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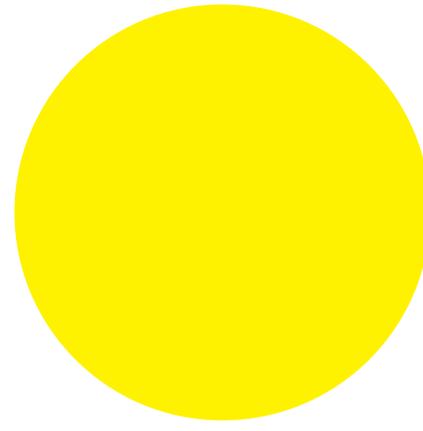
EXCLUSIVE

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Iran's 'The Miracle of Bonasan' highly welcomed by Japanese viewers



Iran Daily



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Iranian president begins three-nation trip to Latin America

Raeisi: Great potential in Iran, LatAm can help expand ties



Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi (2nd R) inspects a guard of honor during a ceremony in Mehrabad Airport before leaving Tehran for Latin American countries of Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba on June 12, 2023.

National Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi said there are great potentialities in Iran and Latin American nations that can play a major role in further expansion of strategic relations between the countries. President Raeisi made the remarks on Monday before leaving Tehran for a three-nation trip to Latin America, which will take him to Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba. Raeisi said Iran's relations with those countries have been consistently cordial during the past years, as they have common views with Tehran on major international issues.

"Our common position with these three countries is opposition to the [world's] hegemonic system and unilateralism," the president said, adding that Iran cooperates with those countries in numerous areas. "Export of technical and engineering manpower is among our important cooperation areas," Raeisi said, adding, "We also cooperate with Latin American countries in the fields of politics, energy, science and technology, medicine and economy."

He said his trip comes at the invitation of the presidents of the three countries, adding that it would be a turning point in developing Tehran's ties with Caracas, Managua

and Havana. This is Raeisi's 13th foreign trip during the nearly two years since he was elected president. A high-ranking delegation comprised of ministers of foreign affairs, oil, defense, and health are accompanying Raeisi in his tour of Latin America. During his five-day trip to the three countries, various cooperation agreements and memorandums of understanding will be signed between Iranian officials and their counterparts. Raeisi is also scheduled to meet with Iranian businesspeople and economists in those countries. Iran has close ties with many Latin

American states in different domains and seeks to further deepen its relations with those nations. Back in February, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made an official visit to two Latin American countries, Nicaragua and Venezuela. Last June, Iran and Venezuela signed a 20-year partnership agreement aimed at bolstering bilateral cooperation in various fields during Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's visit to Tehran. The partnership agreement includes cooperation in the fields of science, technology, agriculture, oil and gas, petrochemicals, tourism and culture.

Messages of Iran's presence in U.S. 'backyard'

By Mahmoud Abbaszadeh
Iranian lawmaker



EXCLUSIVE
OPINION

Iran's President Ebrahim Raeisi embarked on a journey to South America on Monday, to visit Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua. The trip holds great significance for Iran on both political and economic fronts, as well as carrying symbolic weight. The governments and nations of South America are primarily known for their pursuit of independence and their opposition to the policies of the United States and Western nations which are characterized by excessive demands. Due to these shared perspectives, they find common ground with

the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, from a political standpoint, this visit to the region carries a vital message. Developing political relations with these countries will enhance Iran's reputation and elevate its status beyond the confines of the West Asian region, positioning it on the international stage. South America is often referred to as the "backyard" of the United States. Consequently, Iran's presence in these South American countries conveys a symbolic message. The Western world, led by the United States, has made concerted efforts to isolate Iran in recent years. However, contrary to these efforts, Tehran has emerged as a key player in diplomatic affairs within the Middle East.

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Iran rejects reports of interim nuclear deal with U.S.

National Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman dismissed media speculations about an interim agreement between Tehran and Washington over its nuclear program. Speaking at a press conference on Monday, Nasser Kanaani said such speculations about an interim agreement and a similar deal to replace the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), cannot be confirmed, adding that the JCPOA is the basis of negotiations on the lifting of sanctions. However, he confirmed the exchange of messages between Iran and the U.S. through the mediation of Oman. On Friday, the U.S.-based news website Axios reported that American and Iranian officials had held indirect talks in Oman last month, with Omani officials shuttling between their separate rooms to deliver messages. The report came one day after the Middle East Eye news portal claimed that Iran and the United States "are nearing a temporary deal that would swap some sanctions relief for reducing Iranian uranium enrichment activities." "Iran's government has never left the negotiation table and has shown its readiness to conduct serious and substantive negotiations in order to reach a conclusion," Kanaani added. The remarks came a day after Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said there is nothing wrong with reaching a deal if Iran's nuclear infrastructure remains untouched.

Multilateral diplomatic efforts to revive the JCPOA have been stalled since last August, with Iran blaming the United States for failing to guarantee that it will not leave the deal again.

Prisoner swap

Kanaani also said that Iran and the U.S. could exchange prisoners soon if Washington shows goodwill. "Regarding the issue of exchanging prisoners with the U.S., negotiations are ongoing through mediators... If the other party shows the same seriousness and goodwill, this can happen in the near future," Kanaani said.

Tensions with Azerbaijan

Kanaani also referred to recent tensions between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, saying that both countries are pushing to de-escalate tensions and pave the way for the reopening of Azerbaijan's Embassy in Tehran. He said the foreign ministers of Iran and Azerbaijan have held four rounds of talks in recent weeks to mend relations severed after a January fatal attack on the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Tehran, which killed a staff member and injured two others. Baku shut down its embassy in Tehran afterwards.



Cheshmeh Ali Complex, a unique tourism site in Damghan

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Iranian Greco-Roman team crowned Asian U17 wrestling champion

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Iran remains world's 10th largest steelmaker: WSA

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China slams new Iran-related U.S. sanctions on its entities

China's Commerce Ministry opposes new U.S. Iran-related sanctions on Chinese entities and nationals, saying that Washington should stop its unreasonable suppression of Chinese enterprises and individuals. "The U.S. action lacks factual basis and due process, harming the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises and individuals. China will take necessary measures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises and individuals," the ministry's spokesperson said when answering a reporter's question on the move, according to Reuters. The spokesperson also vowed that "China will take necessary measures to resolutely

safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises and individuals." Last week, Washington slapped a new round of sanctions on more than a dozen individuals and entities in Iran, China, and Hong Kong over what it claimed to be aiding the Islamic Republic's ballistic missile program. "This network conducted transactions and facilitated the procurement of sensitive and critical parts and technology for key actors in Iran's ballistic missile development, including Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics," the US Treasury Department claimed in the statement on Tuesday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

President voices support for nuclear industry

PRESS TV – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi says his administration will continue supporting the nuclear industry within the framework of Iran's national interests, echoing earlier statements by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. Addressing a cabinet session on Sunday, Raisi said the nuclear industry is among driving industries in the country. He hailed grand achievements made by young Iranian scientists in this sector.

Talks with U.S. only held indirectly: Adviser to Iranian team

IFP – An adviser to Iran's nuclear negotiating team has rejected reports on secret direct talks with the U.S.

Mohammad Marandi told Al-Araby that all talks between Iran and the U.S. are indirect, held through such intermediaries as Oman or the United Nations, adding that the Iranian and American officials do not even sit in the same room during negotiations.

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian told French newspaper Le Figaro that the diplomatic process and discussions with the European Union on the nuclear issue continue.

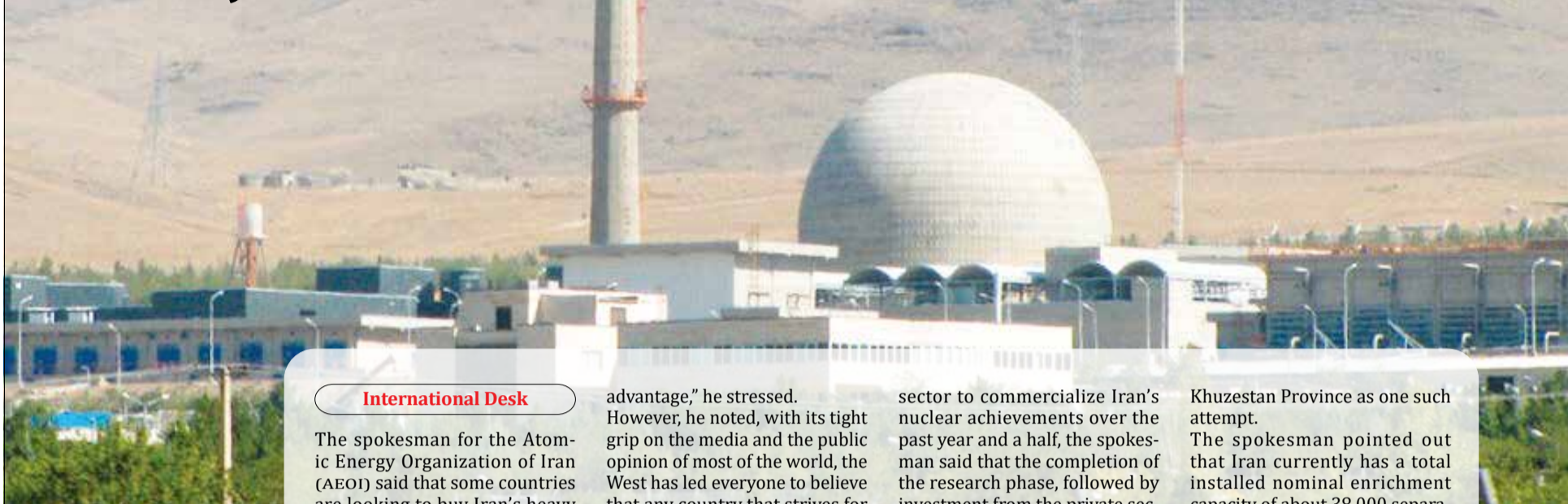
Assad stresses coordination on Syria peace talks

MEHR – Syrian President Bashar al-Assad stressed the need for maintaining coordination with Iran regarding talks on establishing peace in Syria.

Assad made the remarks in a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister's Senior Adviser for Special Political Affairs Ali Asghar Khaji in Damascus on Monday.

Assad also called for defining a joint strategy, with the help of Iran and Russia, to explain the goals of future negotiations, whether it is about Turkey's withdrawal from Syria, the fight against terrorism, or other issues.

Iran aims to commercialize heavy water, nuclear achievements



International Desk

The spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said that some countries are looking to buy Iran's heavy water, adding that the commercialization of Iran's nuclear advancements is on the agenda. Behrouz Kamalvandi pointed out in a radio interview on Monday that the country's heavy water is priced at more than 1,000 dollars per liter, adding, "All is grist for the mill".

Admitting that "all the ruckus is understandably about uranium enrichment now," the official warned against overlooking other areas where the nuclear industry can leave a significant impact, including nuclear medicine, agriculture, and industry. "The fact that Iran can produce 20 percent [purity] nuclear fuel, heavy water derivatives, and nuclear medicines, which are more useful for treating certain diseases, shows that Iran is ahead of many countries in the world in those regards, and has a relative

advantage," he stressed.

However, he noted, with its tight grip on the media and the public opinion of most of the world, the West has led everyone to believe that any country that strives for highly enriched uranium is secretly pursuing a nuclear bomb. Even though the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei strictly prohibited the acquisition and use of nuclear weapons of mass destruction, and even though Iran has proudly passed the highest number of transparent inspections of its nuclear sites by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with flying colors, Kamalvandi stated that the West continues to spread such lies to hamper Iran's progress.

"The fact of the matter is that the industry can bring high added value for us. We are talking about billions of dollars that can be raised in areas such as nuclear medicine and heavy water." Announcing that steps have been taken with the help of the private

sector to commercialize Iran's nuclear achievements over the past year and a half, the spokesman said that the completion of the research phase, followed by investment from the private sector, is needed before the country can generate income from its achievements.

It's the same process everywhere in the world, he maintained, adding that the private sector needs to see whether government research yields results before it makes a hefty investment in such advanced technology.

Referring to the Leader's statements concerning small modular reactors (SMRs), Kamalvandi said Iran is following the recent global trend, where constructing several smaller nuclear power plants is prioritized over constructing one larger nuclear power plant to meet the power needs of a city.

"Constructing SMRs requires lower investment and yields a good return faster," he said, citing the construction of the Darkhovin Nuclear Power Plant in

Khuzestan Province as one such attempt.

The spokesman pointed out that Iran currently has a total installed nominal enrichment capacity of about 38,000 separative work units (SWU) per year, which can be upped to 40,000 SWUs.

"The Iranian Parliament's Strategic Action Law unshackled the AEOI to increase its enrichment capacities while staying perfectly in touch with the IAEA in accordance with the decrees of the Leader," he added.

"The West has been making excessive demands that go far beyond the IAEA safeguards. But if they are not going to honor their commitments, there is no reason for Iran to give in to such demands."

Kamalvandi echoed the recent statements by Ayatollah Khamenei by saying that a deal with the West is acceptable only if Iran's nuclear infrastructure remained intact, as they lay the groundwork for many good, peaceful uses for Iranians.

Enemies fear Tehran's détente policy in Mideast: Sunni cleric

EXCLUSIVE

A senior Iranian Sunni cleric on Monday hailed Iran's recent agreement with Saudi Arabia to resolve long-standing disputes and its willingness to restore relations with Egypt, saying the diplomatic endeavors have instilled fear among enemies.

Iran and Saudi Arabia hold significant importance among Muslim countries, and their rapprochement has caused fears among enemies," Faeq Rostami, who represents Kurdistan Province in the Assembly of Experts — a top clerical

body that chooses Iran's leader and oversee his performance — told Iran Daily.

"The United States and Western nations are well aware that a thaw in ties between the two countries would put an end to the era during which they established a military presence in the region."

Rostami noted that Iran's proactive approach in resuming relations with Saudi Arabia has yielded "numerous positive outcomes" for both countries and the Muslim world.

"We are now witnessing that

other Muslims nations are also burying the hatchet" in the wake of Iran-Saudi Arabia détente, he pointed out.

The top Kurdish cleric warned that a division within the Islamic world would provide enemies with opportunities to reach their nefarious objectives to damage Muslim nations.

"Muslims should steer clear of discord and promote unity under Islam," Rostami added.

He highlighted Islam's message of "peaceful coexistence" and urged



IRAN DAILY

Muslim scholars around the globe to come together regularly.

"Holding annual meetings attended by Muslim scholars would help clear up misunderstandings, foster closer ties within the Islamic world, and create a united front against enemies."

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

Messages of Iran's presence ...

Iran's diplomatic reach extends beyond its neighbors and the West Asian region, encompassing East Asia all the way to South America.

The Iranian president's visit to in the "backyard" of the United States, namely South America, holds a symbolic significance that underscores the futility of America's attempts to isolate Tehran. Iran's diplomatic endeavors have now reached the doorstep of the United States.

Raisi's trip holds economic significance for Iran as well. Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua possess ample economic opportunities that can partially fulfill Iran's needs. Naturally, these countries can serve as promising markets for Iranian goods. It is evident that these nations are inclined to cultivate relations with Tehran based on their national interests. This implies that Tehran also holds advantages for these

three countries. Iran can extend assistance to South American nations in areas such as energy, technology exports, industries, and services. In essence, both Iran and the South American countries stand to benefit from the growth of their political and economic ties.

While President Raisi's government has prioritized its foreign policy toward neighboring and Eastern countries, this does not indicate indifference toward opportunities and the potential for establishing better relations with other regions across the globe. Whenever the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran demand it, the government readily seizes these opportunities to help overcome economic challenges. South America is one such opportunity that can serve as a gateway to Iran's economy, and the government has demonstrated its attentiveness to this prospect.

Russia says it repelled Ukrainian offensives in Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia regions

Russia's Defence Ministry said on Monday it had repelled attempted offensives by Ukrainian forces in the Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia regions and had hit targets with sea-launched high-precision missile strikes.

Ukraine said on Monday its troops had recaptured a fourth village from Russian forces in a cluster of settlements in the southeast, a day after reporting the first small gains of its long-anticipated counteroffensive, Reuters reported.

Russia said its forces had launched a strike on Ukrainian army reserve locations using long-range precision weaponry, launched from the sea.

Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine and Zaporizhzhia to its southwest are among five regions, including the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea.

Russia also said on Sun-

day it had destroyed at least seven German-made Leopard tanks and five U.S.-made Bradley vehicles over 48 hours while repelling Ukrainian attacks, though Russian bloggers reported Ukraine had briefly pierced part of the Russian line.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy acknowledged on Saturday that his military was engaged in "counter-offensive and defensive operations", a day after President Vladimir Putin said Russia had repelled the first attacks of the offensive.

Russia's Defence Ministry published several videos and pictures over recent days showing numerous strikes on Ukrainian-manned armoured vehicles and tanks from Ka-52 attack helicopters and drones. In footage released by the ministry on Saturday,



drones were shown striking tanks in the Zaporizhzhia region where

Kyiv's forces have so far focused their counteroffensive.

A still image taken from video shows what are said to be destroyed armoured vehicles of the Ukrainian armed forces, in the course of Russia-Ukraine conflict in an unidentified location in the southern Donetsk direction in Ukraine, in this image taken from a handout footage released on June 10, 2023.

RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudi Arabia signs \$5.6b deal with Chinese EV company



REUTERS - Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Investment signed a \$5.6b deal with Chinese electric car maker Human Horizons to collaborate on the development, manufacture and sale of vehicles, the Saudi state news agency said in a statement.

The agreement accounts for more than half of the more than \$10b in investments signed on the first day of an Arab-China business conference in Riyadh on Sunday, in sectors spanning technology, renewable energy, agriculture, real estate, metals, tourism and healthcare among others.

Trump and his allies escalate attacks on criminal case as history-making court appearance approaches

Donald Trump and his allies are escalating efforts to undermine the criminal case against him and drum up protests as the former president braces for a history-making federal court appearance this week on dozens of felony charges accusing him of illegally hoarding classified information. Trump's appearance in Miami today will mark his second time in as many months facing a judge on criminal charges. But unlike a New York case some legal analysts derided as relatively trivial, the Justice Department's first prosecution of a former president concerns conduct that prosecutors say jeopardized national security and that involves Espionage Act charges carrying the threat of a significant prison sentence in the event of conviction, AP reported.

Ahead of his arraignment, Trump ratcheted up the rhetoric against the Justice Department special counsel who filed the case, calling Jack Smith "deranged" and his team of prosecutors "thugs" as he repeated without any evidence his claims that he was the target of a political persecution. He called on his supporters to join a planned protest at the Miami courthouse Tuesday, where he will be arraigned on the charges.

"We need strength in our country now," Trump said, speaking to his longtime friend and adviser Roger Stone in an interview on WABC Radio. "And they have to go out and they have to protest peacefully. They have to go out." "Look, our country has to protest. We have plenty of protest to protest. We've lost everything," he went on. He also said there were no circumstances "whatsoever" under which he would leave the 2024 race, where he's so far been dominating the Republican primary. Other Trump supporters have rallied to his defense with similar language, including Kari

Lake, the unsuccessful Republican gubernatorial candidate in Arizona who pointedly said over the weekend that if prosecutors "want to get to President Trump," they're "going to have to go through me, and 75 million Americans just like me. And most of us are card-carrying members of the NRA." Trump's calls for protest echoed exhortations he made ahead of a New York court appearance last April, where he faces charges arising from hush money payments made during his 2016 presidential campaign, though he complained that those who showed up to protest then were "so far away

that nobody knew about 'em." And just like in that case, he plans to address supporters in a Tuesday evening speech hours after his court date. Trump supporters were also planning to load buses to head to Miami from other parts of Florida, raising concerns for law enforcement officials who are preparing for the potential of unrest around the courthouse. The Justice Department unsealed Friday an indictment charging Trump with 37 felony counts, 31 relating to the willful retention of national defense information. Other charges include conspiracy to commit obstruction and false statements.

Former Italian PM dies at 86



REUTERS - Silvio Berlusconi, the billionaire media mogul and former Italian prime minister who transformed the nation's politics with polarising policies and often alarmed his allies with his brazen remarks, died on Monday aged 86. Berlusconi, Italy's longest-serving premier who counted Russian President Vladimir Putin as a friend had suffered from leukaemia and recently developed a lung infection.

Palestinian cause remains a central issue in Muslim world



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

A Palestinian official has called the Palestinian cause the present world's most important issue, saying that developments in his homeland are among the issues on which the entire Muslim world is in agreement and can be considered as the main factor in the convergence and solidarity of Muslims. Head of Khulfa al-Rashideen Assembly of Palestine Mohammed Mahmoud Abu Mustafa told Iran Daily, "Muslims may be in disagreement about some issues at the moment, but there is no disagreement on the issue of Palestine, and all Islamic countries agree on the legitimacy of the Palestinian nation and the

need for the Israeli regime to withdraw from the occupied territories and return the Palestinians to their homeland". Referring to the importance of unity in the Islamic world, he stated, Muslims should be aware of the evil plans of the enemies to create division, which can be a great danger for the Islamic world. He believed that holding various gatherings among Muslim scholars and elites will bring the Islamic countries closer together. Islamic countries should emphasize commonalities and main issues of the Islamic world instead of secondary ones, because all Islamic groups and sects with any belief and thinking are of the same origin and in principle have no differences, the official added. The assembly head said that the

solution to the Palestinian cause is the resistance and standing of the Islamic world against the Zionist regime, adding, "For years, Palestinian resistance groups have been standing against the powerful military and army of the Zionist regime, and this path will lead to the final result, which is the liberation of Al-Quds. It is obligatory for all Islamic countries and noble people of the world to support the oppressed Palestinians in this path. He said that today, the danger of the Zionist regime is not only directed at the oppressed people of Palestine, but the Zionists have a problem with the issue of Islam and all Muslims, and on this basis, the entire Islamic society must feel responsible for the conspiracies of this regime. Referring to the normalization

of relations between some Islamic states and the Zionist regime, he said, "Currently, the struggle of resistance groups in Palestine with the Zionist regime has entered a more serious stage, so that Israelis feel threatened about the future of their regime and have organized new conspiracies, including the issue of normalization." By pursuing the issue of normalizing relations, the Zionist regime aims to make the Palestinian cause forgotten among Muslims and, in this way, ensure its security in the region, but most Islamic countries do not accept this issue and do not go along with the political game, Abu Mustafa added. Abu Mustafa pointed out that the regime has shown its true and violent face many times during the years of occupation



IRAN DAILY

of Palestinian lands, clarifying, "In recent years, with the rise of differences within the Zionist regime, the regime has been on the decline, in such a way that the U.S. and its Western allies have doubts about the future existence of this regime.

46 killed in attack on DR Congo displacement camp

AFP - At least 46 people, half of them children, were killed in a militia attack on a camp for displaced people in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, security analysts and a local community leader said Monday. Around 70,000 displaced people arrived in Bule between April 15 and May 15 due to armed violence in the surrounding areas, the U.N. humanitarian office (OCHA) said in its latest report.

Cheshmeh Ali Complex, a unique tourism site in Damghan

Iranica Desk

Cheshmeh Ali Complex, located in the south of Damghan, with a pleasant climate and rich historical background has always been a popular tourist destination in Semnan Province.

The bubbling springs of the complex, with clear water, green trees by the flowing rivers and the historical mansions are highly attractive for those

traveling to the region, chtn.ir wrote.

Due to the foliage and good weather, the region has been the focus of interest since long ago. Cheshmeh Ali River is the only permanent river in the city. The water of this spring originates from the northern mountains.

The complex, which lies on the road linking Damghan to Sari, dates back to the Qajar era,

when kings used the site to escape from the summer heat.

Several rivers flow in the complex, having a pleasant climate, various types of trees and a green vegetation.

Cheshmeh Ali Complex has two pavilions: One with a brick facade and stone foundation located between two lakes, and the other an adobe-made building with Safavid architectural style. It was once used as a place for the guards to rest, a weapons warehouse, and barracks.

The main pavilion of the complex, a two-story building situated between two lakes, has a porch surrounded by water. The rooms of this building have a view of the lake on both sides. A mosque and a bathhouse were also built next to the pavilion upon the order of Fat'h alishah Qajar, but nothing remains from them now.

The water of the garden is supplied by a number of springs situated at the bottom of the western lake, next to an old plane tree.

The site having accommoda-

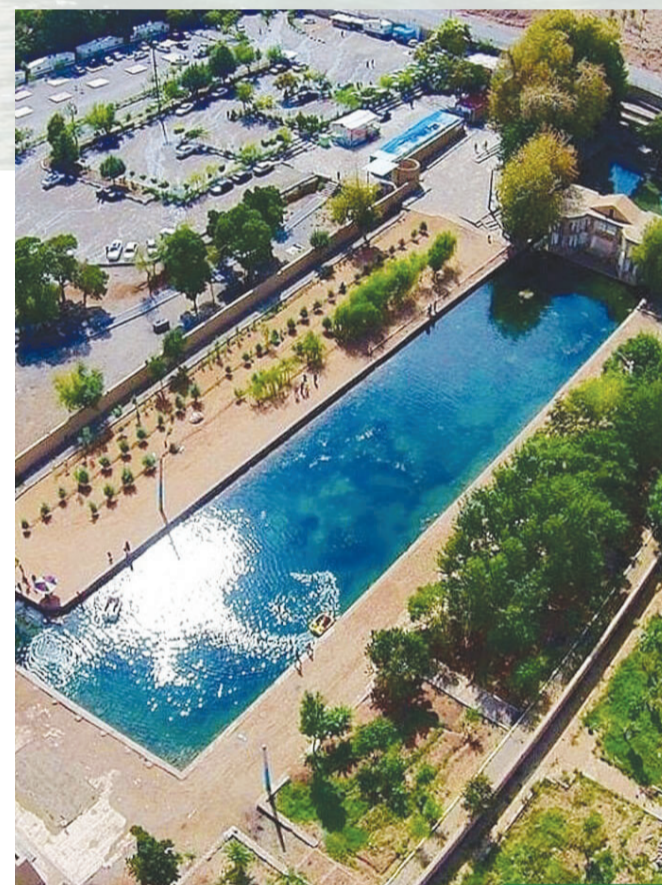
tions, arbors and resting platform hosts a large number of tourists and locals every year.

The historical mansion was registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 2007.

To get to Cheshmeh Ali, use Damghan-Sari buses, or take a taxi bound for Kalat-e Roodbar, or Dibaj. Getting a return ride can be more complicated, however, as vehicles will be already full on leaving those villages; ask the driver if you can arrange a return trip.

The main population centers of Semnan Province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza Expressway), linking Tehran with the holy city of Mashhad in Khorasan Razavi Province.

While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais, cisterns, and ruined mud citadels. The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan, and Shahrud all have a small selection of historic buildings, and Semnan has a fine old covered bazaar. om



destinationiran.com



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The Art of Miniature in Iran

Miniature in Iran went through a long and complicated course of development, reaching its culmination mainly during the Mongol and Timurid periods.

From a historical point of view, the most important development in Iranian miniature has been the adoption of Chinese design and coloring, subsequently blended with the idiosyncratic cultural concepts of Iranian artists. The most important function of miniatures was the illustration of manuscripts, vipemo.com wrote.

Miniatures depicted the literary plot, making it more enjoyable and easier to understand. Iran's great wealth of inspiring literature caused the emergence of many schools of miniature painting, each school having its own unique style. Isfahan was the seat of the last great school of Persian miniature painting, at its height in the early 17th century, under the patronage of Shah Abbas I. The purity of col-

or, elegance of poses, emphasis on details, and vigor of the individual figure are the main characteristics of this style. Bright sky, the beauty of flowers, and figures dressed in splendid garments create the general atmosphere of Safavid paintings. Another feature of Safavid painting is an interest in depicting the minor events of daily life.

Miniature in Safavid period

During the Safavid period, precious manuscripts somewhat declined in number, supplanted in part by a proliferation of single-page drawings that appealed to a less sophisticated audience.

Artists serving royalty no longer made their living based on royal patronage alone. Some sold their works to minor patrons, and even to merchants who carried the pages to the bazaars of India and Turkey. Signed work became the rule rather than the exception it had been in earlier times. This may be because



artang.ir

the connoisseurs of previous epochs had not needed a signature in order to identify the artist. They could easily distinguish the hand of a certain master merely by his artistic individuality. The leading master of the Isfahan School was Reza Abbasi, and many painters of that school imitated his style.



fotografia.islamoriente.com



artang.ir

Iranian Greco-Roman team crowned Asian U17 wrestling champion



Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Ali-Akbar Asghari celebrates after the victory in the 92kg final of the under-17 contests at the U23 & U17 Asian Championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on June 10, 2023.
● UWW

Sports Desk

Iran's Greco-Roman under-17 team cruised to the title at the Asian Championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, courtesy of a remarkable eight medals across 10 weight classes. Iranian boys claimed four golds as well as two silver and bronze medals apiece to finish atop the table with 188 points – a first crown for the country in four years – followed by Kyrgyzstan (176pts) and Uzbekistan (151pts).

On Sunday, Habibollah Rahimi settled for the silver in the 71kg contests after suffering a 12-2 defeat against home-favorite Yrskeldi Khamzaev. Elsewhere on the final day of Greco-Roman event, Ahmadreza Mohammadian finished his campaign with a consolation bronze in the 65kg class, thanks to a 5-3 victory over Tajikistan's Muhammad Yahyoev. Sunday's results came a day after Mohammad Meraj Mohammadi, Mohammadreza Gholami,

Ali-Akbar Asghari, and Amirhossein Abdevali walked away with the ultimate prize of their respective weight divisions. Mohmadi edged the host's Yrskeldi Khamzaev 4-3 for the 51kg gold, while Gholami defeated Indian Suraj Suraj by the same scoreline in the 55kg final. Asghari grabbed a third gold for the country after a 5-0 triumph over Uzbekistan's Sardorbek Rustamov in the 92kg showdown, with Abdevali clinching the top prize in the 110kg class

after a 5-3 win against Bekzhan Ismagulov of Kazakhstan. Erfan Moradi was the other Iranian to come short in the final showpiece as a 4-0 loss to Kyrgyzstan's Marlen Abdysamatov saw him finish on the second podium of the 45kg event. Meanwhile, Ali Dezfulejad bounced back from an 11-10 defeat against Kazybek Kalmagambetov in a thrilling 60kg semifinal to beat Varun Varun of India 8-0 and leave the Kyrgyz capital with a bronze.

Djokovic cements status in GOAT debate after scaling men's Grand Slam peak

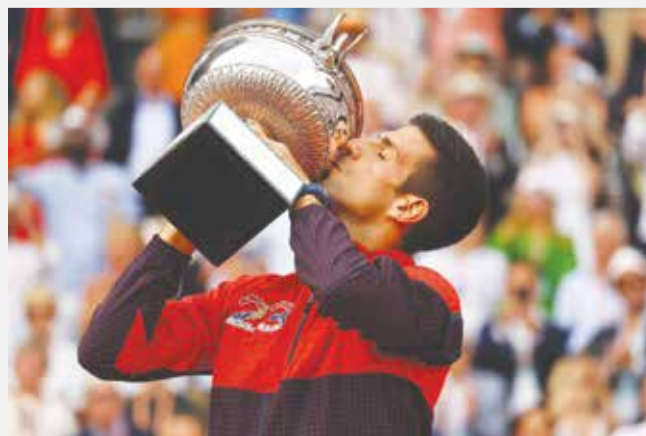
REUTERS – If the debate about the best-ever man to wield a tennis racket came down to statistics alone, Novak Djokovic's status as the GOAT (Greatest Of All Time) would already be decided after he clinched a 23rd Grand Slam title at the French Open on Sunday. The Serb beat Casper Ruud 7-6(1) 6-3 7-5 to eclipse Rafa Nadal's mark of 22 Grand Slam titles and extend his advantage over the now-retired Roger Federer, who won 20 majors. The trio have dominated men's tennis in the last two decades with a collective 65 Grand Slam titles and divide opinion among their loyal fanbases and analysts about who deserves to be known as the best of the lot. But it is Djokovic who is currently the last man standing among the "Big Three" with Nadal effectively out for the season following hip muscle surgery, although the Serbian played down the significance of his latest crown. "I don't want to say that I'm the greatest," Djokovic told reporters. "It's disrespectful towards great champions in other eras. Each great champion of his generation has left a huge mark and paved the way. I leave these discussions to someone else."

The 36-year-old won his first Grand Slam title in 2008 when Federer had already claimed 13 of his 20 crowns and Nadal's era of unprecedented dominance was underway on the Parisian clay with the Spaniard primed to make inroads on the other surfaces. "I've always compared myself to these guys, the two greatest rivals in my career," Djokovic said. "I've said before they have defined me as a player. All the success I have, they contributed to it in a way... the countless hours of thinking what it takes to beat them. "It's amazing to know I'm one ahead of Rafa but at the same time everyone writes their own history. I think everyone has a unique journey they should embrace and stick to but of course the three of us and Andy (Murray), we reached the golden era." Djokovic's rise up the overall tally gathered pace in 2011 when he won three majors, a feat he went on to repeat four years later to get into double figures.

Novak Djokovic kisses the French Open trophy after the victory over Casper Ruud in the men's singles final in Roland Garros, Paris, France, on June 11, 2023.
● KAI PFAFFENBACH/REUTERS

The Serbian's steady progress in the last few seasons is a testament to his mental strength and physical conditioning, even as his fellow contenders for the GOAT title began to feel the effects of their long careers. Federer brought his career to an end last year at the age of 41 after winning 20 major titles while the 36-year-old Nadal may face an uphill task to swell his tally, with 2024 likely to be his final year on the tour. Djokovic has only gotten better with age and his victory over Ruud extended his win-loss record in Grand Slam finals in his 30s to 11-2. The Serbian's coach Goran Ivanisevic said he hoped Nadal could

return and win another major but had no doubt Djokovic had more titles in him to stay ahead with the calendar slam now a real possibility. "I'm really sorry Rafa is not here, but I said a long time ago, before even I became member of Djokovic's team that him and Rafa, they're going to go over 22," Ivanisevic said. "I'm hoping Rafa comes back and wins one more and Novak is the only player who can win a calendar Grand Slam. He was one match away two years ago, so he has a chance this year. "It's still a long way, but Grand Slams are the goal now. I don't know how many, but he has in his body a lot more."



Iran's Mobina Nematzadeh poses with the women's -49kg bronze medal at the 2023 World Taekwondo Grand Prix in Rome, Italy, on June 11, 2023.
● WORLD TAEKWONDO



Iran's Mehran Barkhordari poses with the men's -80kg silver at the 2023 World Taekwondo Grand Prix in Rome, Italy, on June 11, 2023.
● WORLD TAEKWONDO

Iranians bag five medals at World Taekwondo GP

Sports Desk

Iranians claimed five medals – including three silvers – at the Roma 2023 World Taekwondo Grand Prix. Representing the country in the men's -80kg contests, Mehran Barkhordari came out on top against Norwegian Richard Andre Ordemann – a gold medalist at the event in 2018 – in three rounds for a place in the final showdown but a 2-1 defeat against Saleh Elsharabaty of Jordan saw the Iranian finish with a silver in the first event at this year's World Grand Prix. Mobina Nematzadeh, 17, finished her campaign with a women's -49kg bronze following a 2-0 loss to Tokyo Olympic gold medalist Panipak Wongpattanakit of Thailand in the semifinals. The young Iranian shared the third podium with China's Qing Guo, while Wongpattanakit went on to beat Spain's Adriana Cerezo Iglesias for a 10th Grand Prix gold. An all-Iranian quarterfinal showdown had seen Nematzadeh beat Ghazal Soltani, thanks to a 6-0 win in the deciding round. The two medals came after re-

cently-crowned world champion Nahid Kiani had grabbed the women's -57kg silver on the preceding night. The Iranian beat South Korean Kim Yu-jin in the semifinals but came short against Great Britain's Jade Jones in straight rounds (8-6, 5-2) in the final showpiece. In the men's -58kg contests, Mehdi Hajimousaei, 18, booked a place in the final after a walkover victory against his compatriot Abolfazl Zandi – who was forced out with an injury in the first round. The young Iranian, however, had to settle for a silver on his debut at the event after a defeat against Spaniard Adrian Vicente Yunta in a thrilling three-round final, while Zandi took the joint bronze alongside South Korean Jun Jang. More than 250 contestants from 53 countries took part at the three-day tournament – serving as a qualification event for next year's Paris Olympics – in the Italian capital. Paris, the Chinese city of Taiyuan, and Manchester will host the next editions of the 2023 Grand Prix.

Neymar latest on Al Hilal wishlist after Messi snub

CBS SPORTS – Neymar is the latest superstar on Saudi Arabia's radar with representatives of Al Hilal in Paris as they attempt to secure the signature of the world's most expensive footballer. With Paris Saint-Germain eager to part ways with the 31-year-old and the Saudis prepared to offer a mammoth wage packet, the ball is in the Brazilian's court as to whether he wants to call an end to his top-level career in Europe. Al Hilal had expected to secure the services of Lionel Messi until he decided to sign for MLS club Inter Miami earlier this month; they and their owners, the Public Investment Fund (PIF), are eager to secure an alternative marquee addition for the Riyadh club as they look to build on the rivalry between The Blue Waves and Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr. As one of the most high-profile stars in world football, Neymar would tick all the boxes for Al Hilal. CBS Sports understands that a senior delegation from Al Hilal flew to the French capital on Friday, intending to test the waters around Neymar's camp and ascertain



● Ligue1.com

whether he is amenable to make the move to the kingdom. Personal terms would be comparable to those of Ronaldo, whose total package is believed to be around €200 million a year. Sources indicate that the Saudi giants, 18-time league champions, would be prepared to pay in the region of €45 million as a transfer fee however they are yet to open dialogue with Paris Saint-Germain over the signing. For their part, PSG would welcome any approach for Neymar, whose contract expires in 2025.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Several Chinese lenders cut yuan deposit rates



REUTERS - Several Chinese commercial banks cut interest rates on a range of yuan deposits from Monday, following their larger peers in a coordinated move to ease pressure on profit margins. The deposit rate cuts follow a similar move by China's biggest state lenders on Friday and marks the second such industry-wide cut within a year, with previous action taken in September.

Iraq approves record \$153b budget



AFP - Iraq's parliament on Monday approved a 2023 budget of 198.9 trillion dinars (\$153 billion) that sets out record spending on a growing public wage bill and development projects to improve services and rebuild infrastructure. The budget deficit is estimated at a record 64.36 trillion Iraq dinars, more than double the last budget deficit in 2021, according to a budget document and lawmakers. The budget is based on an oil price of \$70 per barrel and projects oil exports at 3.5 million barrels per day (bpd), including 400,000 bpd from the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, lawmakers said.

Italy's labour shortage puts post-pandemic recovery at risk



FT - Italy has warned that a serious labour shortage is hindering the country's ability to implement projects worth billions of euros under the EU's post-pandemic recovery programme. In a report submitted to parliament, the Italian government has warned that a shortage of skilled workers in construction, IT and engineering - and a lack of competent administrators - is causing delays and could "jeopardise full implementation of the plan".

Iran remains world's 10th largest steelmaker: WSA

Iran retained its global ranking and remains among the top 10 steel producers in the world, according to a report of the World Steel Association (WSA).

Iran produced 30.6 million tons of crude steel last year and managed to maintain its place as the world's 10th largest steel producer, IRNA reported on Monday. In the meantime, the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), affiliated to the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, stood in 20th place among the world's top steelmaking companies.

In its report, the WSA announced that steel production in the world registered a 100-fold growth in the past 72 years.

This report indicated that steel production volume in



the world increased from 189 million tons in 1950 to 1.885 billion tons in 2022.

It also indicated that Iran became the world's second-largest sponge iron

producer by producing 12.5 million tons in 2022. Iran also produced 2.5

million tons of crude iron in 2022, of which 100,000 tons were exported.

Iran's lithium find is a potential game changer

The discovery of a lithium mine in Iran and its potential implications for the global production of lithium-ion batteries and electric vehicles is still one of the topics discussed in the world media.

According to Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade (IMT), the deposit holds 8.5 million tons of the rare element, which is often called "white gold" for the rapidly growing electric vehicle industry. Should the estimate be accurate, that would make the deposit the second-largest known lithium reserve in the world after Chile, which holds 9.2 million tons of the metal, according to the US Geological Survey, wrote Press TV.

This is the first lithium carbonate equivalent (LCE) deposit discovered in the mountainous Hamadan province, signaling positive news of the possibility of other reserves in Iran. With global lithium reserves estimated at 89 million tons, Iran may now possess almost one tenth of the world's lithium supply.

Increased demand for rechargeable batteries like those used in electric vehicles and cellphones has pushed lithium prices to record levels in recent years.



Lithium has found strategic importance due to rising demand for most low carbon technologies that are pushing the envelope for a low carbon future within a global electric mobility ecosystem. The recent discovery is set to shift attention to Iran's extractives sector which is relatively underdeveloped. Iran holds about 7 percent of the world's proven mineral reserves, but mineral products make up for no more than 0.6 percent of its GDP.

At current rates, Iran's mineral reserves are worth \$700 billion, with a value added estimated at \$4 trillion, according to former head of state mines and metal holding company IMIDRO Mehdi Karbasian. The country will be able to extract lithium in the next two years, IMT deputy minister Mohammad-Hadi Ah-

madi has said. It is currently studying technological capacities existing in two developed countries as part of efforts to start up the mine through a partnership with private investors.

Iranian officials are usually discreet about divulging the details of foreign involvement in the country's development projects in the face of sanctions pressures. Experts say such an addition to Iran's strategic energy inventories would enable the country to blunt Western sanctions with a potentially potent element.

Iran owns the world's largest oil and gas reserves combined, but sanctions have slashed its capacity to contribute significantly to global supply due to the abundance of producers. As regards lithium, economically viable deposits are limited and the suppliers of

the rare element are few. In market terms, Iran with 8.5 million tons of lithium reserves would be impossible to sideline.

As a result, Iran can use the potential to attract foreign investment and leverage it in negotiations with the West to remove sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

China is currently the world's largest lithium battery consumer market. In 2021, the global lithium-ion battery market reached 545 gigawatt hours (GWh), and China accounted for more than half of the total.

The country is Iran's largest oil customer and an important trade partner despite the sanctions, having signed a 25-year cooperation agreement in 2021 to strengthen their longstanding economic and political alliance.

The lithium deposit news grants Iran an additional advantage to enhance relations with China which has also signed three comprehensive strategic partnerships and four strategic partnerships with Persian Gulf states including the world's largest oil producer and exporter, Saudi Arabia. Hence, Iran's big lithium find, besides being a lifeline for its economy, has enor-

mous geopolitical significance. The news is already raising hackles among the country's adversaries.

Anat Hochberg-Marom, an independent strategic consultant to government agencies and security institutions, has told Israel's major tabloid newspaper Maariv that the discovery can lead to a change in the regional power balance and give Tehran an unprecedented geopolitical and economic influence.

According to the paper, Iran's military strength and thaw in relations with Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt, as well as its military exercises at sea, including with India and Pakistan, have caused significant concern for Israel.

Iran is also strengthening its strategic ties with Russia and China, along with its close ties with Indonesia, the most populous country in the Muslim world.

Iran, Maariv said, will obviously emerge as the main geopolitical player in global politics and economy by controlling about 10% of the world's strategic lithium reserves.

In the face of the worsening climate crisis, lithium deposits, along with other energy sources including nuclear energy, provide power, political influence

and economic power to the government in Tehran, the paper said.

"As a result, not only is it likely to significantly increase Iran's influence, but Iran may also surpass the Persian Gulf countries, the world's major oil producers, especially Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This can change the balance of power and regional dynamics in favor of Iran," it added. Hochberg-Marom said the new discovery strengthens Iran's bargaining hand in various economic and security alliances and agreements and shifts the focus of attention from the oil market to the lithium and white gold mining industries in the region.

It can lead to stronger relations between Iran with China and other Southeast Asian countries, especially Indonesia, and strengthen relations between the Middle East and Asian countries, he said.

Maariv said from Tehran's perspective, the discovery increases its ability to maneuver among a large number of actors.

"Iran as a nuclear threshold country with political, economic and energy capabilities has a high motivation and boldness. With the discovery of the lithium deposit, Tehran's self-confidence is expected to increase significantly," it added.

Iran eyes \$15b in trade with Turkey by 2025

A senior official in Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said trade with Turkey will easily reach \$15 billion in the calendar year 1404 (early March 2025 to late March 2026).

"We have set a target for at least \$15 billion in trade with Turkey until 1404 which can be met through cooperation with the private sector," said Farzad

Piltan, who serves as head of TPO's West Asia department, according to Press TV. Piltan said US sanctions on Iran have hampered the trade of certain items on a list of nearly 500 goods and products that can enjoy lower tariffs under a preferential trade agreement (PTA) between Iran and Turkey.

"Some of these commodi-

ties are subject to the sanctions and we have to carry out more negotiations for the PTA agreement to become more effective," said the official in a forum in Tehran that was focused on trade between Iran and Turkey.

Piltan said Iran and Turkey have also a great potential to increase the amount of international transit of car-

go that passes through their territories.

Annual trade between Iran and Turkey reached a total of \$13.558 billion in the calendar year to late March 2023, according to figures released in April by the Iranian customs authority (IRICA).

Turkey was the third largest customer of Iranian non-oil exports over the

year to late March with some \$7.459 billion worth of purchases, an increase of 23% compared with the year before, IRICA figures showed.

The figures showed that Iran's imports from Turkey also increased by 15% over the past calendar year compared to the year to March 2022 to reach \$6.099 billion.

Power of popular participation: A key to effective environmental protection

Iran's Department of the Environment launches initiative to foster public participation in conservation efforts.



ISNA

Social Desk
EXCLUSIVE

In a recent announcement, the deputy of popular participation and the spokesperson for Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE) unveiled a new content production initiative aimed at educating the public on environmental protection. This initiative will provide a comprehensive report on the current state of environmental houses and their efficacy.

The principle 50 of Iran's constitution states that the environment is an inter-generational heritage that everyone is obliged to protect. Consequently, the plan to establish environmental houses was proposed to encourage public participation in environmental protection efforts. Ali Salajegheh, the head of the DoE, underscored the

significance of the public's role in safeguarding the environment, stating that the environmental houses project aims to harness the capacities of the people in a coordinated effort to protect the environment. Noorollah Moradi, vice president of education and popular participation of the DoE, further elaborated on the role of councils as a cornerstone of governance, facilitating public involvement in the management of cities and villages. He revealed that there are approximately 128,000 rural and urban councils in the country, representing a substantial group capable of contributing to environmental preservation, particularly village councils, given their social standing. With 39,000 villages boasting councils nationwide, there is considerable potential for disseminating educational concepts.

Moradi also highlighted that these councils are elected by the residents of villages and cities, and through their collaboration and participation, as well as the election of villagers and mayors knowledgeable about environmental issues, they can be highly effective in the realm of education and participation. The first step in this process is the establishment of environmental houses, which will host brainstorming sessions, experience-sharing events, and educational workshops in collaboration with city and village councils.

The recent announcement by the DoE regarding the establishment of environmental houses highlights the growing recognition of the importance of popular participation in environmental protection. As the world faces increasingly complex environmental challenges, the need for collective

action and public involvement in conservation efforts has never been more critical. Popular participation in environmental protection is essential for several reasons. First, it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens, empowering them to take an active role in preserving their local environment. By involving the public in decision-making processes and environmental initiatives, governments can tap into the collective knowledge and expertise of their citizens, leading to more effective and sustainable solutions. Secondly, public participation helps raise awareness and promote education on environmental issues. Through initiatives like the environmental houses, citizens can engage in brainstorming sessions, experience-sharing events, and educational workshops, broadening their un-

derstanding of the challenges facing their communities and the planet as a whole. This increased awareness can lead to more informed choices and actions, both individually and collectively, contributing to the overall success of environmental protection efforts. Moreover, popular participation can foster a sense of community and solidarity in the face of environmental challenges. By working together, citizens can pool their resources, skills, and ideas to develop innovative solutions and strategies for tackling environmental issues. This collaborative approach can lead to more resilient and adaptive communities, better equipped to respond to the ever-evolving challenges posed by climate change and other environmental threats. Finally, public involvement in environmental protection can also serve as a powerful

tool for holding responsible authorities and corporations accountable for their actions. An informed and engaged citizenry can demand greater transparency and responsibility from those responsible, ensuring that environmental policies and practices are both effective and equitable. Popular participation, in short, is a vital component of successful environmental protection efforts. By involving citizens in the decision-making process and empowering them to take an active role in conservation initiatives, governments can harness the collective power of their people to create a more sustainable and resilient future for all. The DoE's recent announcement of the environmental houses project serves as a timely reminder of the importance of public involvement in safeguarding our planet for generations to come.

Police arrest British man free-climbing South Korean skyscraper



REUTERS

A British man, previously jailed after free-climbing the Shard in London, has reportedly been arrested in South Korea after attempting to climb the country's tallest skyscraper without equipment, police said.

The man was scaling the 123-storey Lotte World Tower in southern Seoul early on Monday when staff spotted him, forcing him to stop his ascent as he reached the 73rd floor, The Guardian reported.

Local media identified him as George King-Thompson, 24, from Oxford, known previously for carrying out dangerous stunts and publicizing them on social media. "Lotte staff had to go on a gondola lift to persuade him to stop when he was still climbing above the building's 70th floor," an official from the National Police Agency said. "He finally gave in and we arrested him at the scene for obstruction of official business. He is currently being questioned at a police station in Seoul's Songpa district."

The 555-meter Lotte World Tower is the world's sixth-tallest building. He was said to be wearing just shorts, climbing shoes and carrying a small backpack.

In a pre-drafted press release before the climb, King had said he hoped to "evade Korean authorities and get on a flight out of the country, immediately after performing the stunt", the Times reported.

The former personal trainer made headlines when he was sentenced to six months in Pentonville prison for scaling the Shard in July 2019, and was released after serving half of his sentence.

Since his release he has scaled the 36-storey Stratosphere tower in Stratford, east London, and was reportedly arrested in 2022 in Spain for base-jumping off Europe's tallest rollercoaster. The Seoul fire agency said more than 90 emergency, police and other personnel were dispatched to the Lotte World Tower on Monday morning after he was spotted scaling the building.

The Korean newspaper Chosun Ilbo said police had arrested him on charges of trespassing. He reportedly entered South Korea three days ago, and was said to have told police it was a long-held dream to climb the Lotte Tower.

Alain Robert, widely known as the "French Spiderman", was jailed in 2018 after climbing the same building without permission. He ascended to the 75th storey.



IRNA/MOHSEN VANAEE

PIC OF THE DAY

City dwellers find solace in vibrant wall paintings, as urban art breathes life into the concrete jungle and shapes the identity of modern man; Tehran's efforts to enhance urban beauty, though commendable, still leave room for improvement.

Theatrical play 'The Semicolon' lies between imagination and reality



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian theatrical production 'The Semicolon,' co-written and co-directed by Diba Saman and Amir Safiri, straddles the boundary between imagination and reality. Currently, the play is captivating audiences at Tehran's City Theater's Qashqaei Hall until June 27.

Discussing the genesis of the performance, Safiri revealed, "While we were engaged in another production, a spontaneous dialogue delivered by Diba Saman, an actress in the play, fascinated me. I encouraged her to continue improvising. Subsequently, I decided to join her since I was meant to act in this documentary-style play myself. However, I soon realized that it would present challenges. Hence, drawing from that very improvisation, we embarked on the writing process, undergoing numerous rewrites until it eventually transformed into the captivating spectacle witnessed on stage these evenings."

Saman described 'The Semicolon' as a non-linear monodrama, unfolding in a unique manner. Its non-linear structure is rooted in several factors. Notably, the recent passing of my mother prompted a flood of memories, with a swift succession of events we had experienced from childhood until her final moments, as her hands intertwined with mine. These recollections, characterized by flashes of both flashbacks and flash-forwards, were etched vividly in my mind. Moreover, this intentional non-linearity is intertwined with the play's essence. The central character delves into every aspect and event of their life, leaving the audience uncertain of their state of existence. In essence, viewers are left pondering whether the character is alive or deceased. Amid discussions about the stage design, Safiri highlighted the unique amalgamation of expressionistic, surrealistic, and realistic elements within the performance.

He emphasized the team's dedication to crafting an expressionistic stage design that employs a symphony of lighting, effects, animation, and motion graphics, aiming to transport the audience into a realm where they feel as if they are walking on clouds. Yet, as the performance unfolds, these artistic embellishments gradually fade away, giving rise to a metamorphosis of the show into a hyperrealistic masterpiece. Upon exiting the theater, Safiri urged spectators to pause and engage in introspection. He emphasized the importance of reflecting on the play's themes, drawing connections, and arriving at a personal conclusion. Safiri expressed his desire for the audience to depart the theater, their thoughts thoroughly provoked and engaged.

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Iran's 'The Miracle of Bonasan' highly welcomed by Japanese viewers

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian film 'The Miracle of Bonasan,' directed by Habib Ahmadzadeh, received a warm reception during its screening at the Japanese Embassy in Tehran. The film was shown with Japanese audio and Persian subtitles, and was attended by Japanese guests and cineastes.

According to the ILNA news agency, at the beginning of the screening, Kazutoshi Aikawa, the Japanese Ambassador to Tehran, greeted the audience and expressed, "I had heard fascinating and innovative descriptions of this film from various sources, including discussions with Peyman Saadat, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Japan. This led to the opportunity for us to gather Japanese guests, Iranian artists, and chemical warfare veterans at our embassy to watch this film, which depicts the devastating aftermath of the

atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the chemical bombing of the Iranian people."

Following the screening, the Japanese envoy remarked, "I am delighted to have witnessed this film, which is a testament to humanity and peace. The film's exceptional presentation of comprehensive information has deeply moved me. Moreover, witnessing the profound human suffering depicted in the film has had a lasting impact on me. Going forward, I will not only strive as a diplomat but also as a human being to promote the perspectives and values conveyed in this film, and to help showcase 'The Miracle of Bonasan' in various settings, including in my own country, Japan."

Directed by Habib Ahmadzadeh, 'The Miracle of Bonasan' has already competed in the Eastern Vista category, Panorama of Films from Asian and Islamic Countries, at the 38th Fajr International Film Festival.



This joint Iranian-Japanese production has taken the production crew to Iran, Japan, Austria, and Iraq. The film tells the story of a genie who must compose a melody with the assistance of four humans in order to

create a human miracle and symphony, or face eternal expulsion from the Solar System. The cast of the film includes renowned actors such as Parviz Parastui, Shisoku Tesuya, Gerhard Freylinger,

Noriyuki Asakura, and Mahmoud Bonakdar. Ahmadzadeh, a seasoned film director and screenwriter, has collaborated with notable Iranian directors such as Ebrahim Hatamikia, Khosro Sinai, and

Kiumars Pourahmad. Since making his directorial debut in 1997, Ahmadzadeh has also directed several documentaries, including 'The Last Arrow of Arash,' 'Live Wave,' and 'The World's Best Statue.'



Khong Ajdar, largest bas-relief of Parthian era requires urgent consideration

Arts & Culture Desk

Nestled near the city of Izeh, Khong Ajdar stands as one of Iran's most renowned ancient artifacts. This priceless bas-relief, initially utilized by the Elamites, holds historical significance. It showcases an intriguing portrayal of Baar'aam, which was a distinctive ceremony resembling the iconic rituals for meeting the kings of the time during important occasions. Almost 2,000 years later, these ceremonies witnessed at the ancient site of Persepolis.

On one side of the bas-relief, which immediately catches the eye of every observer, lies a depiction of Elamite King, seated, as a procession of dignitaries presents itself before him. This particular ceremony, Baar'aam, represents the conferral of power upon a local Elamite ruler who has journeyed to this region. Accompanying the powerful King of Ilam are three figures, one of whom appears to be a monk or a religious person. The ceremony seems to involve the release of two doves into flight, symbolizing the transfer of power.

The imposing presence and unique hairstyle of the Elamite man evoke a sense of ancient Iranian history, reminiscent of the famous Elamite statue, known as Shami statue, discovered near Izeh, currently preserved in the National Museum of Iran. The name "Khong Ajdar" translates to "the vast plain of the snake," reflecting the surrounding village's name. This area holds a wealth of ancient treasures and demands heightened protection, which has sadly been overlooked. Recent incidents, such as unautho-

rized excavations near this remarkable artifact, have exposed the lack of proper care. Furthermore, unauthorized construction near the site, utilizing water diverted from the nearby dried riverbed, poses a risk of land subsidence. Perhaps the most distressing aspect is the absence of any conservation or restoration efforts for this ancient masterpiece. The Tourism Ministry has taken minimal action, merely placing a protective cover over the artifact to shield it from the sun and rain. However, a comparison of old and recent photo-



graphs reveals a disheartening truth: the artwork on the stone is gradually fading away. Khong Ajdar stands as a testament to Iran's rich cultural heritage, yet it faces neglect and imminent deterioration. The urgent need for proper conservation and safeguarding measures cannot be understated. It is crucial for

authorities, both national and local, to recognize the importance of preserving this extraordinary ancient artifact for future generations. By taking proactive steps to protect Khong Ajdar, we can ensure that this invaluable piece of history continues to captivate and inspire visitors, serving as a bridge between the past and the present.

Iran's Moradi Kermani nominated for Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Institute for Research on the History of



Children's Literature nominated bestselling writer Hushang Moradi Kermani for the Astrid Lindgren

Memorial Award (ALMA) in 2024. The award, administered by the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs, was established in 2002 to commemorate Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren and to promote children's and youths' literature from around the world. It is the world's largest award for children's and youths' literature, and the second-largest literature prize in the world. The prize, five million Swedish kronor in cash, is awarded to one or more re-

ipients including authors, illustrators, storytellers and promoters of reading. Alireza Goldouzian, Ali-Asghar Seyyedabadi, and Nader Mousavi were also announced as recipients of the 2024 ALMA on behalf of Children's Book Council of Iran. Iran's nominations for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award are selected separately every year by the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA), the Iranian Association of Writers for Children and

Youth, the Children's Book Council of Iran and the Institute for Research on History of Children's Literature. Moradi Kermani has been nominated for the award several times. However, he failed to win the honor. Moradi Kermani is mostly known as a children's writer, but his works also appeal to adults. He is the author of numerous bestsellers such as 'You're No Stranger Here,' 'The Water Urn' and 'A Sweet Jam'. Most of his works have been translat-

ed into English, German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Arabic, Armenian, Turkish and several other languages. "Hushang Moradi Kermani is the writer for those children and youths whose voices are heard in their society; from those children who work in the carpet weaving workshops to those who enjoy the minimum educational facilities in their schools in the remote rural areas," the Institute for Research on the History of Children's Literature wrote.