



EXCLUSIVE

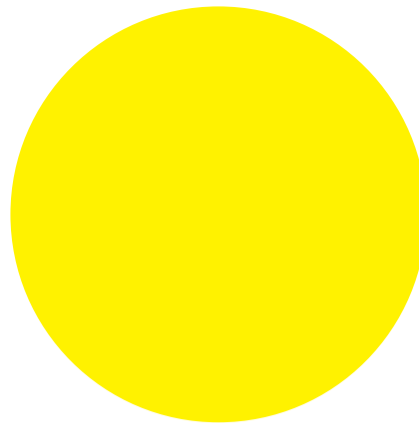
No one leaves a safe home

7 >



Iranian researcher Malayeri wins Jordanian literary prize

8 >



Iran Daily



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SCO, BRICS put Iran's membership on top of agenda

6 >



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (R) talks with Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev (C) at a meeting also attended by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran on June 18, 2023. khamenei.ir

Iran, Uzbekistan sign 11 cooperation deals

Leader welcomes reinvigoration of Tehran-Tashkent ties

International Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei welcomed reinvigoration of relations between Iran and Uzbekistan after a long break. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks during a meeting with visiting Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in Tehran. He expressed

hope that the visit by the Uzbek president and talks between the two countries' officials would be the beginning of a better future in relations between Tehran and Tashkent. Ayatollah Khamenei said that Iran can easily connect Uzbekistan to the high seas through Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. However, he said that cooperation is not

limited to trade or transportation, that both countries can further cooperate in other fields, including science and technology. Earlier in the day, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev arrived in Tehran and held a separate meeting with his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi. Afterwards, officials from both sides signed 11 cooper-

ation agreements in various fields in a ceremony held in the Saadabad Complex. According to the documents, Iran and Uzbekistan will enhance cooperation in trade, transportation and transit, pharmacology, standards and insurance, the establishment of joint free zones, technology and innovation, as well as agriculture. Both presidents attended

a meeting of high-ranking delegations of the two countries, where they discussed ways to bolster bilateral cooperation. During the meeting, the Iranian president emphasized the need to prepare a road map to expand cooperation and implement the agreements signed between the two countries. [Page 2 >](#)

Promising prospects for Iran-Uzbekistan relations



By Abed Akbari
International affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

It has been over three decades since Iran and Uzbekistan established diplomatic ties. Despite the rich historical and cultural bonds shared with Iran, Uzbekistan like the other Central Asian nations, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, remains relatively unknown in Iranian society. Regrettably, the level of bilateral relations has remained largely low and restricted in the past decades.

Central Asia, a landlocked region bordering Russia, China, the Caspian Sea, Afghanistan, and Iran, finds itself amidst the concepts of "new regionalism," "common home," "breakthrough," "economic reforms," and "competition." Meanwhile, Iran has undergone significant economic revisions due to the harsh sanctions imposed by the West. Under the current Iranian government, the nation attaches greater importance to its neighbors in its foreign policy than ever before. The United States' attempt to isolate Iran has forced the emerging economies of Central Asia to give up some of their economic opportunities, affecting the development trends in the region negatively.

Iran has prioritized a policy of "mutual cooperation through good-neighborliness," emphasizing the need to strengthen comprehensive ties with neighboring nations. This priority has been consistently highlighted by Iran's Leader, president, and foreign minister on various occasions. [Page 6 >](#)

Iran, access point for Central Asia to high seas



By Nozar Shafiei
International relations professor

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev visited Tehran yesterday, following the footsteps of high-ranking officials from other Central Asian nations who have previously visited Iran over the past two years. In reciprocity, Iranian officials have also paid visits to these countries.

Mirziyoyev's latest trip to Iran is expected to mark an end to the past disregard for cultural commonalities between Iran and Central Asia. Nations strive to lay a solid groundwork for their foreign relations, and while the nature of these foundations may vary, cultural ties stand out as one of the most significant aspects. When it comes to culture, Iran and the Central Asian countries, namely Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, share numerous elements. Considering these cultural commonalities as the most prominent bond between them should come as no surprise. Regrettably, in past years, these cultural bonds have not received adequate attention, partly due to political reasons. Nevertheless, if these cultural ties are prioritized as the foundation for relations between Iran and Central Asia, it is certain that strong partnerships will be forged between Tehran and these countries, including Uzbekistan. [Page 2 >](#)



Israel to approve thousands of settlement units in West Bank

3 >



Iran, Uzbekistan share significant cultural commonalities

4 >



Iran's Pakdaman grabs Asian saber gold; Rahbari bags bronze

5 >

Blinken, Qin hold 'candid' talks, agree to meet again

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressed the importance of keeping open lines of communication to reduce the risk of miscalculation in talks with the Chinese foreign minister on Sunday, and the two agreed to meet again in Washington.

As the first U.S. secretary of state to visit China in five years, Blinken held "candid, substantive, and constructive talks" with People's Republic of China (PRC) State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang, a State Department spokesman said. Before the talks, U.S. officials saw little chance of any breakthrough on the long list of disputes be-



tween the world's two largest economies, Reuters reported. "The secretary emphasized the importance of diplomacy and maintaining open channels of communication across the full range of issues to reduce the risk

of misperception and miscalculation," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said.

"The secretary raised a number of issues of concern, as well as opportunities to explore cooperation on shared transnational issues with the PRC where our interests align," Miller added in a statement.

He said Blinken invited Qin to visit Washington "to continue the discussions, and they agreed to schedule a reciprocal visit at a mutually suitable time." Blinken, who postponed a February China trip after a suspected Chinese spy balloon flew over U.S. airspace, is the highest-ranking

U.S. government official to visit since President Joe Biden took office in January 2021.

Qin greeted Blinken and his group at the door to a villa in the grounds of Beijing's Diaoyutai State Guest House, rather than inside the building as is customary. The two made small talk as they walked in, Qin asking Blinken in English about his long trip from Washington. They then shook hands in front of a Chinese and an American flag.

After heading into a meeting room, neither Blinken nor Qin made comments in front of reporters who were briefly allowed in.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Delegation to visit Afghanistan over water dispute



ISNA - A parliamentary delegation will soon visit Afghanistan to pursue Iran's water rights from the Hirmand [Helmand] River, an Iranian MP said on Sunday.

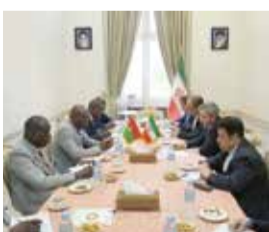
The representative of Sistan and Baluchistan Province and the Iran-Afghanistan Parliamentary Friendship Group will visit Afghanistan to discuss the water dispute between the two neighboring countries, Mohammad Sargazi added.

Terrorist group dismantled



IRNA - A terrorist group has been dismantled in Iran's southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan, the province border police commander, Brigadier General Reza Shojaei, said. During the operation, one terrorist member was killed and several others wounded, the commander said, adding that one Iranian border guard was injured during the clash.

Burkina Faso to open embassy in Tehran



Press TV - The Burkina Faso Foreign Ministry's secretary general, Issa Boro, announced his country's decision to set up an embassy in Tehran. In a meeting with Ali Bagheri Kani, Iran's deputy foreign minister for political affairs on Sunday, Boro said his country has the political will to foster political, economic and cultural relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is rich in historic civilization and culture.

Raeisi highlights effects of nuclear technology on people's lives

National Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi highlighted the effects of nuclear technology on people's lives, especially in the areas of health and medicine, agriculture and industry, as well as oil and gas. During a visit to an exhibition of Iranian nuclear capabilities in Tehran on Sunday, Raeisi hailed the technology as "one of the country's great honors". He added that millions of people have been saved from disease due to the will of Iranian scientists in converting their knowledge into a capability in the nuclear field. The nuclear industry has generated power for the country, Raeisi said, rejecting the idea that the creation of power lies in the production of nuclear arms. "The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly announced that it will never seek the production of nuclear weapons, given its religious beliefs and the fatwa of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, despite the fact that such a capability exists in the country," the Iranian chief executive asserted. Raeisi said the success



President Ebrahim Raeisi visits an exhibition displaying Iranian nuclear capabilities in Tehran on June 18, 2023. president.ir

achieved in Iran's nuclear industry under sanctions and threats should serve as a model for other industries. "The nuclear industry's achievements manifest how the country's beloved youths and scientists turned threats and

sanctions into opportunities," he said during a visit to the exhibition of Iranian nuclear capabilities in Tehran on Sunday. "We need to spread the capabilities and technologies acquired in the nuclear industry to other industries, especially

the automotive sector, so that they could reach this stage of success." Iran showed the world the peaceful nature of its nuclear program by signing the 2015 nuclear agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

(JCPOA), with six world powers. Tehran has invariably asserted that its nuclear program is aimed at purely peaceful purposes and that the Islamic Republic had no intention of developing nuclear weapons.

FM: No boundaries in bolstering relations with Pakistan

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said his country faces no limits in developing its ties with Pakistan, noting that Islamabad enjoys a special place in Tehran's foreign policy affairs. The top diplomat made the remarks on Saturday, meeting in Tehran with the visiting Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Asad Majeed Khan, Press TV reported. Amir-Abdollahian appraised the current status of the bilateral relations as favorable and oriented towards further development. He also commended

the standing level of Iran's bilateral and international cooperation with Pakistan. The Iranian foreign minister pointed to the history of the countries' ties, saying the relations boasted many instances of commonality, and urging both countries to exploit all available capacities towards further enrichment of the relations. Amir-Abdollahian referred to a recent meeting that took place between Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi and Pakistan's Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, during which the officials inaugurated two

important border projects, saying Pakistan functioned as an important link in Iran's political dealings with its neighbors. During the meeting, the Pakistani official conveyed Sharif's regards to Amir-Abdollahian, providing the latter with a report on the contents of the latest round of political consultations between the countries. Majeed Khan considered the consultations to be of strategic importance to the further development of the countries' relations, laying emphasis on the impor-

tance of additional expansion of ties. The official, meanwhile, presented Amir-Abdollahian with an invitation extended by Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto for the Iranian foreign minister to visit Pakistan. Pakistan was Iran's fifth largest export market in the previous Iranian calendar year (which ended on March 20), importing non-oil products worth \$1.488bn from Iran. Iran imported non-oil goods worth \$842m from Pakistan last year, up 170% from the previous year.

Leader welcomes...

He noted that Iran's presence at the International Industrial Exhibition in Tashkent is a sign of Tehran's determination to develop economic and trade relations with the Central Asian country.

President Raeisi said that Iran has turned threats and sanctions into opportunities, emphasizing that Tehran is ready to transfer its experiences in various scientific and economic fields to Uzbekistan. Raeisi stressed that there is no obstacle in the way of expansion of relations with neighboring countries. Uzbekistan's president said his country is interested in the expansion of cooperation with Iran and in various fields, including science, technology, transportation, energy infrastructure, medicine and agriculture. He also invited Iranian companies and the private sector to participate in Uzbekistan's economic projects. Iran and Uzbekistan signed 17 memoranda of understanding and cooperation documents during a visit by Raeisi to Uzbekistan's Samarkand last year, when he had traveled to the country to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran, access point ...

Now that the vital missing link, represented by cultural connections, has been unearthed, it becomes convenient to establish economic and political relations upon it. In this context, it is worth mentioning that these countries possess complementary economic traits, each with its distinct capacities that can also be mutually advantageous. For instance, Turkmenistan can export its natural gas to global destinations by utilizing Iran as a transit route. Uzbekistan can import a portion of its required goods or transport its products to other nations through crucial transit corridors that traverse Iran. Likewise, these transit routes can facilitate Iran's exports to Russia and China. Furthermore, all Central Asian countries can be viewed as a substantial market for Iranian manufactured goods. This arrangement not only caters to the demands of the involved parties but also generates substantial reve-

ue for Iran. Particularly, landlocked Central Asian nations lacking direct access to the high seas find optimal connectivity to international waters through Iran.

Now a suitable opportunity is to grasp in order to set aside past negligence and foster the further development of existing capacities between Iran and the Central Asian nations. By embracing economic and political cooperation, the aim is to bring about greater benefits to the people of the region. The visit of the Uzbek president, along with the visits of officials from other Central Asian countries to Iran, holds the potential to revive relations between these nations and elevate cultural, economic, and political exchanges to the desired level. The membership of these countries in regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Union has amplified the potential for cooperation between them and Iran. However, it is the bilateral relations that hold greater significance in this context.

Israel to approve thousands of settlement units in West Bank

Israel's regime on Sunday tabled plans to approve thousands of building permits in the occupied West Bank, despite US pressure to halt settlement expansion that Washington sees as an obstacle to peace with Palestinians.

The plans for approval of 4,560 housing units in various areas of the West Bank were included on the agenda of Israel's Supreme Planning Council that meets next week, although only 1,332 are up for final approval, with the remainder still going through the preliminary clearance process, according to Reuters. "We will continue to develop the settlement of and strengthen the Israeli hold on the territory," said Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who also holds a defence portfolio that gives him a leading role in West Bank administration. Most countries deem the settlements, built on land captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, as illegal. Their presence is one of the fundamental issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Palestinians seek to establish an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza



Strip with East Al-Quds as their capital. Peace talks that had been brokered by the United States have been frozen since 2014. Since entering office in January, Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition has approved the promotion of more than 7,000 new housing units, most deep in the West Bank. It also amended a law to clear the way for settlers

to return to four settlements that had previously been evacuated.

In response to Sunday's Israeli decision, the Palestinian Authority said it would boycott a meeting of the Joint Economic Commit-

tee with Israel scheduled for Monday.

The Palestinian resistance group Hamas condemned the move, saying it will not give (Israel) legitimacy over our land. Our people will resist it by all means".



A barrier separating the Israeli settlement of Pisgat Zeev (1) from the eastern part of Al-Quds in the occupied West Bank is pictured on June 17, 2023.

● JEWEL SAMAD/AFP

Sudan's warring sides begin new 72-hour cease-fire



Sudan's warring parties began a cease-fire Sunday morning after two months of fighting pushed the African nation into chaos.

Residents in the capital, Khartoum, and its neighboring city of Omdurman reported "relative calm" in the first hours of the cease-fire Sunday morning, after fierce clashes were reported the previous day, according to AP. The three-day truce came ahead of a pledging conference the U.N. and other

nations will organize Monday to raise funds to cover Sudan's humanitarian needs.

The U.N. says it received less than 16% of the \$2.57 billion required to help those in need in Sudan in 2023. Another \$470 million is needed to support refugees in the Horn of Africa region, it said.

The United States and Saudi Arabia, announced the cease-fire agreement Saturday. Both led concerted diplomatic efforts to stop the war over the past two months.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia said in a joint statement that the military and its rival paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces, agreed to halt fighting and "refrain from seeking military advantage during the ceasefire." Sudan plunged into chaos after months of worsening tensions between the rival generals exploded into open fighting, in mid-April, across the country with the capital, Khartoum and the western Darfur region bearing the brunt of the armed conflict.

The fighting turned Khartoum and other urban areas into battlegrounds. More than 3,000 people lost their lives and over 6,000 others were wounded, according to Health Minister Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim. It forced more than 2.2 million people to flee their homes to safer areas inside Sudan and to neighboring nations.

The cease-fire was the latest in a series of attempted truces, brokered by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, all of which failed to stop fighting, with the mediators blaming the two warring sides for repeated violations.

The humanitarian situation in the war-ridden country has been worsening. At least 24.7 million people - more than half of the country's population - need humanitarian assistance. And over 100,000 children are projected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition with medical complications by the end of the year, the World Health Organization warned on Friday.

Mali junta holds vote on new constitution



Malians voted Sunday on whether to back a draft constitution drawn up by the governing junta which has fuelled speculation that the country's strongman ruler will seek election. The West African nation has been under military rule since an August 2020 coup, which followed years of instability marked by insurgencies and political and economic crisis, according to AFP.

Some 8.4 million citizens are eligible to vote in the referendum on the new text in the first electoral test for leader Colonel Assimi Goita, 40, who has vowed to return the country to civilian rule in 2024.

The vote was not held in some parts of the country due to the lack of security, including the town of Kidal, a stronghold of former rebels.

The junta has advertised the new constitution as the answer to Mali's inability to tackle its multiple crises. Mali's recent woes began in 2012, when separatist insurgents in the north - long seen as marginalized by the southern government - aligned with Al-Qaeda-linked terrorists to seize vast swathes of territory. Disputed parliamentary elections in



A Malian national living in Abidjan casts his ballot during voting for the referendum on the draft of the new Malian constitution in the district of Adjame, Ivory Coast on June 18, 2023.

● SIA KAMBOU/AFP

March 2020, followed by mass protests against a government unable to rein in the insurgency, corruption and economic crisis, ended in a coup. Goita initially appointed an interim president but kicked him out in a second coup in 2021 and stepped into the top job himself.

Now doubts are swirling over his commitment to step down after elections planned for next year.

The junta called on Friday for the immediate departure of the country's UN peacekeeping mission, a central and controversial actor in a security crisis that has claimed the lives of nearly 200 peacekeepers in the last decade.

Mali had increasingly imposed operational restrictions on the peacekeepers, ultimately accusing the mission on Friday of not only being a "failure", but even becoming "part of the problem".

NEWS IN BRIEF

Heat wave kills nearly 100 in India



AP - At least 96 people died in two of India's most populous states over the last several days, officials said Sunday, with swaths of the country reeling from a sweltering heat wave. The deaths happened in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh and eastern Bihar where authorities warned residents over 60 and others suffering various maladies to stay indoors during the daytime.

UK PM faces another by-election after ex-MP resigns



BBC - A British MP who was suspended from the country's Conservative Party over allegations of sexual misconduct has resigned.

David Warburton is the fourth British MP in eight days to announce their resignation.

His immediate departure means the Conservatives will now face a fourth by-election.

11 dead, 20 missing in Brazil Cyclone



AFP - At least 11 people were killed and 20 were missing after a cyclone tore through southern Brazil, local authorities said Saturday.

A total of 2,330 people were left with damaged houses and 602 were evacuated from areas at risk due to the passage of the cyclone between Thursday and Friday.

Brazil has been hit by a series of deadly weather disasters in recent years, which experts say are being made worse by climate change.

Iran, Uzbekistan share significant cultural commonalities



Persian style interior design in a Khiva building
IRAN DAILY/ REZA ABESH AHMADLOU

Iranica Desk

Cultural diplomacy is an approach based on the role and position of cultural factors in the formation and maintenance of ties between nations. The ultimate goal of this kind of diplomacy is to clearly portray a desirable and positive image of mutual relations rooted in the historical and cultural commonalities of the countries. Due to its strategic geographic location, historical background, prominent scientific and literary figures and population composition, the Republic of Uzbekistan plays an important role in the region. Interestingly, most of its population adheres to the country's indigenous culture, which is one of the richest in Central Asia and includes their traditions, customs, language, music and local foods.

While talking about Uzbekistan and Iran, it is important to mention the significant number of their cultural and historical commonalities. The Republic of Uzbekistan was a center of Transoxiana, in which Islamic civilization was established. The two countries' inseparable, historical roots, their influence on the creation, prevalence and identification of Persian language and literature, along with the similarity of their traditions, rituals, and social beliefs are the main factors leading to the formation of a close cultural relationship between the two nations.

Literature

Both countries have unique and rich collections of ancient manuscripts in the fields of literature, poetry, history, philosophy, science, mathematics, music, astron-

omy, medicine, geography and art. The interaction between the writers and poets of the two countries has always been ongoing. Over the centuries, Uzbek writers have embraced traditions, philosophies, literary forms and even scripts from the peoples around them. From the 9th to the 10th centuries, for instance, transition from a Turkic to an Arabic script opened Uzbek writers to the influence of Arabic and Persian literature. In Uzbekistan, the names of Sa'adi and Hafez (great Iranian poets) are quite well-known to people.

Architecture

Iranian architecture essentially found its way far away from the present-day borders of Iran. The influence of Persian architecture is seen frequently in Uzbekistan. There are many beautiful historical monuments in some cities, such as Samarkand and Bukhara, which are designed by Iranian architects. It is said in history books that Timur (a Turku-Mongol conqueror who founded the Timurid Empire in and around modern-day Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia) invited very skilled artisans from Isfahan, Shiraz

Similarities in art and architecture of this magnitude cannot occur accidentally. Schools of this city are built with chamfered corner designs, with Iranian architectural style; their geometry, decorations and inscriptions are Iranian. Islamic-Iranian architecture combines aesthetic elements with mysticism. However, this art has different indicators, according to developments in each period and region, which distinguishes it from other periods, and demonstrates the culture of that specific region. Khiva, in the Khorezm re-



Hospitality of Uzbek people
novotours.uz

Persian language

Many people of Uzbekistan speak Persian, especially those who live in Samarkand, Bukhara and Sarkhan Darya Province. The Tajik people in Uzbekistan are the largest Persian-speaking minority in the world. A great number of Persian books are available in Uzbekistan, which has made learning this language a requirement for culturists, historians, writers, intellectuals and professors of Uzbek language and literature.

and other ancient cities of Persia (Iran) to Samarkand, who built big and fascinating mosques and madrassas. Bukhara, in Uzbekistan, has a great resemblance with Iranian art, culture, and civilization. It would be apt to consider it a gem in the field of Iranian culture and civilization in Transoxiana. Bukhara is a city of many historic buildings, with curved and flat Iranian coverings, surrounded in a mud and brick enclosure.

gion of Uzbekistan also has an abundant resemblance with Iranian culture, art and civilization. It would not be inappropriate to consider it a jewel in the field of Iranian culture and civilization in Transoxiana.

Hospitality

One of the distinctive features of Uzbeks, hospitality is among the main cultural commonalities between the two countries. In Uzbekistan there is a deep commitment

to extend kindness and warmth to guests. Like Iranians, Uzbeks provide the very best for their guests and bring a variety of dishes to the table. Hospitality in Uzbek families has a greater value than the richness of a table and prosperity of the family. Not to receive a guest means to disgrace the family. Guests are invited inside, to the most honorable seats at the table, or dastarkhan in Uzbek.

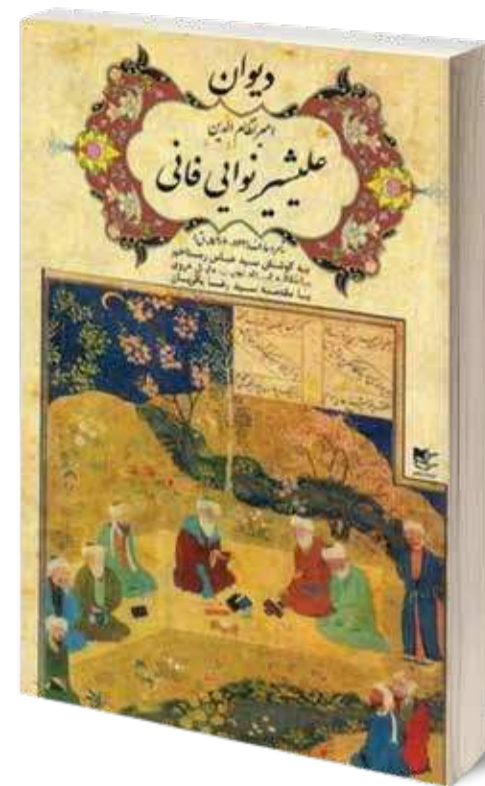
Cultural ties

The first agreement on the cultural cooperation between the two countries was signed in March 2021, paving the way for the further expansion of friendly ties. The agreement was inked on the sidelines of the two countries' joint economic commission, with the aim of consolidating bilateral

relations and increasing the knowledge of the two nations about each other's culture, traditions and customs.

In a meeting with a number of visiting Persian language lecturers, researchers, authors and publishers from Uzbekistan, held during the 34th Tehran International Book Fair (May 10-20, 2023), the head of the Islamic Culture and Communications Organization, Mehdi Imanipour, said that considering the mutual capacities, a suitable ground is prepared for the expansion of bilateral cultural ties between the two countries.

He said the poems written by the two countries' common poets are available to enthusiasts, hoping that a regular exchange of researchers and authors between the two countries would increase.



Divan of Uzbek poet Alisher Navoi
bitabook.ir

Persian poem inscriptions of Pakhlavan Mahmud Mausoleum in Khiva
IRAN DAILY/ REZA ABESH AHMADLOU



Iran's Pakdaman grabs Asian saber gold; Rahbari bags bronze

Sports Desk

The first day of the Asian Fencing Championships in Wuxi, China, saw the Iranians steal the show in the men's saber event.

Ali Pakdaman won a first gold medal at the competitions for Iran in 22 years, while Mohammad Rahbari settled for a joint bronze alongside Hong Kong's Low Ho Tin.

Pakdaman saved multiple match points to beat decorated South Korean Kim Jun-ho – a world bronze medalist in 2018 and a team gold winner at the Tokyo Olympics – 15-14 to take his illustrious record at the Asian Championships to 13 medals.

A clean sweep of six victories in the group phase had secured a place for Pakdaman in the knockout round, where he came out on top against opponents from India, Hong Kong, and Kuwait to progress to the quarterfinals.

The world No. 16, who had won an Asian individual silver in Wuxi seven years ago, defeated Japan's Kento Yoshida 15-13 before a 15-10 triumph over Tin saw him advance to the final showpiece.

Meanwhile, Rahbari marched into the knockouts thanks to five successive wins and then defeated fencers from Uzbekistan and Jordan before a 15-11 win against Mohammad Fotouhi in an all-Iranian battle sent him into the quarterfinals.

A double team silver medalist in the Asian Games, Rahbari eased past Uzbekistan's Musa



Ali Pakdaman poses with the Iranian flag after winning the men's individual saber gold medal at the Asian Fencing Championships in Wuxi, China, on June 17, 2023. irfnc.ir

Aymuratov 15-4 but his campaign came to an end with a 15-12 defeat against Kim.

Elsewhere in the competitions, Hong Kong's Vivian Kong came out victorious (15-4) against Song Se-ra of South Korea – a world champion in 2022 – for the wom-

en's individual épée gold, with the host's Lin Sheng and South Korean Choi In-jeong sharing the third podium.

This year's Asian Championships serve as a qualifying event for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Esteghlal's quest for coach drags on as Spanish Sanchez Flores enters the fray

Sports Desk

Esteghlal's complicated quest for a new manager took another twist on Saturday after Spaniard Quique Sanchez Flores's name was brought up for the job at the Persian Gulf Pro League giant.

It looked to be just a matter of time before former Esteghlal midfielder Javad Nekounam is unveiled as the new Tehran-based Blues' boss but the club's caretaker CEO Hojjat Karimi, in an Instagram post on Saturday, urged the Esteghlal faithful to be "patient" as the board looks to avoid "a hasty and emotional decision-making and will come up with the best choice for Esteghlal's managerial role within few days."

The announcement came after several sources reported on Friday that Esteghlal had reached full agreement with Nekounam, but the ex-Iranian international is reportedly facing legal barriers to take the job due to his controversial departure from Foolad Khuzestan in March.

Nekounam, who led the southern Iran side to the Iranian Hazfi Cup triumph in 2021, stepped down from his job hours after a last-16 win against Saudi side Al Faisaly in Doha over a rift with the club hierarchy.

Esteghlal had also been in talks with Iranian Mohammad Rabiei, who impressed during his five-year tenure at Mes Rafsanjan – steering his team to a fifth-spot finish in the Iranian top flight in the newly-finished campaign – as well as Spanish coach Juan Ramon Lopez Caro – a former manager in La Liga outfits Levante and Celta Vigo plus Saudi Arabia, Oman and Spain under-21 team.

Meanwhile, IRNA and Fars News

Agency reported on Sunday that Esteghlal is also considering a move for Sanchez Flores and the Spaniard is set to visit Tehran on Thursday for further negotiations.

Should the Spanish coach join Esteghlal, he will be among the most prominent managers to step into Iranian club football in recent years. The Valencia and Benfica boss in the 2000s, Sanchez Flores was in charge of Atletico Madrid when the Spanish capital giant lifted the UEFA Europa League and Super Cup in 2010.

Sanchez Flores, who was the head coach of Premier League club Wat-

ford over two spells, is familiar with working in the Middle East as he enjoyed decent spells at Emirati teams Al Ahli and Al Ain from 2011 to 2014. His last job was at La Liga side Getafe, where he was relieved of his duties in April with the club fighting relegation with seven matches to spare.

Esteghlal's job has been vacant since Portuguese Ricardo Sa Pinto ended his one-year stint at the club in May to join Cypriot side APOEL Nicosia, after the Iranian Blues finished third the league and were beaten 2-1 in extra time by archrival Persepolis in the Hazfi Cup final.



REUTERS

Almost 20,000 abusive social media posts in World Cup 2022: FIFA report

BBC – Almost 20,000 abusive social media posts were aimed at players, coaches and officials during last year's World Cup, says a FIFA report.

Of 20 million posts scanned by moderation software developed by FIFA and players' union FIFPRO, 286,895 were hidden from public view.

The biggest spike in abuse came after England's quarter-final loss to France, when Harry Kane missed a late penalty.

"The figures and findings in this report do not come as a surprise, but they are still massively concerning," said FIFPRO president David Aganzo.

"They represent a strong reminder for everyone involved in our game, and it must lead to providing preventative measures and solutions for players who are increasingly facing this type of abuse."

The report, released on Sunday, said more than 300 people have been identified and their details will be shared with authorities "to

facilitate real-world action being taken".

It said 38% of identifiable abuse came from accounts based in Europe and 36% from South America.

Last year FIFA, world football's governing body, partnered with FIFPRO to implement a plan to protect players, coaches and officials from social media abuse during international tournaments.

They established a package of tools called the social media protection service (SMPS), which flagged posts and comments, with 19,636 during the World Cup in Qatar confirmed by the service provider as abusive, discriminatory or threatening.

These were reported to the relevant social media platforms and, in many cases, were removed.

Of the detected abusive messages, sexism made up 13.47%, homophobia 12.16% and racism 10.70%.

"Social media companies' responses to abuse and threat published on



England captain Harry Kane is frustrated after missing a late penalty during a 2-1 quarter-final defeat against France in the World Cup 2022 in Qatar. reuters.com

13,105, followed by Instagram (5,370), Facebook (979), YouTube (113) and TikTok (69).

France suffered the highest number of abusive messages when grouped by country, with Brazil the second most and England third.

The Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, which starts on 20 July, will also feature SMPS support and FIFA has a confidential web-based whistleblowing system to allow people to report abuse.

"FIFA has a duty to protect football, in particular the players and the fans," said FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

"However, FIFA also expects all authorities and social media platforms to also accept their responsibilities and support us in the fight against all forms of discrimination."

their platforms evolved throughout the tournament but still indicated many blind spots, particularly outside of English language content," said the

report. "Targeted individual racism was high volume with more than 300 players being targeted and a few individual high-profile

players receiving a large proportion of targeted abuse across the competition. "Homophobia was prolific and platform responses

seemed blurred by the cultural differences which seemed to bar action." Twitter had the highest number of abusive messages reported to it with

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran sets record for its lowest liquidity growth in five years

Economy Desk

From March 21–April 21, Iran recorded its lowest liquidity growth in the past five years, raising hopes for reaching its targeted 25% liquidity growth by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (ending March 19, 2024).

According to a report by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Iran's liquidity grew by 2.1% in the aforementioned one-month period, which decreased by 0.2% compared to the same figure for last year.

Swiss get behind net-zero climate law

AFP – The Swiss, feeling the impact of global warming on their rapidly melting glaciers, on Sunday backed a new climate bill aimed at steering their country towards carbon neutrality by 2050.

Near-final results showed almost 59 percent of voters supporting the new law, which will require Switzerland to slash its dependence on imported oil and gas, scaling up the development, and use of greener and more homegrown alternatives. Voters also overwhelmingly backed adopting a global minimum tax rate of 15 percent for multinational corporations in a second referendum, with nearly 79 percent in favour, with full results in from all but one of Switzerland's 26 cantons.

Boeing boosts 20-year outlook due to demand



REUTERS – U.S. plane-maker Boeing (BA.N) slightly raised its annual 20-year forecast for new jetliner deliveries, propelled by the strength of the narrowbody market fueled by demand from low-cost carriers.

Boeing expects airlines will need to buy 42,595 jets from now until 2042, up from 41,170 planes in its previous 20-year forecast last year.

SCO, BRICS put Iran's membership on top of agenda

Two senior Russian officials said that the official expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS, where Iran's membership will most likely be decided, are at the top of the agendas of their respective upcoming summits.

Bakhtiyar Khakimov, Russia's presidential representative for SCO affairs discussed the bloc's agenda for the next summit on Saturday, according to Mehr news agency.

"Iran's accession as a full member will be one of the key decisions of the July 4 summit that will take place in New Delhi via video conference," he said.

"Iran has completed the mandatory procedures and will join the family of SCO member states at the New Delhi summit."

Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a transcontinental political, economic, and security alliance, with a total of eight full members. Iran is currently an observer SCO country, but is set to become a full-time member

of the charter.

Moreover, Khakimov said that at the upcoming SCO summit, a memorandum will also be signed regarding the obligations that Belarus would have if it is steadfast in its bid to obtain the status of a member state in the organization.

In addition to the SCO's eight member states, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia have been invited to the July 4 event as observer states.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has said that the country's full membership in the SCO would be finalized in July during the upcoming summit of the association.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was founded by China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan at a summit held in Shanghai in 2001.

China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan are its current full members. Iran, Afghanistan, Belarus, and Mongolia



are observer states.

Iran first applied for membership in the alliance 15 years ago. The approval of Iran's candidacy came at a summit in the Tajik capital of Dushanbe in September 2021.

SCO member states contribute about 30 percent of global GDP, while 40 percent of the world's population lives in SCO countries.

BRICS considers expansion in August

BRICS expansion is on the agenda of the upcoming summit that will take place in South Africa in August,

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Sunday.

"A number of countries stated their intention to join BRICS in some way, and this, of course, is such an interesting event because it indicates the international authority of this integrational association," he maintained.

"We expect the BRICS summit to take place in late August, and the expansion will be on the agenda for the BRICS member states to discuss."

According to the spokesman, "There are certain nuances" regarding which expansion

format would be better to adopt, and whether it should be adopted at all.

Peskov added that Russia is happy to see that more and more states display interest in BRICS, according to TASS.

In early June, Iran's foreign minister said that the members of the BRICS group of emerging economies have welcomed the Islamic Republic's potential accession to the powerful bloc. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi also said recently that Iran's membership in BRICS will be materialized soon.

Promising prospects ...

Despite these efforts, the number of official visits

Page 1 > between Iran and Central Asia still falls short of meeting the needs and objectives of both sides.

The Iranian government's focus on "good-neighborliness" and "economic diplomacy" has fostered an environment conducive to the growth of relations between Tehran and Tashkent. However, these relations still fall short of reaching the desired and anticipated level.

Significant developments in Iran-Uzbekistan relations

have occurred since the new government assumed office in Iran in August 2021. Two meetings between President Ebrahim Raisi and his Uzbek counterpart Shavkat Mirziyoyev took place on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan (September 2021) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (December 2021).

Additionally, Abdolaziz Kamalov, Uzbekistan's foreign minister, participated in the second meeting of Afghanistan's neighbors in Tehran

in November 2021. Furthermore, Ali Shamkhani, the then secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, visited Tashkent in March 2022, further solidifying the importance of these interactions in the realm of Iran-Uzbekistan relations.

During this brief period, Uzbekistan has shown support for changing Iran's SCO status from an observer to a full member. Moreover, Uzbekistan has displayed continued interest in participating in the Afghanistan-Iran-India transit project through the

Chabahar port in southeastern Iran, despite the Taliban assuming power in Afghanistan. Furthermore, there have been ongoing political and security consultations between Iranian and Uzbek authorities regarding the developments in Afghanistan and the approach to dealing with the Islamic Emirate under the Taliban. These instances clearly demonstrate the positive and upward trajectory of Iran-Uzbekistan relations. However, it is important to acknowledge that despite more than three decades

of diplomatic relations, and considering the significant changes and developments in Uzbekistan's foreign policy under Mirziyoyev, there is still room for improvement in Tehran-Tashkent ties to reach their optimal point.

In recent years, the relationship between Iran and Uzbekistan has been progressing, offering hope for further expansion and reaching a favorable level in the near future. Both the Uzbekistan and Iranian governments have ongoing cooperation plans, facilitating increased col-

laboration and communication between ministries and economic actors. Plus, the friendship group of the two countries' parliaments, holds significant importance in advancing this agenda.

There is an optimistic outlook for the economic and trade relations between Iran and Uzbekistan to reach a suitable level. The latest visit of Uzbekistan's president to Iran holds out the promise for the signing of crucial documents, further stimulating economic growth and development in both nations.

Int'l trade to rise with new terminal on Turkish border

Iran will launch a new terminal on its border with Turkey within days, with the aim of increasing international trade via its territory.

Iran's Road Maintenance & Transportation Organization (RMTO) said in a statement on Saturday that the Razi Border Terminal will be officially inaugurated in a ceremony attended by senior government officials, according to Tasnim news agency. The terminal will also

boost bilateral trade between Iran and Turkey amid measures taken by the two countries to meet a \$30 billion target in their annual trade.

Iran started construction of the three-story Razi Border Terminal in 2019 and has thus far spent about \$25 million on this project.

RMTO figures indicated that, with the launch of the new terminal at the Razi border crossing point, the time needed to process passengers traveling via the border between Iran and Turkey would drop from an average of three hours to 15 minutes.

The crossing is near Qotur, a border area located some 70 kilometers from Khoy, the second-largest city in Iran's West Azerbaijan province.



Iran to build power plant in Sri Lanka soon: Minister

Economy Desk

Iran's Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian said that a project to construct a 120-megawatt power plant by Iranian experts in Sri Lanka is at its final stages and will hopefully become operational in the near future.

The Iranian official was speaking in Tehran on Saturday during a meeting with Sri Lanka's Minister of Irrigation Shasheendra Rajapaksa, IRNA reported. Mehrabian added that the project will bring significant added value and develop cooperation between the two countries further.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he highlighted the capabilities and potentials of Iranian companies in implementing projects in the water and electricity fields. Referring to the construc-



tion of the giant, multipurpose "Uma Oya" project by expert Iranians in Sri Lanka, Mehrabian added that the outstanding progress of this hydropower and irrigation project is the result of effective cooperation between the two countries.

The Sri Lankan minister, for his part, expressed satisfaction with the development of ties with Iran, and said that more projects could be launched in the future in the water and energy sectors.

Iran's Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian (R) talks with Sri Lanka's Minister of Irrigation Shasheendra Rajapaksa (L) in Tehran on June 17, 2023.
● dolat.ir

400 new Alzheimer's patients identified in Iran

An Iranian diagnosed with dementia every 7 minutes

Social Desk

The President of Iran's Alzheimer's Association, Masoumeh Salehi, announced the identification of 400 new Alzheimer's patients in the country, bringing attention to the escalating health crisis. Salehi revealed that over one million Iranians are grappling with dementia, a broad category of cognitive disorders, with Alzheimer's accounting for a staggering 70 percent of these cases. The data suggests that a new individual is diagnosed with this debilitating disease

every seven minutes. Salehi highlighted the exacerbating effects of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic on the Alzheimer's situation. The reduction in social interactions, coupled with heightened stress and anxiety, has significantly contributed to the surge in the number of patients. However, she emphasized that early diagnosis could mitigate the disease's progression, according to IRNA. "Early diagnosis can delay the onset of dementia, particularly Alzheimer's, by up to five years," Salehi stated.

She further noted that Iran ranks third globally in terms of an aging population, making preventive measures and interventions crucial in curbing the incidence rate of dementia.

In a collaborative effort with the country's welfare organization, Salehi announced the commencement of dementia screening in the cities of Qazvin and Yazd. This initiative underscores the importance of early diagnosis and preventive interventions in managing the disease. Salehi elucidated that time-



● IRNA

ly therapeutic interventions, facilitated by early diagnosis, could significantly reduce the economic burden and strain on societal and support systems. She expressed concern over the late diagnosis of cognitive and memory disorders in a large segment of the popu-

lation, which significantly impacts the effectiveness of treatment and recovery. "Late diagnosis limits access to information, treatment, care, and support services, creating numerous challenges for everyone involved, from Alzheimer's patients to families, caregivers, commu-

nities, and health systems," Salehi explained. Salehi urged the Ministry of Health to prioritize the implementation of the National Dementia Document, which has been compiled and approved, to address this pressing health issue effectively.

No one leaves a safe home



Ali Amiri
Staff writer

OPINION

"You have to understand, No one puts their children on a boat Unless the water is safer than the land."

Warsan Shire

In her powerful and poignant poem, 'Home', Warsan Shire, a British-Somali writer born in 1988, explores the heart-wrenching experience of leaving one's home and country as a refugee.

The opening lines, "no one leaves home unless / home is the mouth of a shark", immediately set the tone for the rest of the poem, emphasizing the danger and desperation that drives people to leave their homes and seek ref-



● TIME

uge elsewhere. The poem also highlights the prejudice and discrimination that refugees face when they arrive in their new homes, and some lines reveal the xenophobia and racism that many refugees encounter when they try to rebuild their lives in unfamiliar places.

In light of the recent trag-

edy in which a refugee boat sank off the southern coast of Greece, claiming 78 lives with many more probably missing, Shire's poem gains extra significance.

As one of the worst such disasters this year, the recent incidents should remind us that today, in the vast expanse of the world's oceans, a tragedy

of epic proportions unfolds, largely unseen and unacknowledged. The plight of refugees, desperate souls fleeing war, persecution, and economic hardship, has become a recurrent nightmare, punctuated by the sinking of their makeshift vessels and the loss of countless lives. This humanitarian crisis, often relegated to the back pages of our collective consciousness, demands our immediate attention and action.

The refugee crisis is not a new phenomenon. It is a recurring theme in the annals of human history, a testament to our collective failure to uphold the principles of justice, equality, and human rights. Yet, the scale and frequency of these maritime tragedies have reached an alarming magnitude. The Mediterranean, once a cradle of civilization, has become

a watery grave for thousands of refugees, their dreams of a better life extinguished in its unforgiving depths.

The international community's response to this crisis has been, at best, tepid. The rhetoric of compassion and solidarity often rings hollow in the face of restrictive immigration policies and the rising tide of xenophobia. The refugees, dehumanized and vilified, are caught in a Kafkaesque nightmare, their pleas for help lost in the cacophony of political posturing and bureaucratic red tape.

What, then, can be done to stem this tide of human suffering? The answer lies in a multi-pronged approach that addresses the root causes of forced migration, enhances the capacity for rescue and resettlement, and fosters a culture of empathy and inclusivity.

First and foremost, the international community must redouble its efforts to resolve the conflicts and economic disparities that drive people to undertake these perilous journeys. This requires a renewed commitment to diplomacy, economic aid, and the promotion of human rights.

Then, the capacity for search and rescue operations in the high-risk migration routes must be bolstered. This includes providing adequate funding and resources to organizations like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration.

Next, we must challenge the narrative that portrays refugees as a threat to the security and economic stability of destination societies. Refugees are not the architects of their misfortune; they are its victims. They bring with them skills, experiences, and aspirations

that can enrich those societies if given the opportunity.

And last, but not least, a comprehensive immigration reform that prioritizes human dignity and the right to asylum must be ceaselessly advocated. This includes creating legal pathways for migration, expediting the processing of asylum applications, and ensuring the humane treatment of refugees.

The refugee crisis is a litmus test of humanity for everyone, everywhere. It is a mirror that reflects our values, our compassion, and our commitment to the ideals of justice and human rights.

Turning a blind eye to the suffering of our fellow human beings should bring us nothing but shame. Twenty-first century humankind should better rise to the challenge and transform this tragedy into a testament to its capacity for empathy, solidarity, and action.

PIC OF THE DAY

Yazd Effluent Lagoon, created by the Yazd Wastewater Treatment Plant, is a stunning wetland located just four kilometers north of the historic city of Yazd. With a length of three kilometers and surrounded by reeds, this unique destination has become a temporary home for winter migratory birds. Now a popular tourist spot, visitors can spend the night and stargaze under the beautiful Yazd sky.



● MAJID JARRAHI/IRNA

Iran's 'The Actor' outshines at German festival



Arts & Culture Desk

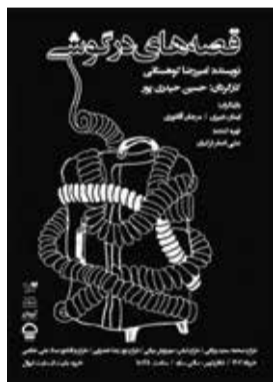
An Iranian television series titled 'The Actor' garnered recognition and accolades at the SerienCamp Festival, which is widely regarded as Germany's largest series festival.

The captivating series, directed by Nima Javidi and produced by Majid Motallebi, received an honorable mention at the festival held in Cologne from June 13 to 17, according to a report from IRNA.

Navid Mohammadzadeh, the brilliant lead actor of 'The Actor,' has already been honored with a grand prize for his exceptional performance at the 2023 Series Mania, a prestigious event held in France.

Adding to its achievements, 'The Actor' has been selected for screening at the highly-regarded 2023 Transilvania International Film Festival, an esteemed gathering in Eastern Europe, set to take place in a city located in the north-west region of Romania.

Theatrical play 'The Murmuring Tales' extended



Arts & Culture Desk

The captivating theatrical production titled 'The Murmuring Tales,' written by Amirreza Koohestani and skillfully directed by Hossein Heidaripour, will continue its performances at Tehran's City Theater Complex until June 23.

The play, which garnered critical acclaim during its debut at the 18th International Fajr Theatre Festival in Tehran, has been captivating audiences since May 23. The narrative of the play delves into the complexities that have consumed various aspects of life, ultimately leading individuals to vent their frustrations onto others. The thought-provoking storyline has resonated deeply with the audience, establishing 'The Murmuring Tales' as a must-see theatrical experience.

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Iranian researcher Malayeri wins Jordanian literary prize

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian researcher Yadollah Malayeri was honored with the Youssef Bakkar Prize for Oriental Studies for his thought-provoking book titled 'The Neighbors in the Eastern Mediterranean.' This political novel delves into the lives of Ahmed Mahmoud and Abd al-Rahman Munif, captivating readers with its insightful narrative. Sharing the spotlight, Malayeri shares this recognition jointly with Abbas Abdel Halim Abbas, hailing from Jordan, who authored the book, 'Abdul Wahhab Azzam, a Civilizational Project, a Study

of His Literary Efforts and Comparative Eastern Cultures,' as reported by IRNA.

The General Secretariat of the "Youssef Bakkar Prize for Oriental Studies," an inaugural award presented under the auspices of the Jordanian Writers Association, with the generous support of Youssef Bakkar, has officially unveiled the deserving recipients of this coveted honor.

Valued at \$3,000, the award symbolizes a significant milestone in the field of Oriental studies and aims to galvanize and empower scholars engaged in this domain. By fostering literary and cultural

ties between Oriental languages, particularly Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, the prize aspires to make a positive contribution to the realm of Islamic civilization.

Expressing his profound gratitude, Akram al-Zoubi, the president of the Jordanian Writers Association, Chairman of the Award's Board of Trustees, and its Secretary General, acknowledged the instrumental role played by the award's esteemed arbitrators and Board of Trustees. Al-Zoubi announced that a special ceremony will be organized to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the prize



winners at a later date, underscoring the Association's commitment to honoring and acknowledging their exceptional contributions.

Over 2,700 works submitted to 5 Int'l Photo Award



Arts & Culture Desk

Over 2,700 works from Iran and around the world have been submitted to the fourth edition of the 5 International Photo Award, according to a jury member. Behdad Najafi-Asadollahi further revealed that this year has seen a remarkable increase in the number of submissions compared to last year. The festival will witness the participation of photographers from countries such as Italy, Japan, Thailand, India, Afghanistan, Turkey, France, South

America, and the United Arab Emirates, according to IRNA.

Najafi-Asadollahi emphasized that not only is the quantity of the photographs impressive, but the quality of the works received by the festival's secretariat is also remarkable. This heightened level of submissions has necessitated a more meticulous selection process by the jury members. This year, the selected works will be unveiled during the opening ceremony on July 1st, and the awards will be presented on the same day.

Alongside the five top works, 50 additional works among the judges' choices will also be showcased and the photographers will be honored. Najafi-Asadollahi announced that among the distinguished jury members for this edition are Frank Bockholt from Germany, Ayako Takahashi from France, Lili Golestan from Iran, Alireza Shadizadeh from Iran, Alireza Kanji from Iran, Majid Talebi from Iran, Adel Heravian from Iran, famous Turkish photographer, Tahir, Italian photographer, Mara Zamuner, and others.

The jury panel will be presided over by Takehiko Nakafuji, a well-known photographer from Japan, who has served as the head of the jury in various festivals worldwide approximately 13 times, thus establishing a prominent international position for this festival. Najafi-Asadollahi stated that the collaboration and exchange of ideas with renowned and recognized judges from Iran and around the world is a valuable experience that contributes to the advancement of the visual arts in the country.

Iran's 'Scent of the Wind' warmly welcomed in France

The latest statistics indicate that over 20,000 individuals have already experienced the cinematic masterpiece, leading to a notable rise in the number of theaters showcasing the film to 130.

Arts & Culture Desk

Acclaimed Iranian film 'Scent of Wind,' directed by Hadi Mohaqeq, receives warm reception from French audiences as it expands its release to 60 cities across France since May 24. The film has garnered significant attention and has been met with enthusiasm from viewers in the country. In fact, the latest statistics indicate that over 20,000 individuals have already experienced the cinematic masterpiece, leading to a notable rise in the number of theaters showcasing the film to 130, as reported by ILNA. The film's positive reception not only reflects the talent and craftsmanship of the Iranian filmmakers involved but also highlights the

power of storytelling to bridge cultural gaps and forge connections. As 'Scent of Wind' continues to enchant viewers, it solidifies its place as a remarkable contribution to the global cinematic landscape. Mohaqeq and Hossein Qurchian co-wrote the story set in a distant Iranian village where a paralyzed man collects herbal medicine in the mountains for making his living with his sick child. The electricity goes off in his house and an electrician comes to fix it. Unfortunately, the problem is bigger than what was anticipated and may take days to be resolved. When he sees the child on the sickbed, he feels committed to doing whatever he can to bring the electricity back.



However, he has a tough job ahead with facing nature and some unexpected events. 'Scent of Wind' won the Silver Balloon (Montgolfière d'Argent) award of the 2022 Festival des

3 Continents in Nantes, France. It was the opening film of the 2022 Busan International Film Festival, one of the most significant film festivals in Asia, and won the Kim Jiseok Award,

which is given to two established Asian filmmakers with three or more feature films. 'Scent of Wind' was also awarded an honorable mention at the Fajr Film Festival in Tehran.