relations rather than being able to play an active role in shaping and exercising power themselves. This has caused them to encounter numerous difficulties in various fields and prevented them from adequately articulating and establishing their perspectives and theories at the international level.

What consequences could the promotion of Western-centric theories in Global South societies, including Iran, entail? How can these societies benefit from Western academic achievements while developing theories suited to their indigenous conditions and particular characteristics?

It cannot be said that all aspects of adopting prevailing theories of international relations, which are predominantly Western, are necessarily problematic. However, strengthening theoretical approaches associated with the Global South could offer an important advantage: enhancing societies' capacity for indigenous theorizing.

We must move toward a position in which we can develop theories suited to the conditions and particular characteristics of our own society; theories specifically tailored to Iranian society and capable of explaining its realities, characteristics, and needs. This is of considerable importance and can help strengthen society and its academic standing in the field of international relations.

Selection criteria to shape Iran's freestyle wrestling lineup for 2027

Sports Desk


TAVAFER

Iranian freestyle wrestlers are set to learn about their pathway toward upcoming international and continental tournaments when the new national team selection criteria for the 2027 season are unveiled.

The selection framework, drawn up by the Iranian Wrestling Federation and the national team coaching staff, will outline the pathway for contenders to qualify for the National Championships, scheduled for early January in Ahvaz.

Those who won medals at major international events in 2026, however, are expected to receive exemptions from the domestic competition and begin their bids for national team spots at next year's UWW Ranking Series events, starting with February's Zagreb Open.

The system is designed to assess wrestlers on technical merit and categorize them according to their achievements, with different entry points for established stars and emerging talents.

While some established stars will enter the process at more advanced stages, younger and less experienced wrestlers will have to work their way up from the national championships and prove themselves at international ranking events and continental competitions.

Meritocracy is expected to be the cornerstone of the system, leaving no room for preferential treatment, with all contenders required to follow the designated qualification routes.

In 57kg, no exemptions are expected following disappointing performances by the Iranian representatives at three major events.

Milad Valizadeh was one of four Iranians to miss out on the podium at October's Senior World Championships after his last-16 defeat to American Spencer Lee was followed by a loss via fall to Russia's Abubakar Mutaliev in the repechage.

Ali Yahyapour also bowed out of the U23 World Championships last month in Las Vegas, while Ali Momeni suffered a last-16 defeat to Tajikistan's Aiaal Belolyubskii at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games later that month.

The three setbacks leave little justification for granting any of the contenders an exemption from the national championships.

In 61kg, Ahmad Javan is assured of an exemption from the opening stages after winning the 2026 world title, thanks to an impressive victory over Russian star Zaur Uguev in the final.

Meanwhile, Ebrahim Khari, who claimed bronze at the U23 Worlds, will have to wait for the coaching staff's decision on his entry point.

Amouzad, Khatri strengthen their cases

Rahman Amouzad is set to be exempted from the national championships and the opening selection stage in the 65kg class following his bronze-medal finish at the World Championships.

Ahoura Khatri has also made a strong case for exemption after capturing gold at the U23 World Championships.

In 70kg, Sina Khalili has endured a difficult spell in recent competitions and will have to compete at the national championships. U23 world silver medalist Ebrahim Elahi, meanwhile, is also awaiting the coaching staff's decision.

In 74kg, Asian Games champion Younes Emami and world bronze medalist Amir-Mohammad Yazdani are certain to be exempted from the opening stages.

However, Ali Karampour has added another dimension to the competition after winning bronze at the U23 World Championships, leaving the coaching staff with a difficult decision over the emerging talent.

Nokhodi, Yousefi in strong positions

Mohammad Nokhodi, who won his fourth silver medal at the Senior World Championships, remains a leading contender in the 79kg division, although a possible move up to 86kg could alter the picture.

Even a move to 86kg would not necessarily force him to compete at the national championships, given his gold medal in the 79kg division at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games.

Mahdi Yousefi has also strengthened his position with an emphatic gold-medal performance in Las Vegas and is unlikely to be required to compete at the national championships.

Two-time world champion Kamran Qassempour, who failed to win a medal at 86kg at the World Championships, may have to begin his campaign at the national championships, in line with previous selection practices for wrestlers without a world medal.

The division could also feature Nokhodi, should he move up from 79kg in a bid to boost his chances of securing a place at the LA 2028 Olympics. Reza Afshar, meanwhile, could emerge as a new contender after winning bronze at the U23 Worlds.

If Qassempour is required to start from the opening stage, the 86kg category could emerge as one of the most fiercely contested divisions at the national championships.

Injury complicates selection in 92kg

Amirhossein Firouzpour, who finished fifth at 92kg at the World Championships, is recovering from an injury that requires surgery and is therefore unlikely to be fit for the national championships.

Abolfazl Rahmani, meanwhile, claimed gold at the U23 World Championships, leaving the coaching staff with a special decision to make regarding the two wrestlers.

In 97kg, Hassan Yazdani and Amirali Azarpira are certain to skip the national championships, with their battle for the national team spot expected to be settled in the final stages of the selection process.

Mohammad Mobin Azimi, who won bronze at the U23 World Championships, is likely to enter the fray at the national championships.

In 125kg, meanwhile, it is hard to imagine a genuine challenge to Amirhossein Zare', who secured four victories by technical superiority without conceding a single point en route to a fourth world title of his illustrious career, adding to his emphatic gold at the Asian Games.

If there is to be any domestic threat to his dominance, however, it will surely come from Abolfazl Mohammadnejad, who triumphed at both the U20 and U23 World Championships, providing further evidence of the country's growing depth in the superheavyweight division.

AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup:

Iran beats Lebanon to sweep group

Sports Desk


Iranian players celebrate a goal during a Group B victory over Lebanon at the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup in Phang Nga, Thailand, on November 23, 2026.
AFC

Iran underlined its title ambitions with a 7-2 victory over Lebanon in its final Group B match at the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup in Phang Nga, Thailand, on Monday.

The win capped a perfect group-stage campaign for the two-time defending champions, who opened their campaign with a 9-2 rout of Afghanistan before hammering Vietnam 10-2 on Saturday.

Lebanon, meanwhile, finished second in the group standings to set up a quarterfinal clash with Bahrain on Wednesday.

Mohammad Al Saleh gave Lebanon a promising start when he tested Iran goalkeeper Seyyed Mohammad Dastan in the opening minute, but the two-time semifinalist would find the going tough thereafter.

Iran opened the scoring in the fifth minute when Movahed Mohammadpour's overhead kick struck teammate Mahdi Shirmohammadi before crossing the goal line.

Reza Dayeri then hit the crossbar before Iran doubled its advantage in the sixth minute through Mohammadpour's free kick.

Lebanon goalkeeper Ali Hallal had to be on his toes late in the first period, making back-to-back saves from overhead attempts by Saeid Piramoun and Sobhan Faleh, but could do nothing to prevent Mohammad Masoumizadeh from extending Iran's lead in the 12th minute.

Lebanon showed more promise in attack in the second period, with Al Saleh firing just over from a free kick before Ahmad El Khatib forced a fingertip save from Seyyed Mahdi Mirjalili.

Their improved attacking play, however, yielded nothing, with Iran adding to its tally in the 18th minute when Mohammadali Mokhtari converted a penalty past Mohamed Choker.

After Choker made several good saves early in the third period, Lebanon conceded again in the 27th minute as Mokhtari turned home Dayeri's overhead attempt.

Lebanon pulled a goal back through Haitham Fattal's 29th-minute penalty, but Mirjalili restored Iran's five-goal advantage with a superb volley a minute later.

Al Saleh pulled another goal back for Lebanon in the 32nd minute, but Iran again responded, with Masoumizadeh finding the net in the 35th minute to seal a third straight victory for Ali Nadri's men, who are chasing a record-extending fifth title in the 12th edition of the continent's premier beach soccer competition.

Iranians conclude gymnastics campaign with five medals

Sports Desk


IRNA

Iranians wrapped up their gymnastics campaign with five medals, including three silver, at the Open SCO Cup in Moscow.

In the junior artistic gymnastics competition, Arshia Pourgholam claimed two silver medals in the parallel bars and horizontal bar events, while Rahin Hossein-Panahi secured bronze in the pommel horse.

Karin Kamangar also took bronze after finishing third in the vault final with a score of 12.533.

In trampoline, Bahareh Mosalaei and Fatemeh Tavassoli teamed up to win silver in the synchronized event with a score of 39.33.

The two Iranians also competed in the women's individual trampoline final, but both narrowly missed out on the podium, with Tavassoli finishing fourth and Mosalaei taking fifth place.

In the men's trampoline competition, Abolfazl Kimasi and Sajjad Kargar finished fourth and fifth, respectively, as Iran brought its campaign to a close with five medals.

Bringing together more than 2,000 athletes from Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states and invited teams, the Open SCO Cup, featuring 11 sporting events, concluded on Monday in the Russian capital.

ITTF World Youth Championships:

Iran U19 boys fall to China in quarterfinals

Sports Desk


ISNA

Iran's U19 boys' team missed out on a semifinal spot in the team event at the ITTF World Youth Championships in Istanbul after suffering a 3-0 defeat to China on Sunday.

Mohammad Habibi fell to a straight-game loss (11-8, 11-2, 15-13) against Wen Ruibo, before Benyamin Faraji was beaten by Li Hechen, who came from behind twice to win 3-2 (9-11, 12-10, 5-11, 11-6, 11-4).

Arshia Lorestani completed Iran's disappointing quarterfinal outing with a 3-0 defeat (11-9, 11-3, 11-6) against Zhou Guanhong.

Having opened their campaign in the last 16, the Iranians had defeated Italy 3-0 to advance to the quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, Faraji and compatriot Faraz Shakiba have learned their opponents in the singles events, which get underway on Wednesday.

Ranked No. 11 in the latest ITTF boys' U19 rankings, Faraji will open his campaign against Turkey's Kenan Kahraman, who was part of the Turkish duo that won silver in the U15 doubles event last year.

Shakiba will take on world No. 21 Ukyo Kobayashi of Japan in the U15 boys' round of 32.

Saffron Festival to promote Torbat-e Jam's tourism potential



● IRNA

Iranica Desk

Saffron in Torbat-e Jam is more than an agricultural commodity or a source of income. Over the decades, it has become deeply intertwined with the culture, everyday life and social traditions of the area's villages, playing an important role in shaping their cultural identity.

Faramarz Saber-Moghadam, head of the Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts in Torbat-e Jam, Khorasan Razavi Province, highlighted saffron's significance in the lives and culture of local residents, describing it as an important resource for the development of agricultural tourism, according to ISNA.

He said activities associated with growing and harvesting saffron not only contribute to the livelihoods of rural households but also help strengthen cooperation and social solidarity among local communities.

Emphasizing the need to explore saffron's potential from different tourism perspectives, Saber-Moghadam said the crop's close connection with everyday life and indigenous traditions could provide an opportunity to showcase rural culture and attract visitors interested in agricultural tourism.

Referring to the importance of local festivals in promoting tourism destinations, Saber-Moghadam said the Torbat-e Jam Saffron Festival had been established to showcase the township's potential and help promote the organized development of event-based tourism.

Event-based tourism, he noted, is an important means of introducing emerging destinations. Festivals can draw on the cultural, economic and social characteristics of individual regions to attract visitors and bring lesser-known attractions to wider attention.

Saber-Moghadam announced that the Torbat-e Jam Saffron Festival had been officially registered on Iran's National Tourism Events Calendar.

He said the festival was added to the calendar on November 9 this year, following the completion of the required legal procedures and approval by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

He said one of the main objectives of securing a place on the national calendar was to introduce new tourism destinations and routes while making greater use of local resources to develop the sector.

The villages of Torbat-e Jam, with their longstanding tradition of saffron cultivation and harvesting, have considerable potential for agricultural tourism. This heritage could be used to highlight rural attractions and draw more visitors to the area.



● IRNA

Sari seeks to boost rural tourism through ecotourism lodges

Iranica Desk

The head of Sari's Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has announced the launch of a "One Village, One Ecotourism Lodge" initiative aimed at boosting the rural economy, developing tourism and creating sustainable employment opportunities in the city's villages.

Qasem Qaderi said the initiative had been designed to expand rural tourism capacity, capitalize on the unique characteristics and potential of individual villages, and strengthen local economies, according to chtn.ir.

Under the program, efforts will focus on revitalizing villages' traditional, cultural, natural and architectural assets and creating the conditions for the development of ecotourism lodges. The aim is to turn villages across the county into attractive tourist destinations while supporting the growth of local businesses.

Highlighting support for rural-based economic activities, Qaderi said facilitating access to guidance and consultation services, streamlining investment procedures, and simplifying the issuance of licenses for ecotourism lodges were among the essential measures needed to implement the initiative. These steps, he added, would make it easier for local residents and investors to enter the tourism sector.

Reading Room

Allameh Tabataba'i offers global model for Islamic thought



Iranica Desk

Introducing the intellectual heritage of the Islamic world to the international academic community remains a major challenge for Iran's seminaries and universities. Despite the rich philosophical, theological and intellectual traditions of Islamic civilization, many Muslim thinkers remain relatively unknown internationally.

The experience of Allameh Seyyed Mohammad Hossein Tabataba'i, a contemporary Shiite scholar whose ideas crossed cultural and geographical boundaries, offers a valuable model for presenting this heritage to the world.

Yahya Jahangiri Sohravardi, Cultural Counselor of Iran in Jakarta and a visiting professor of Islamic Studies at the International Islamic University of Indonesia, believes that one of the main challenges facing the humanities in Iran is the failure to establish the international standing of its thinkers.

While figures such as Kant, Heidegger and Popper are widely recognized worldwide, many Iranian and Islamic scholars remain largely absent from international academic discourse despite their significant intellectual contributions, according to IBNA.

The challenge, he argues, is not simply producing ideas but ensuring their dissemination and influence. Many books, dissertations and research projects remain confined to libraries and archives rather than entering global academic discussions.

Valuable ideas must be presented in forms and languages that international audiences can understand and engage with.

Among contemporary Shiite thinkers, Allameh Tabataba'i and the Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr stand out for their influence beyond religious boundaries. Sadr has attracted attention across the Islamic world, including Sunni intellectual circles. Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, has also described him as a genius.

Tabataba'i's distinctive achievement was his direct engagement with Western thinkers and the recognition of his works in Western philosophical circles.

Different audiences have emphasized different aspects of Tabataba'i's legacy. In the Islamic world, particularly in Arab countries, he is best known for his Qur'anic commentary, Al-Mizan. In the West, he is more commonly recognized as an Islamic philosopher. This difference illustrates why introducing thinkers internationally requires an approach tailored to the intellectual interests of each audience.

Several scholars and cultural intermediaries helped bring Tabataba'i's ideas to international attention. Henry Corbin, through his meetings and discussions with him, played an important role in conveying his philosophical thought to Western audiences. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Dariush Shayegan, William Chittick and Annemarie Schimmel also contributed to introducing his ideas and Islamic philosophy internationally.

Tabataba'i understood the importance of engaging with the modern world and Western thought. According to an account recalled by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, when Nasr was leaving Iran, Tabataba'i remarked that his departure would mean losing a window through which the West could be understood. His book The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism reflects this intellectual engagement.

Jahangiri Sohravardih describes another challenge as the tendency to sell ideas in their raw form. In his view, effective theorizing involves four stages: identifying a problem, describing it, analyzing it and proposing a solution. Academic research sometimes focuses heavily on analysis without offering practical solutions or a clear future direction. Consequently, ideas fail to develop into coherent and influential bodies of knowledge.

International communication also requires language and presentation suited to the intended audience. An idea may be rooted in the intellectual tradition of the Ahl al-Bayt, but the way it is communicated must reflect the audience's background. Language appropriate for discussing religious beliefs with a young Shiite in Iran may not work equally well with a university scholar in China or India, or with a non-Muslim audience.

Translating a book into English or Arabic alone does not guarantee international recognition; its arguments and presentation must also be accessible.

Understanding other cultures and civilizations is therefore essential to meaningful dialogue. It is impossible to respond effectively to a society without first understanding its questions, concerns and historical experiences.

Scholars and cultural representatives must identify the intellectual needs of their audiences before offering answers.

The experiences of Tabataba'i and al-Sadr demonstrate that intellectual authenticity and effective communication can go hand in hand. Al-Sadr, for example, wrote about the sensitive historical issue of Fadak, yet his works have also attracted attention in some Sunni academic circles. The objective is not simply to be heard, but to communicate in a way that enables others to understand. The Qur'anic expression "so that they may understand my speech" (li-yafqahu qawli) captures this principle.

Iranian cultural missions and institutions abroad can make a significant contribution. Their work should go beyond organizing conferences, book exhibitions and occasional events. Identifying universities and research centers, establishing relationships with academics, facilitating translations and connecting Iranian and international scholars can help secure a lasting place for Islamic thought in global academic environments.

These relationships must be sustained so that works become part of continuing processes of dialogue, criticism, research and citation.

In culturally and religiously diverse societies, including Southeast Asia, subjects such as interfaith dialogue, comparative philosophy, ethics, the relationship between science and religion, justice, spirituality and the environment can provide common ground for academic engagement. The aim is to make Islamic thought part of serious intellectual discussions rather than limiting its presentation to religious promotion.

International recognition can also be assessed through academic citations. A distinction should be made between references and citations: references identify the sources used by a researcher, while citations indicate how frequently other researchers refer to and build upon a scholar's work.

Tabataba'i's experience offers important lessons: intellectual sincerity, direct engagement with the wider world, understanding one's audience and choosing appropriate ways to communicate ideas. Academic works should not remain on library shelves. Their influence depends on becoming active contributions to international intellectual life.

Tabataba'i demonstrated that international recognition is possible even from a scholarly environment with limited resources. Iran's seminaries and universities now face the task of turning his experience into a lasting model for introducing other thinkers and the intellectual heritage of the Islamic world through coherent theorizing, cultural understanding, effective communication and active participation in international academic networks.

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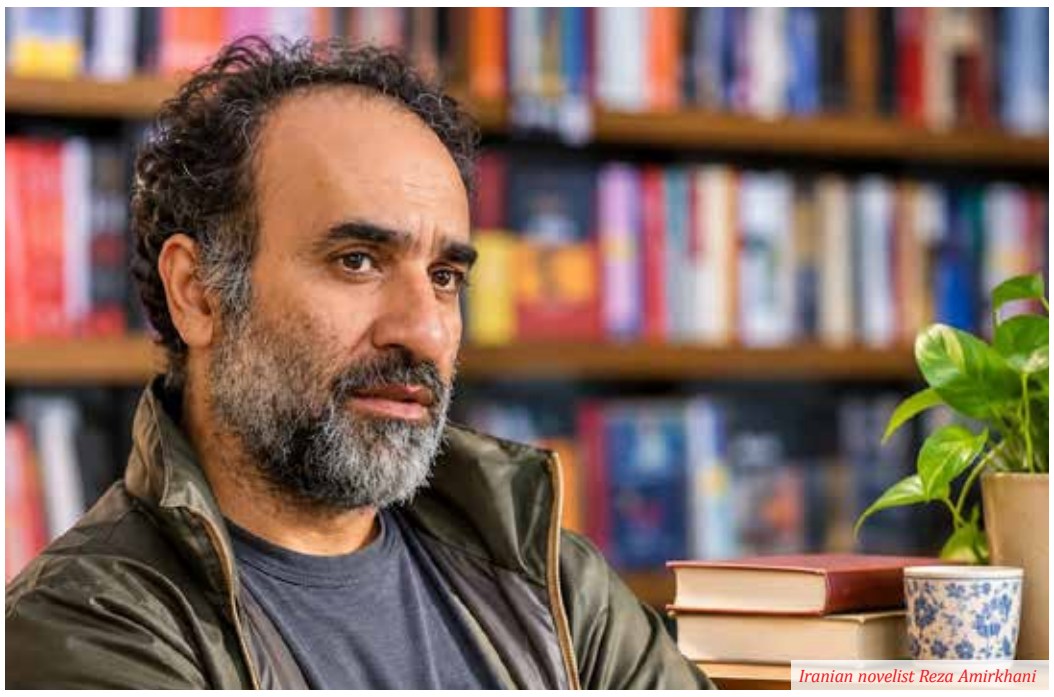
Novelist Reza Amirkhani,known for his distinctive prose, dies at 53

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian novelist Reza Amirkhani died on Monday, November 23, aged 53, nearly a year after suffering severe head injuries in a paragliding accident near Tehran.
Amirkhani was injured on November 30, 2025, when his paraglider crashed in Mosha, near Mount Damavand, east of the capital. He was initially treated in a Tehran hospital's intensive care unit and later transferred home, where he remained under medical and nursing supervision.
Amirkhani published 13 books, spanning novels, travel writing, short stories and essays. His prose had a distinctive style, marked by wordplay, unconventional spelling and shifts between formal and colloquial Persian.
Ali Ilent, a writer and friend, told the Iranian Book News Agency that Amirkhani developed a severe lung infection in the final days of his life, while still unconscious.


Iranian novelist Reza Amirkhani

Born in Tehran on May 17, 1973, Amirkhani graduated in mechanical engineering from Sharif University of Technology. He began his literary career in the 1990s, publishing his debut novel, "Ermia", in 1995. His 1999 novel "Man-e Ou" helped establish his reputation.
His novels covered a range of subjects, from the experience of war and questions of faith and identity to love, migration and urban change.
"Man-e Ou," one of his best-known works, drew on the social and cultural life of old Tehran, while "Beyoutan" followed its recurring protagonist Ermia as he confronted questions of identity and belonging in the United States.
In "Rahesh" (Salvation), which won the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Award in 2018, Amirkhani turned his attention to Tehran's changing urban landscape and the impact of development on the city.
His other works included "Naser Armani" (Armenian Nasser- 11 Stories), "Az-Be" (From-To), and "Qeydar".
Beyond fiction, Amirkhani wrote travelogues and essays on social and economic issues. In "Nasht-e Nesha" (Brain Drain), he examined the emigration of educated Iranians, while "Nafahat-e Naft" (Good Smell of Oil) explored the influence of oil wealth on the country's management culture.
His travel writing included "Janestan-e Kabulestan," based on a journey to Afghanistan, and "Nim-Dang-e Pyongyang" (A Half of One-Sixth of Pyongyang), about North Korea.
President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a message that Amirkhani had brought new perspectives to contemporary fiction through his attention to human and social concerns.
In another message, Culture Minister Seyyed Abbas Salehi praised his energetic prose, imagination and efforts to explore the possibilities of the Persian language.
Details of his funeral and memorial services will be announced later, state media reported.

Stone and community earn Iranian guesthouse global award

Arts & Culture Desk

A community-built guesthouse in southeastern Iran has won the Best Use of Stone award at the 2026 World Architecture Festival.
The Nedarag Guesthouse, in Kahnanikash village in Dashtiari County, Sistan and Baluchestan province, received the award for highlighting how traditional Baluch building techniques and local participation can shape contemporary tourism projects.
The festival's closing ceremony was held on November 20 in Florida, United States. Held from November 18 to 20, the festival presented the prize, supported by Turkish Stones, for innovative and exemplary uses of stone in architecture.The guesthouse is designed by Tehran-based Nextoffice, led by architect Alireza Taghaboni, and was completed in 2023. It has three accommodation units with five rooms and a service area, arranged around a central courtyard.
The design combines locally sourced stone, thick masonry walls and a lightweight roof inspired by traditional Baluch construction.
It also draws on local stone-laying methods and Kapar, a traditional lightweight local structure made of tamarisk and palm trees.
The materials and techniques link the building to its surroundings and regional architectural heritage.
The courtyard serves both visitors and residents. Children use it as a play area during the day. Women gather there in the afternoon, while villagers and travelers meet there at night. The guesthouse thus doubles as a community space.
The project was developed as a non-profit initiative to support the local economy through tourism and strengthen social ties.
Residents took part in every stage of design and construction, blurring the usual boundaries between architect, client and builder.
Kheironesa Amiri, head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department for Chabahar and Dashtiari counties, said the award showed that architecture rooted in local culture and adapted to regional climate conditions could gain international recognition.
"Backing local initiatives and encouraging investment that respects each area's cultural identity were key to sustainable tourism," Amir said.
She added that local involvement in managing tourism businesses could help preserve cultural traditions, create jobs and strengthen residents' sense of ownership.
She singled out Shanbeh Dehghani, the guesthouse manager, for his role in establishing and developing the project. Amiri also pointed to the Makran coast along Iran's southeastern shoreline as an area with strong potential for cultural, natural and rural tourism.
Greater exposure, she said, could attract visitors and investment and create new economic opportunities for local communities.
The design team included Taghaboni, Niloofar Ghabadi, Hadi Al-Davood, Ali Ghods and Meysam Feizi, as well as local participants Abdollah Dehghani, Mozamel Nouhani, Zolor Nouhani, Akram Nouhani, Abdolrahim Deloshzahi, Mehrdad Makaremi, Sattar Ganjalipour, Masoud Sufiani, Farzad Ferast, Hadi Irani and Dorsa Sadeghi. Roostatish, a platform for developing and marketing rural products, and Mina Kamran served as social facilitators.
The graphic design team included Homa Asadi, Asal Karami, Marzieh Norouzi and Ehsan Ahani. Ehsan Hajiresouliha and Taraneh Eftekhari handled photography. Nedarag was also named a finalist in the 2026 Architizer A+Awards, a separate international architecture competition.


The courtyard of Nedarag Guesthouse in Sistan and Baluchestan province serves both visitors and residents.
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WHO backs access to medicines in Iran

Social Desk

The World Health Organization (WHO) will fully support Iran's Health Ministry in ensuring that medicines, vaccines and other essential health supplies remain available to the public, its representative in Iran said, as the country faces mounting pressure on its healthcare system from war-related damage and international sanctions.
Iran has faced two wars waged by the United States and Israel, a 12-day war in June 2025 and a second, 40-day war that began in late February 2026.
Jean Jabbour, the WHO representative in Iran, made the remarks during a meeting with Iran's health minister, thanking him for the opportunity to discuss key health issues.
Jabbour said the WHO's cooperation with member states was guided by a bottom-up approach, in which countries first identify their national priorities before these are reflected in the organization's local programs, country support plans and regional and global initiatives.
He said the WHO worked closely with the Iranian government and the Health Ministry, adding that placing medical education within the ministry's structure played an important role in strengthening the healthcare system by training the workforce needed to provide health services to the population.


EBRAHIM NOROOZI/AP PHOTO

A July 2026 humanitarian update by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that about 245 health facilities and 90 pharmaceutical facilities had been damaged in Iran. It also documented shortages of nearly 1,000 types of medicines and rising prices for some drugs. In a separate statement on May 12, 2026, the WHO said airstrikes since February 28 had damaged an estimated 229 healthcare centers, 49 hospitals and 78 pharmaceutical facilities, laboratories and warehouses.
It also added that 56 emergency bases had been struck, nine hospitals evacuated, and 47 ambulances and 10 support vehicles destroyed.
Attacks on or near pharmaceutical and diagnostic production facilities had disrupted domestic medical supply chains, the organization said.
International sanctions have added to the difficulties. Although medicines are not directly targeted by US sanctions, restrictions on financial transactions have made it harder for Iranian importers to pay foreign suppliers.
Jabbour also highlighted Iran's role in regional and international organizations, saying the country had an important part to play in sharing its medical experience.
He said the WHO would work to provide the support needed to help Iran develop and maintain healthcare services for its population.
He stressed that the organization had both a development mandate and humanitarian responsibilities, working with governments to ensure access to medical care, medicines and vaccines, even in difficult and challenging circumstances.
He also announced joint plans with Iran to hold an event on health diplomacy, saying the initiative could use diplomatic channels to build bridges for development, peace and better public health.