



EXCLUSIVE

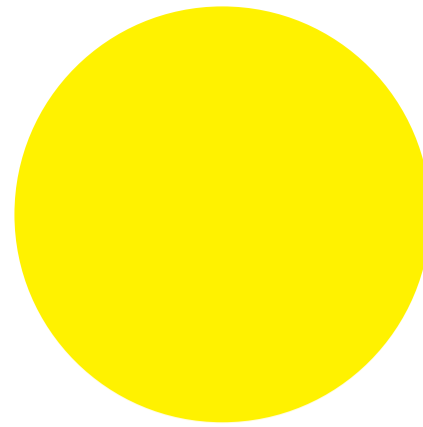
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Iran Daily



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Vol. 7331 • Wednesday, July 5, 2023 • Tir 14, 1402 • Dhu al-Hajjah 16, 1444 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

Iran formally joins Shanghai Cooperation Organization



بیست و سومین اجلاس سران کشورهای عضو سازمان همکاری شانگهای
۱۳ تیر ۱۴۰۲
23RD MEETING OF THE SCO COUNCIL OF HEADS OF STATE
4 JULY 2023
एससीओ राष्ट्र अध्यक्षों की परिषद की 23वीं बैठक
4 जुलाई 2023

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi listens as India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (on screen) speaks during a virtual meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heads of State Council in Tehran on July 4, 2023.
president.ir

International Desk

Iran formally joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as the ninth member of the Asian bloc on Tuesday. Iran's membership was announced by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he head-

lined the SCO leaders' summit held virtually on Tuesday. Modi congratulated Iran on becoming a full member of the alliance, saying, "New countries joining the group underlines the importance of the group". Iran first applied for membership in the bloc 15 years ago,

but it took until 2021 for the request to be approved. Iran and the organization started a formal process for Tehran's accession in March 2022. In September of the same year, Iran signed a memorandum of commitment to join the SCO. Addressing the Tuesday sum-

mit, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said Tehran's membership will support "collective security... expand ties and communications and strengthen unity". "In particular, I hope that Iran's presence in this important and influential organization will

provide a platform for collective security, lead to sustainable development, expand links and communications, strengthen unity, respect the sovereignty of countries more than ever before, and provide synergies to deal with environmental threats," Raisi said.

De-dollarization a necessity

He also warned against the dominance of the dollar in global exchanges, saying de-dollarization is a pivotal necessity to form a just international system.

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UN to hold urgent meeting on Qu'ran desecration in Sweden

The United Nations Human Rights Council will hold an urgent meeting on the desecration of the Muslims' holy book, Qu'ran, outside a mosque in Sweden, following a request from Pakistan. The desecration of the Qu'ran took place outside the Swedish capital Stockholm's main mosque last week, which was authorized by the police and was carried out by an Iraqi man.

The Swedish government condemned the "Islamophobic" act, after the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation called for measures to avoid future desecration of the holy book. Officials from numerous countries, including many in the Middle East, have also condemned the incident, calling on Stockholm to step up measures against religious

hate. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said: "We will teach the arrogant Western people that it is not freedom of expression to insult the sacred values of Muslims." Ankara is currently holding up Sweden's application for NATO membership on accusations that the Nordic nation harbours people Turkey considers "terrorists".

Fresh blood in SCO as Iran joins Eastern bloc



By Javad Mohammad Ali
Staff writer

Iran's recent inclusion in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) marks a historic milestone for the Islamic Republic, opening up new avenues to strengthen its economy and shape its foreign policy. By aligning with the SCO, Iran strategically prioritizes its relations with

Eastern powerhouses - Russia, China and India - in an effort to mitigate the impact of US sanctions and establish regional partnerships as alternatives to Western counterparts. One of the key benefits of Iran's SCO membership lies in the economic sphere. The Islamic Republic aims to enhance its energy sector, particularly oil sales, by fostering collaborations with other SCO member states. By leveraging its SCO attachment, Iran envisions

transforming into a pivotal energy hub in the region, attracting foreign investments and improving its oil and gas infrastructure. This move not only bolsters its economic structures but also augments its competitive position. Moreover, the SCO's emphasis on economic cooperation, under China's leadership, gives Iran opportunities to reduce its reliance on the US dollar in global trade.

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Russian firm to build part of Rasht-Astara railway



● SPUTNIK

International Desk

The Russian President's Special Aide Igor Levitin announced that a Russian company will soon sign a deal to construct part of the Rasht-Astara railway — which itself will be part of the International North-South Corridor (INSTC). Refraining from disclosing the name of the company, Levitin maintained that the INSTC will be an opportunity for Russia to export its surplus products, especially foods, through Iran.

Fresh blood ...

By facilitating economic exchanges that minimize dollar dependency, the SCO can help shield Iran from the impact of sanctions and provide a platform for diversifying its trade partnerships.

Javad Mansouri, former Iranian ambassador to China, has said that Iran has proposed the creation of a unified currency within the SCO to break the monopoly of the US dollar in global trade and counter the repercussions of banking sanctions and SWIFT measures.

Iran's permanent membership in the SCO also carries significant political implications, particularly in relation to Western nations, notably the United States. With the SCO being dubbed the "NATO of the East," the organization's collaborative nature and sensitivity to regional concerns are highlighted. Iran's inclusion further enhances the capabilities of the SCO and sends a strong political message to Western nations about the growing influence of the organization and its member states.

The affirmation of Iran's accession to the SCO signifies a political stride, showcasing the member nations' willingness to deepen interactions with Iran. By participating in the SCO, Iran elevates its international stature, placing itself on a global scale. Furthermore, Iran's presence in the SCO creates an environment conducive to open dialogue and engagement, reinforcing its commitment to pursuing a multilateral approach in its foreign policy.

Iran's SCO membership can serve as a stepping stone for its potential involvement in other regional and international institutions such as BRICS.

National Desk

Iran's first vice president announced that six major water transfer projects are currently either being reviewed or implemented in the country's Energy Ministry. Mohammad Mokhber said that after the launch of these projects, water shortages and the subsequent tensions in Iran's central and eastern provinces will be resolved. Speaking in the inauguration ceremony of the third module of the wastewater treatment plant in Urmia on Tuesday, which was also attended by the Iranian Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian, the vice president pointed out that the project will also provide water-intensive industries with their required share of water from the neighboring seas. Noting that the issue of water is one of the most serious issues in the country as well as the world, Mokhber said despite being under the looming threat of water shortage, Iran has several opportunities in that regard.

"Unfortunately, our country's average annual precipitation is not good, but Iran can utilize the opportunities that the Caspian Sea to its north and the Persian Gulf to its south can bring," he said, expressing dissatisfaction with how these opportunities were missed in recent years. "The establishment of wa-

Iran VP: Six seawater transfer projects under review



ter-intensive industries in the country's deserts and central regions in the past was a grave oversight that eventually caused a shortage of drinking water. What is more, to transport raw materials to these industries and export their products, thousands of kilometers must be transited within

the country." Drawing on the efficient water use of Iran's neighboring countries through advanced technologies as an example, the official said that as a result of proper management and the use of technologies, a balance can be struck between development and population growth.

The first vice president lauded another major project of the Energy Ministry that transfers reclaimed wastewater to Urmia Lake, maintaining that the project will reduce water waste, pollution, and damage to the environment. The project in question, which involves 36 kilometers of

tunnels and 11 kilometers of canals, will transfer 51 million cubic meters of processed wastewater to the troubled lake annually. The designed capacity of the inaugurated third module of the Urmia wastewater treatment plant is 60,000 cubic meters per day, which will cover 300,000 people.



The photo shows the launch of the third module of the wastewater treatment plant in Urmia, Iran, on July 4, 2023.

● IRNA

Envoy: Palestinians can only reach goals by using 'force'



Israeli police inspect the scene of the car-ramming attack in Tel Aviv on July 4, 2023.

● JACK GUEZ/AFP

International Desk

Iran's mission to the United Nations asserted that Palestinians could achieve their goals against Israel only through the use of force, as the regime con-

tinues its unabated onslaught on the occupied West Bank city of Jenin. The mission added that Tehran is ready to help Palestinians win over the regime through the use of "force," according to Press TV. "Based on Iran's assessment, Palestinians cannot regain their seized rights from the Israeli regime through negotiation, as the Israeli regime only responds to force," the mission told Newsweek. "Therefore, Iran supports any request for assistance from the Palestinian resistance," it added. The occupation forces assaulted several neighborhoods in Jenin by air and

land on Monday as the Palestinian death toll from the latest wave of Israeli aggression has topped 10 since it began in the early hours of the day. Palestine's Shehab news agency reported that the occupation forces fired gas bombs at the hospital in Jenin, which was followed by Palestinians hurling handmade explosives at Israeli military vehicles in front of the medical facility. In response to the Israeli aggression, the Jenin Brigade, which includes members of the Palestinian resistance groups in the occupied West Bank city, said it had ambushed the occupation forces and

detonated a military vehicle with explosive devices. A Hamas resistance fighter drove his car into a crowded bus stop in Tel Aviv on Tuesday and began stabbing people, wounding eight in an attack praised by Palestinian resistance groups. Israel's military assault appeared to be the largest attack in the occupied West Bank in around two decades as the regime deployed armed drones and hundreds of troops against the innocent Palestinians. Iran on Tuesday strongly condemned the Zionist regime's brutal raids on the Jenin camp in the

West Bank, voicing concern about the humanitarian consequences of the military assaults and the butchering of tens of innocent Palestinians, Tasnim news agency reported. Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani called for immediate action by the United Nations, the UN Security Council, and the international community and organizations to stop the Zionists' lunatic crimes. He stressed that the Palestinian nation and resistance groups have the legitimate right to self-defense against the aggressive Zionist regime.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran formally joins ...

Based on the past decades' experience, he said, militarism and the dominance of the dollar form the bases of the Western hegemonic system. "Therefore, any attempt to shape a fair international system requires the removal of this instrument of dominance in intra-regional relations," the Iranian president said.

Protecting regional peace

Chinese President Xi Jinping called on the SCO leaders to work to "protect regional peace and ensure

security." He said the SCO member states should "follow the right direction and enhance their solidarity and mutual trust". China would "persist in the correct direction of economic globalization, oppose protectionism, unilateral sanctions and extension of the national security concept," Xi said. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who also attended the meeting, reiterated his country's opposition to Western sanctions and said Moscow would counter "all these external sanctions

and pressures" and continue to "develop as never before". Putin also backed trade accords between SCO nations in local currencies in an attempt to blunt sanctions. The China-headquartered SCO is a diplomatic organization now with nine members, namely Russia, India, Pakistan, Iran, China and the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Set up in 2001, the organization's members work to tackle joint security issues, cooperate militarily and promote internal trade.

An assessment of Richard Haass's recent warnings: Extreme right poses threat to American political system



By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

Richard Haass, one of the prominent political figures in the United States and the President of the Council on Foreign Relations, has issued a warning regarding the decline of American power on the occasion of his departure from this think tank. In an interview, he emphasized that the real danger is at home, with the rise of extremism and the weakening of democracy. Iran Daily has discussed these warnings with Rahman Qahramanpour, a

strategic analyst and translator of books such as "Political Order and Political Decay" and "Identity" by Francis Fukuyama.

IRAN DAILY: What are the recent positions of Richard Haass and his warnings about the declining power of the United States?

QAHRAMANPOUR: Considering various analyses of the US' decline in power, there is an ongoing discussion about China simultaneously gaining power. This raises an important question about why China is rapidly becoming powerful. Some believe that it is not China becoming powerful, but rather America losing

its international standing. One of the factors contributing to this decline is the emergence of the Trump phenomenon in the US political arena. Trump's victory in the 2016 presidential elections unleashed social forces in the country that had previously lacked representation in power. Prior to that, these right-wing and extremist ideologies couldn't enter the government because the political system in the country is presidential. Therefore, out of necessity, they were leaning towards the Republican Party. On the other hand, the main body of power within the Republican Party was predominantly conservative, not extreme right-wing. Even

prominent families like the Bush family in the Republican Party were conservative, not extreme right-wing. However, since Trump became president, extreme right-wing elements found representation and became powerful within the government. Contrary to some expectations, Trumpism did not fade away as a passing trend. The division in American society, which was revealed with Trump's victory, still exists, and the policies of Joe Biden and his Democratic administration have not been entirely successful in addressing this divide. Therefore, critics in the US, like some Democrats and figures such as Richard Haass

and Fukuyama, consider this societal division as the main threat to the country. It is important to note that Fukuyama's critical analysis does not imply the decline and fall of American civilization. His main argument is that the US used to have a bureaucratic and well-structured system of governance, which has now weakened significantly. In fact, these are warnings to American authorities and decision-makers. Richard Haass's main point is that the US needs to address its internal problems to remain powerful. Otherwise, simultaneous with its decline in domestic power, the US' international standing would also weaken further.

What are the main manifestations of these internal problems?

One of the main manifestations is the political and social divide within the US, which stems from the rise of extremists or right-wing ideologies. This phenomenon could gradually marginalize moderate Republicans and strengthen extreme factions within the Democratic Party as well. Another important manifestation is the decline of the middle class in the US. The middle class is crucial to sustaining democracy, and as it weakens economically and socially, individuals separated from this class tend to lean towards extreme right-wing ideologies. This is why Trump still has significant followers in American society. Therefore, the growth of

extreme right-wing ideologies poses a serious threat to the US' political system.

Mr. Haass has also stated that the US has become the greatest threat to global security. Does this mean that the country is an external threat to the world?

I don't think Mr. Haass means that the US deliberately creates instability in different parts of the world. From Haass's perspective and that of some other American critics, as the US' internal power weakens, it cannot effectively maintain the international order that it has been upholding since World War II. Consequently, when the US is preoccupied with internal issues, it may contribute to increased instability and insecurity in different parts of the world. Some argue that Russia acted on this assessment of the US' weakened power when it attacked Ukraine.

Are these warnings regarding the state of political management being taken into account by American decision-makers?

We don't have a clear answer to whether these criticisms are receiving attention or not. However, currently, there are two approaches within the US. Democrats and the Biden administration believe that through multilateralism and cooperation with allies, along with strengthening the middle class, the US can maintain its international standing. On the other hand, Republicans, particularly those aligned with Trump,

still believe that by rejecting globalization, making alliances and opponents more transparent, the US should be empowered.

Republicans, especially Trump's followers, believe that the US should focus on nationalism and toughening stances against rivals and opponents to regain its strength. The dominance of one solution over the other depends on the political trajectory of American society.

Therefore, these positions can be considered as an election warning to the American people. If the conservatives win in the upcoming presidential elections, will the US' weakening process accelerate?

Haass had a famous quote after Donald Trump's victory in the elections, stating that governing a country is different from running a campaign. While his audience may include the American people, these warnings are primarily about the long-term situation and the political governance and management in the country. Haass knows that regardless of whether a Democrat or Republican candidate wins in the next elections, these problems, such as a divided society and a weakened middle class still persist. Haass believes that the continuation of domestic problems implies further weakening of the US' position and power in the international system. Therefore, the main audience for Haass's warnings is the American political system.

First presidential elections under new Constitution of Uzbekistan

Early voting of the presidential elections has started in Uzbekistan on June 28 and it will last until July 5, as the elections will take place on July 9, while, a sum of 19.66 million voters registered in presidential elections in the country. The decision on early voting was announced by the current President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on May 8, 2023 following the results of a referendum on a new version of the Constitution (in accordance with Articles 110 and 128 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as Article 66 of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan).

This will be the first election after the amendments to the Constitution come into force. Now the president is elected for seven years on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

In total, four candidates are running for the post of head of state:

from the People's Democratic Party - Ulugbek Ilyasovich Inoyatov; from the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Business People - the Liberal Democratic Party (UZLiDeP) - Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoyev; from the Social Democratic Party "Adolat" - Robahon Anvarovna Makhmudova;



and from the Ecological Party - Abdushukur Khudoikulovich Khamzaev.

In turn, the Milliy Tiklanish party decided not to nominate its own candidate for participation in the presidential elections, supporting the candidacy of Mirziyoyev.

The program of the candi-

date for president of Uzbekistan from the People's Democratic Party Ulugbek Inoyatov says that his main goal is to form a democratic social state in the country that meets the criteria of social justice, social equality and democracy.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev, a presidential candidate from

UZLiDeP, presented the New Uzbekistan Strategy, which provides for reducing poverty by at least two times by 2027, developing the digital economy, deepening reforms in the judicial and legal sphere, increasing life expectancy, and improving public administration.

The candidate for the presidency of Uzbekistan from the social democratic party "Adolat" Robahon Makhmudova in her program offers a social democratic model for building a "fair civil society", providing for a democratic legal, social state and prosperity for all. The presidential candidate from the Ecological Party of Uzbekistan Abdushukur

Khamzaev in his election program focuses on overcoming the risks caused by climate change and the tragedy of the Aral Sea. He emphasizes that the problems of land and water resources, the reduction of biodiversity, the deterioration of atmospheric air, the accumulation of industrial and domestic waste require more serious attention from the state.

To organize early presidential elections in Uzbekistan, 10,784 polling stations have been organized, including 56 in 39 foreign countries at embassies and other representative offices of the republic. According to the Electoral Code, a voter

who does not have the opportunity to be at his place of residence on election day has the right to early voting. According to the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as of July 1, 2023, a sum of 376,623 voters exercised their right to early voting as 275,592 people voted on the territory of the republic, 101,031 - abroad, including at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

At the 55th polling station, established at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Iran, fellow citizens staying in this country used their constitutional right and began to take part in the early voting process.



The great significance of Damavand



Mount Damavand
© itto.org

As the highest peak of Iran, Mount Damavand (5,628 meters) has come to represent core qualities to the people of this land. Let us take a look at what this now extinct volcanic mountain means to Persians.

Damavand has a special place in Iranians' hearts, which is palpable in Iranian mythology and stories. Ancient Persians thought this peak was insurmountable and the sky was holy. Therefore, the height closest to it was considered sacred, too, cheetah-adventures.com wrote.

This impression has made Damavand an inspiration for many artists. The photograph of this monumental peak can be seen on our money notes, coins, posters, etc.

Barfchal Celebration

Ab Ask village inhabitants perform a ritual every spring called the Barfchal Celebration. They do this by gathering the remain-

ing snow on the ground and piling it in a hole. The melting of the snow produces fresh water that can be used in the summer. At the end of this ceremony comes time for eating together.

This ceremony has been held for six centuries. Nowadays, people celebrate because of their religious beliefs. Perhaps you will enjoy taking part in this age-old celebration that entails so much forethought and provision.

Damavand Persian mythology

Many stories and myths regarding Damavand are about its holiness. The legend of Zahaak and Fereydoun takes place on the outskirts of Mt. Damavand.

Legend of Zahaak and Fereydoun

As the world-famous storyteller, Ferdowsi, sets out this myth, Zahaak was an evil ruler who was swayed easily by the

whispers of the devil. One day the devil bent down and kissed each shoulder of Zahaak once. From the place where he placed a kiss, a serpent arose that only ate the brain of men for food. Out of fear that one day the serpents would eat Zahaak's own brain, he cruelly had two young men killed each day to feed the snakes.

Fereydoun was a bold, young man who stood against the tyranny of Zahaak. He defeated the evil ruler in a fair fight but refused to put him down; instead, Fereydoun imprisoned Zahaak in a cave beneath our very own Damavand Mountain. This is where Zahaak will remain until the end of time, cut off from the world, and doomed to eternal detention. They say sometimes you can hear shrieks coming from the base of Damavand, which is Zahaak's voice that is carried across centuries.

The legend goes that

one day when the war between Iran and Turan reached an impasse, both sides agreed to peace if an arrow shot by an Iranian would settle the border.

The fiendish demand was made to dishearten the Persians, who knew that they could not take their land back from the advancing enemy. For who could let an arrow fly so far? But when Arash stepped forward, they trusted his adroitness and courage. He climbed Mount Damavand, and from the peak fired an arrow that flew from dawn until sunset. It ultimately landed on a broad walnut tree, and this determined the border of Iran and Turan. They say that Arash set down his soul on that arrow; that is how it flew so far. They say that he died the moment his arrow flew and that his body still rests at Damavand.

Damavand in Poetry

Damavand has always



Barfchal Celebration
© MOSTAFA SHANECHI/ISNA

been a symbol of endurance to Iranians. This has inspired poets such as Ferdowsi, Rumi, Nizami, Vahshi Bafqi, Malek-o-Shoara Bahar, and many more.

Europeans climbing the peak

The first European who sought to conquer Damavand was a Frenchman, Antoine Olivier. He was a natural science researcher, who came to Iran to

learn all that he could of the nature of the Middle East. During his first attempt, he found sulfurous rocks along the track. His first attempt at climbing Damavand did not come to fruition; however, on his second attempt a few years later, he made his way to the very top.

Jacques de Morgan traversed all of the expanse of Iran with the aid of the French government. De Morgan attempted to

climb Damavand in the winter of 1889. He didn't make it past the height of 5,300 meters; however, he devised a map of the geography of the mountain up to that height and returned to France. He was a geologist who provided many services to the science of geology. De Morgan's attempt was indeed laudable. He took on the climb with equipment available 130 years ago.

Hamidyieh' Museum of Anthropology has a historically significant collection

Iranica Desk

The city of Hamidyieh, in Khuzestan Province, is a unique place where you can see deserts, rivers and forests all together. The amazing arrangement of its sand dunes and the presence of various plants

and species catch the eye of every viewer.

The city also hosts a large number of historical sites which are in need of more care.

Moreover, the city's Museum of Anthropology, inaugurated in 2019, displays objects introducing the

lifestyle and art of local people.

In an interview with IRNA, the head of Hamidyieh's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, Hassan Behdad, referred to the importance of the city's historical and cultural heritage, and called

for the elimination of chal-

lenges faced by the city's Museum of Anthropology in the field of preservation. He added that the museum hosts a collection of antique objects which were used by the ancient residents of the land.

Behdad noted that agri-

cultural tools, handwoven carpets, swords and jewelry constitute a major part of the artifacts on display in the museum.

He said that the historical collections which belong to individuals should have legal permits, adding that permission for the oper-

ation of this museum is granted to a person named Khalil Daihimi, issued by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, under the title of "Anthropological Collection of Khuzestan's Arab People."

The tools and objects of the collection, which are

of significant historical and cultural value, are being showcased in a rented residential unit.

He added that Daihimi owns a piece of land in which a building is expected to be established to host the Hamidyieh Museum of Anthropology.



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© IRNA



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Iran's Qassempour given injury boost ahead of world wrestling meet

Sports Desk

Iranian wrestling sensation Kamran Qassempour said he would be fit in time to take part in September's Wrestling World Championships after a groin injury saw him limp off a training session last week.

The dominant force of the freestyle 92kg class for the past two years, the Iranian has already been ruled out of the upcoming Ranking Series event, starting July 13 in Budapest, making way for young prodigy Amir-Ali Azarpira.

Speaking to Tasnim News Agency, Qassempour said he is receiving the proper treatment and would be back to training sooner than initially feared.

"I'm in good physical and mental conditions right now. This is not the first time I suffer an injury as I have a history of participating in several tournaments even with a torn meniscus or ligament," said Qassempour.

The Iranian missed the Kaba Uulu

ing part in the 72kg contests.

Mohammad Nokhodi and Ali Savadkouhi will also decide who will wear the Iranian 79kg singlet in September.

Nokhodi had to settle for a world silver in the past two years after back-to-back defeats against legendary American Jordan Burroughs, before Savadkouhi claimed a first victory in 15 attempts for the Iranians against the seven-time world and Olympic champion at the FS World Cup last December.

Reza Atri (61kg) – a world silver winner last year – reigning world champion Rahman Amouzad (65kg),

Younes Emami (74kg), eight-time

world and Olympic medalist

Hassan Yazdani (86kg), Mo-

jtaba Goleij (97kg), and

Amirhossein Zare' (125kg)

– a Tokyo Olympic bronze

winner and world champion

in 2021, who took the world

bronze last year – have

already secured their spots

in the Iranian squad for

the World Championships.

Kozhomkul

& Raatbek Sanatbaev

Ranking Series tournament in

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, earlier in June with the same problem.

"I'm sure I can overcome the injury again and will give my all to compete at the World Championships in my best form," added the Iranian, who will be chasing a third successive world gold in Belgrade.

Azarpira, meanwhile, will be joined by six other Iranians in the Hungarian capital, with three national team places at the world event up for grabs. Ahmad Mohammad-Javan and Milad Valizadeh will represent the country in the 57kg category, with Amir-Mohammad Yazdani – a world silver winner in 2021 – and Mohammad Bakhshi tak-



Iran in flying form for U21 World Championship



Iranian under-21 players are seen in a training session in Tehran, Iran, on June 28, 2023. volleyball.ir

Sports Desk

Iran will be looking to build on its impressive form when getting its campaign underway at the FIVB Men's U21 World Championship in Manama on Friday.

Gholam-Reza Momeni Moqaddam's 12-man squad entered the Bahraini capital on Tuesday on the back of fine performances in a couple of friendlies in Bulgaria.

The Asian powerhouse came out on top in four sets against USA before defeating the home side 3-2 (17-25, 25-20, 25-22, 19-25, 15-13) on Monday.

Iran also played Brazil in Sofia but the game, tied at

one set apiece, came to an immature end midway through the third set after a horrible injury for Iranian Yousef Kazemi, who returned to Tehran for treatment on his injured leg.

Having missed out on a place in the quarterfinals in 2021, Iran will be chasing a second world title in Bahrain in four years in after a victory over Italy in a five-set thriller in Riffa sealed a maiden trophy for the country in 2019 under Behrouz Ataei – now in charge of the seniors' team at the Volleyball Nations League.

Erfan Norouzi, Arshia Behnejad, Sajjad Jelodarian, Shayan Sepehrifard, Mobin Nasri, Pendar Momeni Moqaddam, Younes Javan, Amirmohammad Golza-

deh, Ali Haqqarast, Amirhossein Sadati, Pouria Hosseinpour, and Mehdi Bayati will be the Iranian players in Manama, who will open their Pool A campaign against Thailand.

Iran will take on Tunisia before squaring off against the host in the final round of the group fixtures on Sunday.

The top two of each group will progress to the last-eight round. Defending champion Italy and four-time winner Brazil are in Pool B – also featuring Egypt and Mexico – with Poland, Bulgaria, Canada, and India in Pool C.

Argentina, Belgium, the Czech Republic and USA complete the lineup in Pool D.

Wimbledon:

Rublev speaks out as Russian players return after ban



THE GUARDIAN – Russian players are back at Wimbledon after the All England Club stood alone in banning them from competition in 2022, achieved nothing much for its efforts and this year backed down.

On day one of the tournament there was not much enthusiasm on anyone's part to engage with the issue but Andrey Rublev, the men's No 7 seed, did offer his thoughts.

The Russian said: "I think

obviously there was better

options. Not just to ban.

Because in the end, there

was no difference. [Wim-

bledon] did only worse to

themselves."

Rublev beat the Australian

Max Purcell in straight

sets, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4, to pro-

gress to the second round.

Meanwhile, Novak

Djokovic, the second seed

and seven-time champi-

on, was reduced to drying

Centre Court's grass with

his own towel as a mishan-

dled rain delay meant that

he and his opponent, Pe-

dro Cachin, had to wait for

nearly an hour and a half

until the grass was suffi-

ciently dry.

Despite many potential

distractions in his first

match of the grass-court

season, Djokovic began an-

other Wimbledon title run

with a solid performance

as he defeated Cachin 6-3,

6-3, 7-6(4) to reach the sec-

ond round.

"Probably, but in a good

way," Djokovic said when

asked if the match was

the strangest Wimbledon

opener of his career.

"It was definitely frus-

trating of course for all

the crowd waiting for us

to come out on the court.

And us players; we both

wanted to play but the con-

ditions were not great. Still

slippery under the roof.

"Once the roof was open, it

was a different story. After

five, 10 minutes we were

out and about.

"This is the holy grail and

the temple of tennis, so

to say. This court is really

something special. Every

time I come out, I normally

come out with rackets not

towels."

In his post-match press

conference, Djokovic said

he did not have any issues

with the umpire opting to

see out the set before clos-

ing the roof. "I don't think

it has gotten too much wet

from that maybe extra

minute and a half or some-

thing," he said.

"I just feel it has something

to do with something

else. That's probably not a

question for me. We were

lucky that rain stopped so

we could resume play with

an open roof."

Brazilian star Neymar fined \$3.5m for environmental offense

REUTERS – Brazilian authorities said on Monday that soccer star Neymar was fined 16 million reais (\$3.33 million) for breaching environmental rules during the construction of his coastal man-

sion in southeastern Brazil.

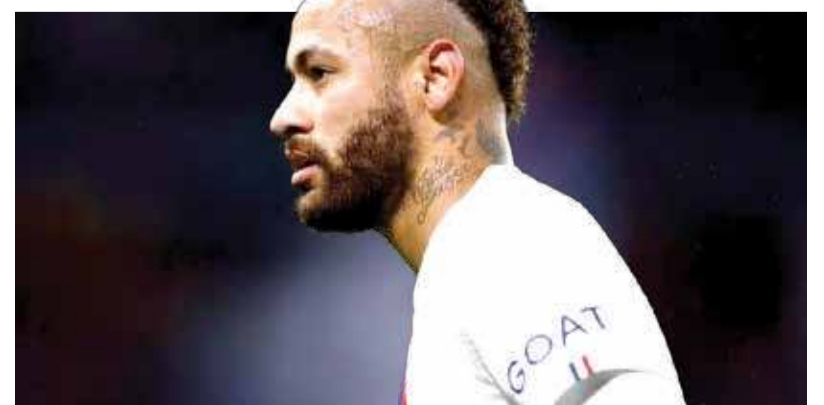
The luxury project violated rules regarding the use and movement of freshwater sources, rock and sand, local authorities first alleged late last month and

confirmed on Monday. A spokesperson for Neymar declined to comment on the matter.

His residence is located in the town of Mangaratiba on the southern coast of Brazil's Rio

de Janeiro state. Mangaratiba's environmental body said in a statement on Monday that environmental infractions were made "in the construction of an artificial lake at the mansion."

Besides the fine, the case will be probed by the local attorney general's office, the state civil police and environmental protection office, among other environmental control bodies.



STEPHANE MAHE/REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Owji to attend
8th OPEC
int'l seminar

SHANA - Iran's oil minister will attend the 8th OPEC International Seminar and deliver a speech at the second ministerial meeting of this event entitled, "Investment, Financial Issues and Strategies of Oil Inclusive Growth". The 8th OPEC International Seminar will be held in the Austrian capital of Vienna on July 5-6, 2023, after a three-year hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Inflation
still rising
in Britain

● GETTY IMAGES

CNBC - The U.K. is the only country among the Group of Seven wealthy nations where inflation is still rising, according to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The Paris-based organization said Tuesday that year-on-year inflation in the G7 fell to 4.6% in May, down from 5.4% in April, reaching its lowest level since Sept. 2021. U.K. consumer prices across all items rose to 7.9% in May when compared to the previous year, the OECD said, up slightly from 7.8% in April.

Egypt starts
\$1.8b gas
exploration
program

REUTERS - Egypt has begun a \$1.8 billion programme to drill natural gas exploration wells in the Mediterranean Sea and Nile Delta, petroleum minister Tarek El Molla told UAE state news agency WAM on Tuesday. The programme is in cooperation with Eni, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Shell and BP. The aim is to drill 35 exploration wells within two years, 21 in the current 2023/2024 financial year and 14 in the next year.

Minister says 13 countries keen on
participation to facilitate traffic in INSTC

➤ The Third Trilateral Meeting of Iran, Russia and India discusses facilitating cargo traffic in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) in Tehran on July 4, 2023.

● IRNA

Economy Desk

Thirteen countries are interested in participation to facilitate cargo traffic in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), announced Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mehرداد Bazrpash in Tehran on Tuesday. Speaking in the Third Trilateral Meeting of Iran, Russia and India, the

minister said by strengthening the existing infrastructure as well as creating new capacities, maximum facilitation will be provided for the private sector and state-run companies, IRNA reported. By removing barriers, 30 million tons of cargo could be transited via the INSTC, Bazrpash added. Meanwhile, managing director of Iran's Ports and

Maritime Organization (PMO) Ali-Akbar Safaei said that the trilateral meeting paves the ground for increasing transit of goods among these countries and other states in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, as well as western and eastern regions of the Caspian Sea. The meeting was aimed at increasing the transit of goods, Safaei stated, adding that several negotia-

tions took place last year to reach serious agreements in this respect. He added that some of the agreements are on the verge of turning into executive contracts. Safaei also announced the conclusion of a contract with Russia for the manufacturing of six ships in the Caspian Sea. As a result of the activities of large private companies active in the field

of transit as well as the existence of various firms that own cargo and ships in the Caspian Sea, Iran can assure foreign partners such as India and Russia, as well as northern and southern states, that goods delivered from Iranian soil will be transported at a lower cost in comparison to traditional sea routes and with shorter transit time, Safaei argued.

Iran's claim to Arash gas field indisputable

EXCLUSIVE

The Kuwaiti authorities' uncooperative stance regarding the shared gas field between Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia has once again brought to the forefront the disagreements between Tehran and Kuwait City. Kuwaiti Oil Minister Saad Al-Barrak made an unusual assertion, rejecting Iran's planned activities around the premises of the Arash offshore gas field.

Barrak said he was surprised by the Iranian plan and added that the move "contradicts the basic principles of international relations".

A close source to Kuwait's Foreign Ministry said that the maritime area where the field lies is part of Kuwait's sea territories, and "the natural resources therein are shared between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia".

The source added that "only" Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have "exclusive rights" to the natural resources of the field.

The Arash gas field, also known as "Al-Durra" by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, was initially discovered by a Japanese oil company back in 1960. This field is shared between Iran and the neutral zone situated between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. According to the previously determined border limits, approximately 40% of the Arash field's oil and gas reserves



● aljarida.com

lie within Iranian waters. However, over the past decade, Kuwait, relying on seismic surveys conducted by Shell, has defined a new border line that places the entire Arash field within its Arab sector. Tehran does not accept this maritime border set by Kuwait. Consequently, the disputes between Iran and Kuwait over their maritime boundaries have hindered the exploitation of this significant field. It is estimated that the shared field holds around 368 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves and approximately 310 million barrels of oil reserves.

In March of last year, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement for the development of this gas field, excluding Iran's participation, which provoked Iran's objections. At the time, Iran's Foreign Ministry emphasized that, in accordance with international regulations and

procedures, any activities related to the exploitation and development of this field should be carried out through coordination and cooperation among all three countries. At a time when the de-escalation process in the region was expected to facilitate the resolution of legal and border disputes through technical negotiations, Kuwait's recent position has further complicated the utilization of vast oil and gas resources.

Disputes not political

Mohammad Irani, who previously served as Iran's ambassador to Kuwait until a few months ago, highlighted in an interview with "Iran Daily" the long-standing and contentious issue of maritime boundary delineation and the division of the Arash gas field between Iran and Kuwait. Irani emphasized that this matter has a history of over a decade and

is not rooted in good neighborly relations or political dynamics.

According to Irani, border disputes are common among many neighboring countries, and the disagreement between Tehran and Kuwait City is primarily a matter of legality and technicalities, rather than a political dispute.

The former envoy further explained that over the past decade, delegations from Iran and Kuwait have engaged in joint meetings on this issue 7 or 8 times. The most recent meeting took place in Tehran about 4 months ago, but unfortunately, it did not yield a mutually satisfactory outcome. "The nature of the dispute between the two countries is so heavily grounded in legal and technical aspects that both Iran and Kuwait sought assistance from international institutions specializing in border delimitation. However, these institutions and companies have yet to reach a resolution for the ongoing dispute," Irani stated.

He emphasized that the gas field in question is a shared resource among all three countries, and until the dispute between Iran and Kuwait is effectively resolved, no party should unilaterally invest in or exploit the field.

The former ambassador noted that the legal and technical differences between the two nations should not be seen within

the context of political relations. "Instead, both sides should strive to reach a satisfactory resolution through continued technical and legal talks in order to benefit from the substantial resources available in this gas field."

New opportunity for joint venture

Nersi Qorban, an energy expert and university professor, expressed his disagreement with the legal and logical position taken by Kuwait in an interview with "Iran Daily." He believes that the historical records of the past few decades clearly indicate that the Arash gas field is situated within the waters between Iran and the neutral zone shared by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Drawing on past experiences and the unilateral actions taken by parties to exploit this gas field, the professor emphasized that these actions were neither favorable nor beneficial for any of the three countries involved. According to Qorban, engaging in unilateral actions and attempting to exclude one party from the gas field only serves to escalate tensions.

He noted that the recent shift in the regional political landscape, particularly the normalization of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, has created a favorable opportunity for countries in the region, including Iran and Kuwait,

to resolve their differences through technical dialogue and avoid further delays in developing the shared field. Qorban argued that due to Saudi Arabia's demand for gas resources and the significant distance between the gas field and Iran's land borders, which poses challenges in terms of building infrastructure for resource transportation and attracting investors due to sanctions on Tehran, the best approach would be a joint venture among the three countries for the exploitation and development of the field.

According to the expert, Iran can contribute the necessary capital for joint operations by selling gas directly to Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the professor suggested that Iran and Kuwait could seek the assistance of reputable international companies and institutions to determine their maritime boundaries and resolve the dispute.

In light of several decades of history concerning the Arash or Al-Durra gas field, it is evident that the field has been shared between Iran and Kuwait since its discovery in 1960. Unilateral actions have only fueled misunderstandings, disputes, and obstacles to its exploitation. The notion that Iran, due to disputes with Western countries and sanctions, is relinquishing its interests in this gas field and forfeiting its rights is a fallacious idea.

Iran to have comprehensive national atlas of population dynamics

Social Desk

The CEO of the 15 Khordad Foundation, Hamidreza Alianzadegan, announced the preparation of a comprehensive national atlas of population dynamics, aimed at facilitating the effective management of Iran's population plans.

Alianzadegan emphasized the necessity of such an atlas for macro and interdisciplinary tasks in the field of population, and to mitigate the challenges posed by Iran's aging society, Mehr News Agency reported.

"The atlas will be incorporating practical indicators for population management," he said.

The 15 Khordad Foundation, in collaboration with the National Cartography Center of Iran and other national organizations, will undertake the task of preparing the atlas. The atlas is expected to play a significant role in understanding the size and growth of the population, demographic composition and changes, age structure, marriage and divorce rates, and workforce and employ-

ment trends.

Alianzadegan also announced the activation the Secretariat of the National Population Award, with the 15 Khordad Foundation selected as the primary base of the country's Population Status Chamber, as approved by the Central Council of the National Population Award.

In response to the vice president's emphasis on women and family during the unveiling of the new version of the country's population atlas, Alianzadegan stressed the need for the comprehensive national atlas of population dynamics to be prepared promptly and made available to organizations responsible for the country's youth population.

According to the CEO of the foundation, teams will be formed to prepare, evaluate, and process information, converting indicators into graphic content for use in the comprehensive national population dynamic atlas.

Also, Alianzadegan underscored the importance of the youth population, describing it as a national



MEHR

wealth and a cornerstone of the country's economic and social growth.

He further expressed gratitude to the CEO and members of the Council of Deputies of the National Cartography Center of Iran for their efforts in defining the demographic tasks in the organization. He emphasized that the comprehensive national atlas of

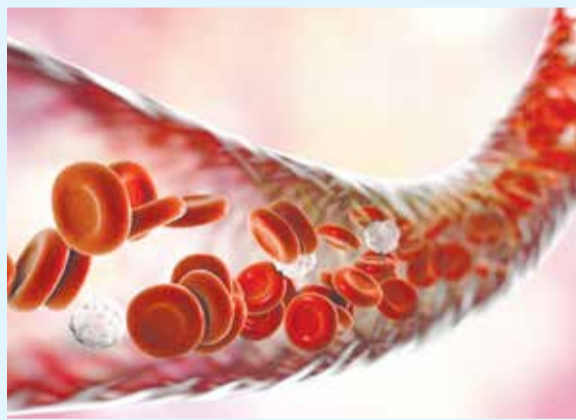
population dynamics will include gender statistics as supplements to the country's statistics.

Ali Javidaneh, the head of the National Cartography Center, stressed the urgency of implementing the results of the synergy joint working group with the 15 Khordad Foundation in compiling the comprehensive national atlas of popu-

lation dynamics. He noted the declining fertility rate in the country and projected that Iran's population growth rate will reach one percent in the next decade, a figure he described as concerning.

Javidaneh emphasized that the atlas could serve as an invaluable tool for policy and planning in the field of population.

First come first served at Iran's national cord blood bank



IRNA

Social Desk

The Blood Transfusion Organization (BTO) of Iran, home to the nation's only free umbilical cord blood bank, is working in collaboration with six hospitals in Tehran to collect and store cord blood, a valuable source of stem cells, according to Nasim Ezzati, head of the Cord Blood Bank and Stem Cells Group of the BTO.

Ezzati underscored the

importance of the cord blood bank, which provides reserves to patients across the country at no cost, IRNA reported.

The hospitals involved in this initiative include Najmiyeh, Baqiyatallah, Milad, Parsa, Sarem, and Mostafa Khomeini.

"Instead of discarding this invaluable resource, expectant mothers can donate it to the National Cord Blood Bank," Ezzati said.

"This donation can

then be used to treat children and adults suffering from malignancies and diseases that can only be cured with stem cells, particularly those derived from umbilical cord blood."

However, Ezzati noted that the donation is contingent upon giving birth in one of the six cooperating hospitals. This is due to the specialized conditions under which cord blood must be collected to ensure its quality is preserved.

The BTO's cord blood bank stores these donations for public use, with

neither the donor nor the recipient incurring any costs. Ezzati emphasized the distinction between the BTO's cord blood bank and private banks.

"In the BTO's cord blood bank, the first eligible patient can use the donated cells," Ezzati explained. "In contrast, in private banks, only the donor and their family can use the stored stem cells."

This initiative underscores the BTO's commitment to providing life-saving treatments to patients across Iran, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Amazing results of one man's mission to reforest a barren Irish hillside

Social Desk

Eoghan Daltun, an Irish pioneer in the rewilding movement, has been working tirelessly the native forests of Ireland, which once covered 80 percent of the country but now for 1 percent.

Standing on a slope in the Beara peninsula in west Cork, Daltun pointed out the environmental degradation that has occurred in the area. The verdant fields, craggy hills, and conifer trees, while picturesque, represent a barren landscape, biologically empty due to the sheep devouring wildflowers and seedlings, and the monoculture plantation of conifers devastating biodiversity.

Over the past 14 years,

Daltun has transformed 30 acres of rugged hillside into a showcase of biodiversity and climate action. He has fenced off the land to keep out non-native animals, eradicated invasive alien plants, and allowed nature to take its course. The result has been a flourishing of wildflowers and tree seedlings, and the establishment of a forest canopy that supports a variety of insects and native mammals.

Daltun's efforts are part of a global initiative to rewild gardens, estates, and countryside to halt catastrophic biodiversity losses. Despite Ireland's pastoral reputation, it is one of the EU's worst carbon emission offenders and has struggled to protect ancient bogs and

contain invasive species. While the country has increased its forest cover to 11 percent, most of it is made up of monoculture plantations, which are considered dead zones.

Rewilding initiatives are gaining traction in Ireland. Trinity College Dublin replaced manicured lawns with native Irish wildflowers, and Randal Plunkett, an estate owner in County Me, replaced livestock and crops with wilderness. The Health Service Executive is also considering rewilding the of its headquarters.

Daltun, who sold his home in Dublin in 2009 to buy a patch of the Beara peninsula, has been a vocal advocate for rewilding. He believes that protecting the remaining natural habitats

is crucial, and his efforts have been well-received by the public. His book, 'An Irish Atlantic Rainforest: a Personal Journey into the Magic of Rewilding', has won international acclaim and has helped to raise awareness about the importance of rewilding.

However, Daltun acknowledges that significant action will require subsidies, community consultation, and popular support. He

emphasizes that ecological and social justice must go hand in hand, and that rewilding should not be seen as a hobby for the wealthy, but as a necessary step towards preserving biodiversity and combating climate change.

** This piece is an edited version of a longer piece published originally by The Guardian on July 4, 2023.*

The Guardian



On the occasion of Iran's National Pen Day:

Written word still holds its immense power



By Ali Amiri
Staff writer

OPINION

Today, our country Iran celebrates its National Pen Day, a day which could serve to remind us of the power of the written word and its profound impact on individuals and society alike.

This day is not a celebration of the pen as a physical tool, but a recognition of the transformative power of writing in shaping individual minds, influencing individual and collective opinions, and driving societal change. Since the dawn of recorded history, writing has been a fundamental pillar of human societies. It is the primary basis upon which information is recorded and knowledge is communicated.

It is through writing that we express our thoughts and emotions. It is through writing that we record history, and share stories. It is through writing that we educate, inform, and inspire. We Iranians are heir to a rich literary tradition with its deep respect for the written word. Our country is home to some of the world's most celebrated poets and authors, whose works have not only shaped our enduring culture, but have also contributed significantly to the world literature.

Moreover, today we should take some time and reflect on the power of writing to effect change. The pen, as the saying goes, is mightier than the sword.

Through the written word, we can challenge injustices, question, and advocate for change. Writing is a powerful tool for any kind of activism. It is a means through which we can voice our opinions, express our hopes and fears, and call for action. In addition to all its societal benefits, writing could be a potent tool for personal growth and self-expression. It allows us to reflect on our own lives, explore our thoughts and feelings, and articulate our dreams and aspirations. Pen, in that sense, is a vehicle for the journey of self-discovery and self-understanding.

In our extremely digital age, it is hard to overstate the importance of writing. While technology has transformed the way we communicate, the essence of writing remains the same. Whether it's a handwritten letter, a blog post, or a tweet, writing continues to be a powerful medium of expression and communication. Iran's National Pen Day is a celebration of this power. It is a day to appreciate the importance of writing in our lives and in our society. It is a day to honor the writers who have used their pens to enlighten, inspire, and better us. It is a day to encourage everyone, especially the younger generation, to embrace the power of the written word.

Four Iranian films at Shanghai Int'l Short Week



ILNA – Four works from the Soreh Cinema Organization were showcased during the Shanghai International Short Week (SHISW).

The films included 'After Midnight,' directed by Mohammad Baqeri and produced by Mohammad Hadi Aqajani, 'Before Heaven,' directed by Ahmad Heydarian and produced by Mohaddeseh Pirhadi, 'Needle,' directed by Yousef Ja'fari and produced by Hossein Darabi, and the short animation 'Let's Make Peace,' directed by Abdullah Alimorad.

The festival returned with its highly anticipated 25th edition after being cancelled in 2022 due to the pandemic. Some 450 titles from around the world screened in over 40 cinemas across the city.

For more than a week every June, the SIFF, China's largest film festival by number of films screened, brings the city a taste of both international cinemas rarely shown in domestic theaters, and high-profile Chinese films before their world premiere.

● License Holder: Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)
 ● Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 88913453
 ● Editorial Dept. Fax: +98 21 88930684
 ● ICPI Publisher: +98 21 88548892, 5
 ● Advertising Dept. Tel & Email: +98 21 88500617 - irandaily@iranagahiha.com
 ● Website: www.irandaily.ir
 newspaper.irandaily.ir
 irandaily@icpi.ir
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 ● Printing House: Iran Cultural & Press Institute

Address: #22, Hosseini-Rad Alley, South of Shahid Mottahari St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran, Iran



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Iran Daily

62607571900044 > irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir

Vol. 7331 ● Wednesday, July 5, 2023 ● Price 40,000 Rials ● 8 Pages

Iran Culture Week opens new horizon on Tehran-Moscow ties: *Minister*

Arts & Culture Desk

In an effort to enhance cultural relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation, Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, arrived in Moscow on Tuesday to participate in the events of Iran Culture Week.

The visit comes after a year of negotiations between the officials of the Ministry and their Russian counterparts, paving the way for new cultural interactions between the two countries. The event began on July 4 and will conclude on July 9, according to IRNA.

Speaking at the opening of his visit at Vnukovo International Airport, Esmaeili stated, "This trip was planned upon the invitation of the Russian Minister of Culture to attend Iran Culture Week in this country."

He further emphasized the longstanding history of good neighborliness and shared cultural heritage between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation, expressing the need for increased cultural cooperation.

Referring to the meetings between Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi and Russian President Vladimir Putin in previous years, Esmaeili highlighted the emphasis

placed on the development of cultural relations.

He expressed hope that his visit, along with the organization of Iran Culture Week in Russia, would initiate a fresh era of robust cultural collaboration in various fields.

Esmaeili mentioned the past visits of Iranian cultural deputies, media representatives, and the head of the Cinema Organization of Iran to Moscow.

He described the current readiness of both countries to establish a strong interactive environment as a result of extensive bilateral negotiations.

"With the planned agenda and the topics to be dis-



cusSED in negotiations with the Russian side during this trip, we hope to witness positive agreements and a significant advancement in cultural interactions between the two countries," said the Iranian minister.

On Wednesday, the Iranian minister will hold an official meeting with his Russian counterpart and participate in a joint press conference. Other activities during his visit include meetings with the cultural adviser to President Vladimir Putin,

prominent Iranologists and Islamic scholars in Russia, the president of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and delivering a speech at the Scientific Councils of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

During his stay, Esmaeili will meet with the governor of St. Petersburg and visit the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which houses a rich collection of Iranian manuscripts and artworks registered with UNESCO.

The official program of the minister's visit will conclude with his attendance at an Iranian classical music concert at the Capella Concert Hall in St. Petersburg.

Iran Culture Week in Russia encompasses five sections, including exhibitions of traditional Iranian arts, Persian carpets, a joint performance by Iran's National Orchestra and the Russian National Youth Symphony Orchestra, and film screenings and animations.

Inscription with the word 'Allah' discovered in Fars Province

Arts & Culture Desk

A rare inscription believed to have been written during the early Islamic period with the word "Allah" (God) was discovered on the rocks of Fars Province.

According to the ILNA, stone inscriptions, including credible and firsthand documents, contribute to the reconstruction of the history and archaeology of a region, portraying the political and social conditions of an area within a specific time frame. Moreover, these inscriptions present the perspectives and ideologies of the ruling

structure and religious circumstances of a society in a specific temporal dimension.

Abolhassan Atabaki, a scholar in ancient languages and a history Ph.D., said that this stone inscription is believed to be one of the oldest inscriptions bearing the name "Allah" engraved on rocks in Fars Province. According to the researcher, with the decline of the Sassanid Empire and the expansion of the Islamic domain, the Kufic script, rooted in Aramaic lines (derived from Syriac script), replaced the Pahlavi script. Initially, this script lacked

diacritical marks and punctuation. However, during the first Islamic century, it underwent an evolutionary process and was still used in a calligraphic and decorative form until the fifth Islamic century. Yet, in the third century of the Hijri calendar, when Abu Ali Muhammad Shirazi established the naskh script by modifying the Nabatean script, the Kufic script declined, and the naskh script took its place.

Najmeh Ebrahimi, with an M.A. in history, said that it is believed that the writing of this stone inscription took shape on rocks from



the third Islamic century onwards. Since this rock is adjacent to a castle with a spring and water reservoir, and its inhabitants enjoyed a secure environment, the

time period of this inscription should be designated when Muslim Arabs expanded their comprehensive dominance over the Fars region.

She said that despite the fact that portions of the Roman Empire, North Africa, and all regions of Iran were opened by Muslim Arabs, Iranians were the only ethnic group who preserved their language and culture and engaged in the reconstruction of Iranian identity and culture during the earliest Islamic centuries through movements such as the "Shu'ubiyya" and the establishment of local governments such as the Samanids and the Safarids.

She added, since the Arabs of that time lacked a history of statehood and bu-

reaucratic administration, they were able to continue the Sassanid administrative system by relying on Iranian intellectuals.

Nevertheless, these documents encompass a portion of the history of the land of Iran and reflect the historical events and incidents that our ancestors once faced. Due to the relatively low height at which this inscription is positioned, and its easy accessibility, a part of it has been subjected to destruction in subsequent periods, as evidenced by an extension attached to the word "Allah".

Challenges, potentials of Iranian books in global market



By Hamideh Hosseini
Staff writer

The Iranian literary scene is home to a rich array of works, each with its own unique qualities. However, the global book market presents numerous challenges for Iranian authors and publishers, resulting in a limited presence of Iranian books on platforms like Amazon and Google Books. The global book market is highly competitive, requiring authors to create innovative and engaging literary works to achieve international

success. Extensive research, mastery of writing techniques, and linguistic knowledge are essential in crafting compelling narratives. While platforms like Ama-



zon and Google Books have made books easily accessible to readers worldwide, Persian books remain underrepresented. This limited availability reduces

exposure and recognition for Iranian works among global readers. The hurdles posed by sanctions and restrictions on financial transactions contribute to this scarcity. As a result, many talented Iranian authors and publishers struggle to reach a wider audience and promote their works on these popular platforms. Moreover, the lack of effective advertising and marketing tools further hinders the recognition of modern Iranian literary works worldwide.

Persian books with cultural and historical content hold

great potential for translation into other languages. These works, which often surpass their global counterparts in quality, capture the rich heritage and significance of Iran. They resonate with readers worldwide, allowing them to appreciate Iran's history and culture. It is crucial to prevent inaccurate portrayals of Iran by non-Iranians and take charge of representing the country's culture. By translating and promoting such works, Iran's distinctive features can be showcased, contributing to a more accurate global understanding of

the country. While some argue for a focus on universal themes in literature, disregarding a country's distinctive features, I believe that every nation possesses unique aspects worth showcasing. Iran, with its rich cultural tapestry, should not be exempt from this perspective. Works that address universal themes like love, family, and friendship can certainly resonate across cultures, but it is equally important to highlight the specificities of Iranian culture. By encouraging the translation of works that encapsulate

both universal and Iranian characteristics, we can promote Iranian culture worldwide.

Despite the challenges faced by Iranian authors and publishers, the potential for translating Iranian books into other languages remains significant. By addressing the hurdles posed by sanctions and limitations, promoting cultural and historical works, and preserving Iran's distinctive features, we can overcome barriers and ensure that Iranian literature finds its rightful place in the global literary landscape.