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Iranians celebrate nuclear deal: 'This will bring hope to our life'

Tehran residents rejoice and drivers honk their horns after the announcement of a landmark deal that will lift sanctions and avert the threat of war



Women flash the “V for Victory” sign as they celebrate on Valiasr street in northern Tehran after the announcement of an agreement on Iran nuclear talks. Photograph: ATTA KENARE/AFP/Getty Images

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Jubilant Iranians took to the streets on Thursday night to celebrate news of [a breakthrough in nuclear negotiations with the West](#), and to express their hopes that the deal will end years of international isolation and economic hardship – and avert the threat of war.



Nuclear deal: Iranians find ways to celebrate on social media

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The news from Switzerland was especially sweet coming as Iranians celebrated the final day of [their Nowruz new year holidays](#). Even though newspapers, bazaars and state institutions were closed, many welcomed the landmark agreement which they believe will have a dramatic effect on the lives of ordinary Iranians.

Drivers in the streets of Tehran honked their car horns as news of the deal started to break. At 1am in the morning, t the capital's longest street, Val-e-Asr

Avenue, was still lined with cars, with men and women waving flags and flashing V-for-victory signs from open windows.

“Whatever the final result of the negotiations, we are winners,” Behrang Alavi told AFP. “Now we will be able to live normally like the rest of the world.”

— **Sobhan Hassanvand (@Hassanvand)** [April 2, 2015](#)

Northern Tehran after [#IranTalks](#), tonight <https://t.co/sgERWp6xyp>

Others shared the news via texts or on Twitter. “The winter is over,” read one widely shared text message.

“This will bring hope to our life,” said Ali, a 34-year-old Tehrani citizen. “It was as if someone had blocked my airways but I can now breathe. Everyone is happy, we’ve been waiting for this for too long.”

Sanctions over Tehran’s nuclear programme – including an EU and US embargo on imports of Iranian oil – have compounded the country’s economic woes in recent years.

Iran’s currency, the rial, dropped dramatically against the dollar at the height of the sanctions in 2012, but is likely to benefit almost immediately from Thursday’s announcement.

Analysts predict that the rial will strengthen and Tehran’s stock market will rally when markets open on Saturday, the beginning of the Iranian week.

A Tehran resident who works for an electronics company said that many businesses which rely on goods and materials from abroad would be pleased with the outcome of the talks. “For our company, this is basically a new life,” he said. “Lots of the spare parts we need comes from the US, but we had to obtain them from the black market in cash and with higher prices. Now we might be able to access them normally in the near future.”

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US president Barack Obama hails the ‘good deal’ that has been struck. [Link to video](#)

Amir Ali Handjani, an Iranian American energy executive, said the first multinational firms which will scramble to break into post-sanctions [Iran](#) are Boeing and Airbus.

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“There have already been discussions between Iranian aviation officials and the two global aerospace giants,” he said. “Those discussions have happened with the approval of Europeans and Americans. They recognise how important an issue this is for Iranians, who have some of the oldest passenger planes in the world.

“From a psychological standpoint there will be a sense from the people that things are heading in the right direction,” he said.

“Major European and American multinationals will be very skittish to jump into the Iranian market. They will look for the assurances from their governments that it is OK to come back in and it doesn’t like that’s going to happen right away.”

Under the sanctions, Iran’s banks, were cut off from the outside world and those firms that did business abroad had immense difficulties transferring money. Those restrictions will begin to be lifted when the agreement comes into force.

Amin, who has a car parts and accessories shop in Tehran’s Cheragh-Bargh street, said: “We’ll have less stress and even though we might not benefit from the agreement immediately, people will be a little bit relaxed psychologically.”

Saeed, a 29-year-old who works in publishing and the printing business, said the news has re-energised him and his co-workers. “I have a good feeling, and our business will gain from this because all the materials and equipment in our business comes from abroad. If the dollar gets cheaper, business will certainly go up,” he said.

“Due to sanctions, we had little profit in the recent years, sometimes we would deliver a job but we would have to wait for months to receive its payment,” he added.



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People flash the “V for Victory” sign as they celebrate on Valiasr street in northern Tehran. Photograph: Atta Kenare/AFP/Getty Images

Homa, an Iranian housewife who has recently become a grandmother, said she did not know much about politics but she welcomed news of peace and reconciliation.

“We would like to be friends with other nations,” she said. “Since the revolution, we’ve had problems with many countries. We had so many enemies. But people are alike. Now we’re on better terms with the world and that’s a good thing. People are tired of constantly being at odds with other countries. I’m happy for myself, for my children and for my grandchildren.”

But others were more sceptical: Kianoush Amiri, a Tehran-based journalist and translator, said he thought ordinary Iranians would not benefit from a

deal. “It will only help officials travel more easily and transfer their money,” he said.

Mehrdad, another resident of Tehran, was similarly gloomy. “It will not change people’s lives significantly,” he said. “This is only good for the Islamic republic and its allies in the region: Iraq, Syria and Yemen.”

Davood, a retired teacher with three children, said: “Why should we be happy? I don’t trust either of the parties in the negotiations,” he said. “It all happened in secrecy, nobody knows what they agreed on.”

His wife, Manijeh, said: “If the economy improves, it will be good for people. We are all under pressure and many people can’t make ends meet now but things might get better.”

Majid, a Tehran resident, said he hoped the agreement would pave ways for greater social freedoms. “Rouhani was quite preoccupied with the nuclear issue since his presidency began, and he neglected a lot of social issues meanwhile so now with the nuclear issue being solved, maybe he’ll have time for other issues such as the continued house arrests of opposition leaders.”

An Iranian journalist based in Tehran contributed to this report. Some names have been changed to protect people’s identities.