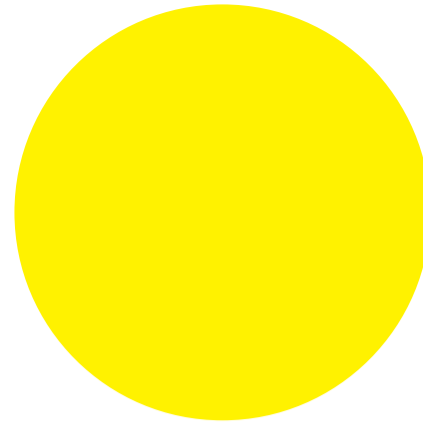




Envoy: Uganda's independent policy fosters cooperation



Srebrenica victims commemorated in Tehran: 'Immortal March'



Iran Daily

UN: Qur'an-burnings aimed at dividing communities

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Africa; land of opportunities, fortune



By Hossein Amir-Abdollahian
Iran's foreign minister

OPINION

Africa is the world's largest continent after Asia and enjoys a special global political and economic significance in various aspects. Rich agricultural resources in the central and western parts of Africa, huge petroleum and mineral resources in northern and eastern Africa, and industrial attractions of the countries in the south of the continent have turned it into one of the world's most lucrative economic zones and attractive tourism

poles. Economic opportunities in various sectors such as public services, ports, mines, oil and gas, agriculture, and tourism have grabbed the attention and investment of leading industrial countries in Africa in recent years. On such a basis, the high economic capacities and commercial potentialities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and African nations provide an important ground for both sides to develop interests and profit from the existing capacities.

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Qalibaf: Asia becoming world's powerhouse, West's biggest concern

International Desk

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf said Tuesday the greatest challenge facing the West is the return of Asia as the center of the world's economic and political power.

To manage this historical turn, Asian countries should institutionalize multilateral cooperation in the framework of regional integration, said Qalibaf. He made the remarks at the opening ceremony of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly's (APA) Budget and Planning Committee in Tehran.

Iran's top parliamentarian said that the current change in the international system can pave the way for renewing the structure of international institutions such as the United Nations.

Today, the ancient continent of Asia is at the center of geopolitical developments in the world, which enjoys a pivotal position on the international stage, Iran's parliament speaker said.

The APA was established in 2006 at the seventh session of the Association of Asian Parliamentary for Peace (AAPP). It has 42 members and 16 observers. The assembly has been created as a forum to exchange views, ideas, and experiences for developing common strategies and promoting peace in Asia and the world.

Top commander warns Iraq over anti-Iran groups

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri cautioned the Iraqi government that its failure to meet a deadline of September for action against hostile armed groups in its northern regions will result in a fresh round of Iranian military strikes against them.

Addressing an annual conference of the commanders of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in the northeastern city of Mashhad on Tuesday, Baqeri warned the fact that a



number of neighboring states have failed to honor their commitments to border security, Tasnim news agency reported. "Armed secessionist groups exist in northern Iraq which cause insecurity at our borders," the top commander said.

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A Palestinian protester stands with a copy of Qur'an, Islam's holy book, during a demonstration outside the Swedish consulate headquarters in the East Al-Quds neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah on July 3, 2023.

HAZEM BADER/AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tehran, Cairo
progressing
toward détente

International Desk

An Egyptian diplomat revealed that, recently, a round of talks took place between Egypt and Iran, during which the two sides agreed to hold a series of exploratory meetings regarding issues that concern their decision-makers. The diplomat, who spoke to Al-Araby Al-Jadeed on condition of anonymity, explained that a joint committee has been formed to restore relations, stating that Egypt is "moving ahead with caution, given Iran's international ties and regional role". The same diplomat pointed out that the Egyptian and Iranian sides "definitely made, during various talks that took place under Iraqi and Omani mediation, great strides toward bringing their views closer together".

Persian
Gulf trio
islands Iran's
'forever'

Abu Musa island
● ISNA

TASNIM - The spokesperson for the Iranian Foreign Ministry refuted the contents of a joint statement from the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and Russia about Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb, describing the islands as an eternal part of Iran's territory. In their statement on Monday, the ministers said the issue should be settled through bilateral negotiations or the International Court of Justice, in accordance with the rules of international law and the United Nations Charter.

US intel:
Iran not
developing
nukes

AP - A US intelligence assessment says Iran is not pursuing nuclear weapons at the moment but has ramped up nuclear activities. The assessment from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released Monday corresponds with previous US assessments about Iran's nuclear program, although many in Congress and elsewhere have been skeptical of those.

Envoy: Uganda's independent policy fosters cooperation



The Iranian Ambassador to Kampala Majid Saffar (r.) and Uganda's former state minister for Foreign Affairs Henry Oryem Okello cut a cake together to mark the 44th anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution in Kampala, Uganda, on February 11, 2023.
● icro.ir

International Desk

Iranian ambassador in Uganda recognized the independent policy of the African country — which has assumed the chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

this year — as a favorable framework that fosters collaboration between the two countries. On the eve of the Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi's visit to three East African countries including Uganda, Majid Saffar shed light on Uganda's political

and trade standing as well as the potential areas of cooperation between the two states.

In an interview with ISNA, Saffar emphasized that despite pressures from certain Western countries, Uganda has maintained an independent stance in international and regional arenas and strived to advance its own policies in the face of external interference. He viewed this as a promising opportunity to foster robust collaboration between Iran and Uganda during the latter's tenure as the head of the NAM.

The Iranian ambassador in Uganda revealed that several memorandums of understanding and joint cooperation documents will be signed during President Raeisi's upcoming visit to Uganda, further strengthening the partnership between the two na-

tions.

Regarding economic prospects, Saffar underscored Uganda's abundant natural resources, mines, and underground reserves. He further highlighted Uganda's favorable climatic conditions, which have enabled the country to develop a thriving agricultural sector and enticed Iran to seek to expand agricultural cooperation.

The ambassador noted that trade volume between Iran and Uganda remains relatively low, amounting to \$2.2 million in 2021, according to official statistics. Iran mostly imports tea, coffee, and sometimes tropical fruits and exports manufactured goods, industrial equipment, and petrochemical and petroleum products. The Iranian diplomat also emphasized the two countries' potential for exchanging tourists.

Uganda's remarkable natural resources, wildlife, vast lakes, the riverside of the Nile, and other captivating attractions provide an ideal foundation for Iranian tourists to explore the East African nation. Likewise, Iran's seemingly unending beauty offers a plethora of options for Ugandan tourists who wish to visit. To facilitate such exchanges, he added, mutual promotion and awareness are essential. However, Saffar acknowledged two significant obstacles to expanding bilateral cooperation: Uganda's lack of access to international waters and limited public familiarity between the citizens of both countries. He expressed hope that through government planning and the shared commitment of officials, existing barriers can be mitigated.

Africa; land of opportunities ...

After the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the limited "Africa approach" of the former monarchical regime, which had established relations with only a few African countries in line with the interests of the Western camp, was totally transformed. In that period, the Islamic Republic of Iran devoted special attention to establishing relations with other African nations thanks to its freedom-seeking and anti-imperialistic nature. Moreover, ancient cultural and historical relations between Iran and Africa and religious commonalities between our peoples, especially with the eastern and southern parts of Africa, provided a solid foundation for the improvement of political, economic, and trade relations with the continent. As a result of such transformation, the Islamic Republic of Iran extensively boosted its

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relations with most African countries in various political, economic, and cultural fields.

It should be noted that even though this continent is historically facing numerous problems such as poverty and deprivation as the result of the rivalry between the East and the West, Africa enjoys untapped potential and unparalleled opportunities in political, economic, and cultural sectors. Such potential is so enormous that Africa is described in the global political literature as the "land of opportunities" due to its high economic potential and immense natural and talented human resources.

Aware of such significance, the incumbent government of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the development and deepening of all-out relations with African countries as an important foreign policy priority. In view of such a policy, the Ministry of For-

ign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran has seriously and strongly placed on its agenda the further enhancement of relations in various economic, trade, political, and international areas with Africa in line with mutual interests. The Iranian government is therefore trying to concentrate on joint economic capacities existing between Iran and Africa and utilize them to further cement trade links in addition to political ties. In this respect, in 2022 alone, four joint economic commissions were held with African countries, 83 political, trade, and cultural delegations were exchanged, and close to 50 memoranda of cooperation and agreements were signed by the two sides.

His Excellency President Raeisi is embarking on his Africa tour upon the official invitation of his counterparts in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The purpose of this visit is to strengthen

bonds with friends and aligned countries, diversify Iran's export destinations, and create more grounds for political and commercial cooperation.

President Raeisi's Africa tour marks the first visit by an Iranian president in 11 years. This visit naturally aims to establish closer interaction with African countries and make various aspects of mutual relations more operational. If this occurs successfully — which I am sure it will — Iran's contribution to and participation in Africa's growing economy will expand exponentially. The transfer of Iran's indigenous technology and science to Africa constitutes one of the priorities of cooperation during President Raeisi's tour.

In general, the present strategy of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards Africa is based on deepening economic relations on the basis of South-South cooperation. Fortunately, last year, multiple increase was

registered in Iran's commercial transactions with Africa as the result of the successful economic diplomacy of the incumbent Iranian government.

At the present time, the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy is geared towards stronger interaction with Africa, and we are therefore trying to expand balanced and inclusive relations with African countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always proved that it has been a reliable partner and will remain such for African nations. In order to continue and strengthen this approach, we have founded our foreign policy strategy on long-term cooperation with Africa and stretched our hands of fraternity and cooperation to all African nations. It is hoped that in light of President Raeisi's Africa tour, grounds are paved for further enjoyment and expansion of cooperation between Iran and Africa, especially in trade and economy. President Raeisi's next African destination in the near future will be South Africa.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Tehran hints at goodwill to resolve gas field row

International Desk

Iran says it always observes the principles of good neighborliness and mutual interests in exploiting shared hydrocarbon reservoirs, as the controversy surrounding the Arash joint oil and gas field with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait erupted anew. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani on Tuesday reacted to the latest claims by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait over their "exclusive rights" to Arash strategic maritime gas field, known as Al-Dor-

ra in the two Arab countries, in the resource-rich Persian Gulf, Press TV reported.

In response to such claims, Kanaani said senior directors of the Iranian and Kuwaiti foreign ministries held their latest round of "legal and technical" negotiations in Tehran on March 13 about the demarcation of the disputed area. Zhang Jianwei, the Chinese ambassador to Kuwait, also commented on the dispute, urging all sides to engage in negotiations and friendly consultations, ac-



Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani
● IRNA

ording to ISNA. The ambassador stressed that China has not yet been asked to mediate talks in this regard and reiterated Beijing's respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region.

UN: Qur'an-burnings aimed at dividing communities

The United Nations said hate speech was on the rise everywhere, as the UN Human Rights Council held an urgent debate Tuesday to address recent desecration of Muslims' holy book, Qur'an, in Sweden.

These appear tailor-made to inflame anger and divide communities, the UN human rights chief Volker Turk said as he opened the debate at the UN's top rights body in Geneva, AFP reported.

A copy of Qur'an was burnt outside the Swedish capital's main mosque on June 28, triggering a diplomatic backlash across the Muslim world.

Pakistan and other nations called for a discussion of "the alarming rise in premeditated and public acts of religious hatred as manifested by recurrent desecration of the Holy Qur'an in some European and other countries."

Turk said recent Qur'an-burning incidents "appear to have been manufactured to express contempt and inflame anger; to drive wedges between people; and to provoke, transforming differences of perspective into hatred and, perhaps, violence".

He said that irrespective of the law or personal belief, "people need to act with respect for others".

He said hate speech needed to be combated through dialogue, education, raising awareness and inter-faith engagement.

"Powered by the tidal forces of social media, and in a context of increasing international and national discord and polarisation, hate speech of every kind is rising, everywhere," Turk said.

"It is harmful to individuals, and it damages the social cohesion necessary to the sound functioning of all societies." Salwan Momika, 37, who fled from Iraq to Sweden several years ago, stomped on the Muslim holy book and set several pages alight in Stockholm. The Swedish government condemned the Qur'an burning as "Islamophobic", but added that Sweden had a "constitutionally-protected right to freedom of assembly, expression and demonstration".



↑ Iraqis lift copies of Qur'an during a rally in Basra on July 2, 2023, amid protests against a desecration of the Muslims' holy book outside a Stockholm mosque that outraged Muslims around the world.
● HUSSEIN FALEH/AFP

Turkey gives green light to Swedish NATO membership bid

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday agreed to forward to parliament Sweden's bid to join the NATO military alliance, appearing to end months of drama over an issue that had strained the bloc as war has raged in Ukraine.

Sweden and Finland applied for NATO membership last year, abandoning their policies of military non-alignment that had lasted through the decades of the Cold War in response to Russia's military operation in Ukraine, Reuters reported.

While Finland's NATO membership was green-lighted in April, Turkey and Hungary have yet to clear Sweden's bid. Stockholm has been working to join the bloc at the alliance's summit in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, which begins on Tuesday.

"I'm glad to announce ... that President Erdogan has agreed to forward the accession protocol for Sweden to the grand national assembly as soon as possible, and work closely with the assembly to ensure ratification," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told a news conference, describing it as a "historic" step. He had convened Erdogan and Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson for several hours of talks on the eve of the summit as he sought to finally break the deadlock.

Erdogan has held out for months, saying Sweden's accession hinged on the implementation of a deal reached last year during the alliance's summit in Madrid and that no one should expect compromises from Ankara.

Turkey has accused Sweden of not doing enough against people Turkey sees as terrorists, mainly members of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) that is considered a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the EU and the United States.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov reacted to the Turkey's decision, saying that Turkey should be under no illusion that it might one day be allowed to join the European Union.



↑ NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg (top-C), Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson (R) react during a meeting, on the eve of a NATO summit, in Vilnius, Lithuania, on July 10, 2023.
● YVES HERMAN/POOL/AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Protests erupt after Israel reform clause voted through



AFP - Protests erupted across Israel Tuesday, hours after parliament adopted in a first reading a key clause of the cabinet's judicial overhaul package. The cabinet of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu forged ahead with the controversial move despite mass demonstrations since the reforms were proposed in January.

Baku accuses Red Cross of smuggling, shuts road to Karabakh

AL JAZEERA - Azerbaijan has temporarily shut the only road linking its breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region with Armenia, accusing the Armenian branch of the Red Cross of smuggling.

The Armenian-populated region has been at the centre of a decades-long territorial dispute between the Caucasus arch-foes, which have fought several wars over the mountainous territory.

"The passage through Lachin checkpoint of the state border is temporarily suspended" pending an investigation into the Red Cross using its medical vehicles for "smuggling", Azerbaijan's state border service said on Tuesday.

Top commander warns ...

Lauding the IRGC's Ground Force for "effective missile and drone attacks" against the terrorist groups in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, with the purpose of protecting Iran's security, Major General Baqeri said the strikes have been suspended after the Baghdad government undertook to disarm those groups and stop their activities.

The general then noted that Iran will wait until September and hopes that the government of Iraq would honor its commitments, adding, "If the deadline passes and they [terrorists] remain armed or carry out any operation, our operations against those groups will definitely recur more severely."

Iran launched several rounds of military strikes on the positions of separatist groups in Iraq's Kurdistan Region in 2022.

NATO summit unlikely to ease tensions in Ukraine

By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff Writer

INTERVIEW

The NATO leaders' summit is currently underway in Lithuania, taking place on Tuesday and Wednesday. Prior to his arrival in Lithuania, US President Joe Biden engaged in discussions with the Prime Minister and the King of the host country, in Britain. Ukraine, amidst its ongoing war with Russia, holds aspirations of greater NATO assistance. However, Biden made it clear that Kiev's accession to NATO is presently unattainable. To shed light on the significance of this meeting and its implications for the war, we sought the insights of Amir-Ali Abolfath, an expert in American affairs.

Iran Daily: Biden is currently in Lithuania to participate in the NATO meeting. During his visit to Britain, he stated that Ukraine's inclusion in NATO is not a viable option until the ongoing war comes to

an end. Conversely, the Ukrainian government is seeking greater support from Western nations. Do you observe any indications of a potential resolution to the conflict and the establishment of peace?

Abolfath: Presently, the prevailing indicators do not suggest a path toward peace. The war has acquired symbolic significance for both Russia and the United States as the leader of the Western world, and neither party wishes to emerge as the loser in this conflict. Moscow perceives that refraining from battling in the Donbass region would necessitate a confrontation with Western powers on Russian soil. Therefore, it has paid substantial financial, military, and reputational costs. Likewise, America believes that if Moscow emerges victorious, the international order established by the United States after World War II would collapse. Consequently, tensions have escalated significantly. It appears that we are likely to witness a protracted

war of attrition in Ukraine. Some even speculate that the outcome of the Korean War will be echoed here. Several decades have passed since North Korea and South Korea reached a truce, yet they have not achieved a lasting peace. In Ukraine, we may anticipate a similar scenario — a temporary cease-fire rather than a comprehensive resolution — in the immediate future.

Recently, the United States dispatched weapon shipments, including cluster bombs, to Ukraine — a move that has garnered significant criticism. This measure is bound to provoke a response from Russia and is expected to bring more death and destruction. Is there a possibility that the fears of everyone regarding a nuclear war might occur?

If Ukraine's counteroffensive against Russia fails and the Western aid does not tip the balance of power in favor of Kiev, we can anticipate a surge in weapon supplies from Western nations to

Ukraine. Consequently, we will witness the utilization of even more destructive weaponry in the ongoing conflict, as both sides continue to use more destructive weapons.

However, the question of whether we are on the brink of a nuclear war remains. While the likelihood of a full-fledged nuclear conflict is remote, it is not solely limited to the scenario where one side of a conflict intentionally deploys an atomic bomb and provokes a retaliatory response from the opposing side.

Ukraine, in particular, possesses nuclear power plants. In the early stages of the war, a missile struck just 400 meters away from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. At that time, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed that if the missile had landed a mere 400 meters closer, Ukraine's history would have come to an end.

Hence, there exists a legitimate concern that the war could inadvertently reach these nuclear facilities, potentially leading to an event of far greater destructive



magnitude than the notorious Chernobyl disaster.

Based on this context, what impact will the NATO meeting have on the conflict in Ukraine?

As highlighted by Biden during his visit to Britain, the realization of Ukraine's NATO membership appears unlikely in the near future. Nonetheless, NATO remains committed to providing diverse forms of assistance to Ukraine and may even escalate both the quantity and quality of this support. The United States' allies within NATO have little choice but to comply with such efforts. In response to the criticism surrounding the US shipment of cluster bombs to Ukraine, a senior German

official stated that the decision has been made and others should not oppose. This statement implies that the United States, as the leading force, has made a decision, and the other member nations are expected to follow suit. Europe finds itself aligning with America in the overarching Moscow-Washington conflict, which has propelled NATO into a role where it cannot unravel the complex knots of the ongoing war through its meeting.

While NATO continues to provide aid, there is an acknowledgment that Ukraine's counteroffensive against Russia, which has persisted for over 70 days, has yet to achieve significant success.

Secrets of the Zoroastrian Tower of Silence



eailya.com



eailya.com

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

EXCLUSIVE

A mountain called Kooh-e Dakhmeh, or Tower of Silence, is located 5km southeast of Yazd, the capital city of the central province of Yazd. The word 'dakhmeh' literally means cave, or sometimes, a dark and/or damp place. Two dakhmehs are located on the highland, in which the ancient residents of the region placed their dead. They believed that earth, water, and fire are sacred elements, which

should not be polluted with corpses, thus they transferred their dead outside of their cities.

They left the corpses for vultures and other birds to feed on them and, after some time, they collected and dumped the bones in an ossuary.

Fariborz Shahdadi, head of the Yazd Zoroastrian priests (*mobeds*) believes that such a custom was followed by the early Aryan settlers of the region; it has no connection with the basic religious rituals of Zoroastrians.

People who lived in Iran Vij, an early Aryan settlement located in the north-

ern, cold region of the country, used this method, but it was not common in most other parts of the country.

After the reign of the Sassanid king, Khosrow Parviz, various religions entered Iran, and their followers gradually called themselves Zoroastrians. They took advantage of the weakness of the Zoroastrian clergy to promote some ideas; for example, in some areas they said that dakhmehs should be built for the dead, while there was no such tradition in Zoroastrian culture.

He said most of the Zoro-

astrians' pilgrimages and holy places in Yazd were built on highlands in the heart of mountains, adding, Zoroastrians carried their dead to the top of the mountains. To reach the dakhmehs, you had to climb the mountain slopes through the stairs.

The stone structure of the staircase shows that its age is not as old as the dakhmehs, and for many years the people had to climb the mountain to reach them.

Shahzadi added that some strong men called *nesasalar* carried the corpses up to the Tower of Silence by themselves.

The ritual has not been performed for more than half a century, while Zoroastrians, like followers of many other religions, bury the bodies of their dead.

Shahzadi noted that the Zoroastrian religion called for its followers to act according to the norm in cases which are not considered among the principles of the religion.

"Since the tradition of placing the dead in dakhmeh is not a religious principle, Zoroastrians, like Muslims and their Iranian predecessors, bury their dead in the earth," he concluded.



IRNA



IRNA

Crafts in 'Era of Exchange'



Workshops for lapis lazuli have been found at several sites in early towns of Iran from the early 3rd millennium BCE, like Tappeh Hesar, Susa, Shahdad, Tal-e Malyan and Shahr-e Sokhta. At the latter, carnelian and turquoise were used in addition to lapis lazuli. Although no corresponding architectural layers were preserved, the work process could be approximately reconstructed. The raw material was divided into blocks with flint tools using a specific technique of carving and pressure. Those blocks were then divided up further into smaller pieces, depending on the intended dimension of the product. Sanding and polishing produced the final shape of the beads, and flint drills were used to create the perforations.

The same techniques were also used on other semi-precious stones, such as chalcedony and turquoise. Carnelian and agate were additionally subjected to strong heat to enhance their colour effect. Bead-makers were profes-

sional craftsmen, and some of them carried the tools of their trade with them at all times, even into the grave, as some burials from Shahdad demonstrate.

Steatite Carving

The simple procedures of sanding, cutting, drilling and polishing are sufficient to shape the soft steatite or chlorite, which is found in the Kerman region.

Since the 3rd millennium BCE, this special material had been carved into richly decorated vessels. Tappeh Yahya was one of the centres of steatite vessel manufacture, and its products were traded as far as Mesopotamia, the Arabian Peninsula and the Indus Valley. The findings from Tappeh Yahya are to this day the best illustration of the vast distances that were crossed regularly in the trade of prestige objects. After the end of the 3rd millennium BCE, steatite workshops also appeared in the cities along the desert fringe, for example in Shahdad.

Just recently, Jiroft has been added to the list of known

production centres for steatite vessels. Its products are characterised by their complex and inventive iconography.

Administration

The growing subdivision of individual economic branches and the craft specialisation that are the hallmark of the "Era of Exchange", required new methods and tools to document, manage and control the flow of goods and labour. Stamp seals had been in use as early as the Neolithic, but it was the fourth millennium BCE that saw the introduction of tokens, bullae and cylinder seals in order to label and authenticate documents.

Since the Late Uruk period, when the introduction of standardised accounting systems and - slightly later - the invention of writing took place, Mesopotamia had efficient documentation tools at its disposal. It is in this time and under the palpable influence of the Uruk culture that the earliest numeric tablets are also found in Iran, in layer 17B on the acropolis



at Susa. The seal impressions on these bullae and tablets are stylistically indistinguishable from the ones found in Uruk itself, and demonstrate just how close the link between Susa and the Uruk culture was in this time.

However, real writing did not appear until the beginning of the Proto-Elamite Period, which coincides with Susa III, at about 3,100 BCE. The first Proto-Elamite tablets are to be found in layer 16C at Susa, while a set of numeric tablets with single and possibly

Proto-Elamite glyphs came to light between layers 17B and 16C.

The particular and unique Proto-Elamite writing system was used to record a non-semitic language - the Proto-Elamite.

This term reflects the assumption that the language might be a predecessor of the later Elamite, which was spoken in Elam in the 2nd millennium BCE. Both the Proto-Elamite script and the glyptic demonstrate a new development that is completely detached from Mesopotamia.

Superb Alcaraz underlines Wimbledon credentials



BBC – Top seed Carlos Alcaraz underlined his status as the man likeliest to stop Novak Djokovic winning another Wimbledon after beating 2021 finalist Matteo Berrettini in the fourth round. The 20-year-old Spaniard fought back to win 3-6 6-3 6-3 6-3 and reach the SW19 quarter-finals for the first time. Alcaraz will next face Denmark's Holger Rune, who won 3-6 7-6 (8-6) 7-6 (7-4) 6-3 against Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov. Djokovic, 36, remains the man to beat after his victory over Hubert Hurkacz. The Serb second seed, who cannot meet Alcaraz until the final, is aiming for a fifth successive Wimbledon title which would also see him equal Roger Federer's record of eight men's singles victories. Alcaraz has emerged as the main challenger to Djokovic's recent dominance at the All England Club. Having grown up on clay courts in Murcia, grass is the Spaniard's least natural surface and how quickly he has successfully adapted his game is a mark of his considerable talent. He warmed up for Wimbledon by winning the title at Queen's in only the third grass-court event of his professional career. The success served to increase

his expectations of lifting another trophy in London this month – and so will passing his biggest test so far. Berrettini is still one of the biggest threats on grass, even though he has been hampered by a recurring abdominal injury this year. That menace was shown in a first set where he fought off three break points before taking Alcaraz's serve for a 5-3 lead and serving out the opener. "I knew it was going to be really tough – Matteo is a great player," said Alcaraz. "It is not easy to come back after losing the first set, but I knew I would have my chances. "I had to stay focused, that's something I am working on, to not lose my mind." Alcaraz's speed and athleticism meant he was able to soak up the Italian's huge serves and groundstrokes, turning defence into attack with his own power from the baseline. A single break of serve was enough to secure the second set before Alcaraz ramped up the intensity in the third. The US Open champion broke to move 3-1 ahead and, as a result, the pressure forced Berrettini into more errors as he looked to blast his way back into the match. With his second serve also under

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz celebrates winning his fourth round match against Italy's Matteo Berrettini at Wimbledon in London, Britain, on July 10, 2023. **HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS**

scrutiny, Berrettini lost serve again to hand over the set and it led to him pleading with umpire John Blom for the roof to be closed because of fading light. The Italian said his game was "suffering" with the increasing darkness and there was a short break as the match moved indoors under the lights. Both players comfortably held serve in the opening seven games, until Alcaraz pounced to break and serve out the match in the following game. Now he faces Rune – another 20-year-old who he has known since they played junior tournaments as 12-year-olds – in the first Wimbledon men's quarter-final between two players under the age of 21. Asked about his reaction to reaching the last eight, Alcaraz said: "It is something I really wanted. "I came in with that goal to get into the quarter-finals. Now I'm looking for more. "It is my dream to win this title one day. I hope to reach that dream this year."

Double derby hero Alekasir leaves Persepolis for Sepahan



Sports Desk

Iranian striker Issa Alekasir parted ways with Persepolis to sign a two-year contract with Persian Gulf Pro League club Sepahan as a free agent. Alekasir, 34, is the seventh signing in a busy transfer window for Sepahan – runner-up to Persepolis in the league last season – giving Portuguese manager Jose Morais a dilemma for the No. 9 position as the Isfahan-based club had already secured the services of Kaveh Rezaei, Reza Asadi, and Reza Shekari to add to the previous campaign's top scorer Shahriyar Moghanlou in the frontline. The Iranian forward, who contributed with 19 goals and 10 assists in 59 matches for Persepolis, leaves the Reds with mixed memories after his four-year spell at the club characterized by both success and setbacks. The former San'at Naft striker's first appearances in the Persepolis shirt came in the 2020 AFC Champions League, where he spearheaded the team's progress to the semifinals – following the competition's resumption in Qatar during the pandemic – by bagging four

goals in six outings. However, his controversial goal celebrations in a 2-0 victory over Pakhtakor in the quarter-finals was deemed as a "discriminatory gesture" by the Asian football governing body, handing the Iranian a six-month ban on the eve of the last-four clash against Saudi side Al Nassr, which also ruled him out of the 2-1 defeat against Ulsan Hyundai in the final showpiece. On his return, Alekasir netted five in 20 games – including a late winner against archrival Esteghlal – as Persepolis lifted a fifth successive trophy in the Iranian top-flight while reaching the last-eight of the Asian elite clubs competition. The 2021/22 campaign came to an end for Alekasir midway through the season as a torn ligament injury sidelined him for another 12 months. With Persepolis lagging behind Sepahan and Esteghlal in the domestic league table, Alekasir's recovery proved pivotal for Yahaya Golmohammadi's men last term. Alekasir came off the bench at halftime to score another derby winner in a massive 1-0 victory over Esteghlal in April to help Persepolis leapfrog the top two

Issa Alekasir scores for Persepolis during a 1-0 victory over Esteghlal in the Persian Gulf Pro League at Tehran's Azadi Stadium on April 23, 2023. **MEGHADAD MADADI/TASNIM**

in the table with three games to spare before ultimately walking away with ultimate prize in May. He also found the net against Sepahan, Golgozar, and Havadar in the Hazfi Cup to inspire the Reds to a second domestic double in four years. Alekasir is the fifth player to leave Persepolis in the pre-season after veteran midfielder Kamal Kamyabinia, Siamak Nemati, Malian forward Cheick Diabaté, and second-choice keeper Iahamd Gohari, who joined Iralco on a season-long loan contract. With Persepolis likely to cut loose from Brazilian Leandro Pereira, Golmohammadi will have to step up pursuit for a new frontman as new signing Shahab Zahedi and Mehdi Abdi are the only established strikers in the squad.

Nassar, disgraced USA Gymnastics doctor, stabbed in prison

REUTERS – Larry Nassar, the disgraced doctor of USA Gymnastics who was convicted of sexually abusing young female gymnasts, has been stabbed multiple times by another inmate in prison and was in stable condition on Monday, U.S. media reported. The Federal Bureau of Prisons confirmed that an inmate at the U.S. Penitentiary Coleman in Florida was assaulted on Sunday afternoon, but declined to identify the prisoner over privacy and security concerns. "Responding staff immediately initiated life-saving measures," bureau spokesperson Benjamin O'Conne said in a statement. "The inmate was transported by (emergency personnel) to a local hospital for further treatment and evaluation." The FBI was notified of the inci-



REBECCA COOK/REUTERS

dent, and an internal investigation is ongoing, O'Conne added. No other staff or inmates were injured, he said. Nassar, who is serving a de-

cade-long sentence following his 2018 conviction, was stabbed 10 times – twice in the neck, twice in the back, and six times in the chest – Joe Rojas, president of the local correction officers' union, told CNN. According to the Associated Press, which was first to report the assault, Nassar was in stable condition. Nassar was sentenced to up to 175 years in prison for sexually abusing young female gymnasts who were entrusted to his care, including Olympic gold medalists Simone Biles, Aly Raisman and McKayla Maroney. His sentencing followed an extraordinary week-long hearing in which 160 of his victims, most of whom were minors at the time they were abused, unflinchingly told their stories.

Chelsea make transfer enquiry for Juve striker Vlahovic

GOAL – Chelsea have reportedly enquired about the availability of Dusan Vlahovic, with Juventus setting their minimum price tag for the Serbian forward. The Blues want to add firepower upfront after parting ways with Kai Havertz to Arsenal. Chelsea have drawn up a shortlist with Vlahovic emerging as the primary target, and they have made an initial approach to the player's intermediaries. According to Alfredo Pedulla, Juventus believe that Vlahovic is not transferable but if an offer of around €75-80 million plus bonuses is tabled then they will take it up for consideration. The striker scored 14 goals for Juventus across all competitions last season as he struggled with injuries throughout the campaign. According to a report in



ALESSANDRO SABATTINI/GETTY IMAGES

Corriere dello Sport, the Old Lady will be willing to lower their demands to €25m (£21m) if Chelsea add Romaleu Lukaku in a swap deal. Moreover, Chelsea have also initiated talks with Montpellier for Elye Wahi, who scored an

impressive 19 goals in 33 league games last season, according to the Evening Standard. However, a final decision is yet to be made on the third attacking option as the Blues have already signed Christopher Nkunku and Nicolas Jackson this summer.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dushanbe-Tehran trade could exceed \$5b: Diplomat



Economy Desk

Iran and Tajikistan enjoy the capacity to raise their bilateral trade to over \$5 billion, said First Secretary of the Tajikistan Embassy in Tehran Marufjon Abdurahmonov.

Speaking in a meeting with Mohammad-Ali Mollaei, the head of the International Affairs and Trade Development Commission of Iran's House of Industry, the Tajik diplomat invited Iranian industrialists to attend the joint business forum of Iran-Tajikistan, which will be held in August, reported iranhim.ir. Abdurahmonov also discussed development of cooperation in the mineral sector in a separate meeting with the managing director of Iran Central Iron Ore Company, Mojtaba Hamidian.

He emphasized the cooperation of his country in the fields of exploration, exploitation, equipment of steel factories, investment and training of specialized manpower in the field of mining with Iran and the Iran Central Iron Ore Company.

FAO recognizes Iranian agro system

The Estahban Rainfed Fig Orchards Heritage System, located in Iran's southern Fars Province, was formally recognized as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS), by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

During a meeting of the GIAHS Scientific Advisory Group that took place in Valencia, Spain, FAO designated three new GIAHS sites in Asia, underlining the importance of the continent's centuries-old agricultural practices in feeding the world's growing population and combating climate change and biodiversity loss, according to fao.org.

The sites include a unique rain-fed fig-growing region in Iran, an area famous for using fallen leaves as compost for agriculture in suburban Tokyo, and an area breeding beef cattle with unique genetic preservation practices in western Japan. Under the flagship program of FAO, the selection criteria stipulate that sites must be of global importance, have value as a public good, support food and livelihood security, agro-biodiversity, sustainable knowledge systems and practices, social values and culture as well as outstanding landscapes.

Unlocking Africa's economic potential

Raeisi's tour could lead to economic alliances

Economy Desk

President Ebrahim Raeisi's visit to Africa is the first by an Iranian head of state in 11 years. The three-day trip to Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Uganda aims to promote a balanced foreign policy and increase Iran's share in the African continent's multi-hundred billion dollar economy.

Africa is an lucrative continent with 40% of the world's gold and precious metals, 30% of mineral reserves, 65% of arable land, 10% of resources of renewable fresh water, 8% of natural gas, and 12% of the world's total oil reserves. This has made it a destination for diplomatic trips of world powers more than in the past. The main purpose of Raeisi's visit is to develop the market for technology-based products and the export of technical, engineering, agricultural, and medical services.

The Iranian government should design a special goal for placing Africa in the country's "foreign policy basket" and foreign trade to secure Iran's national interests from its regional competitors who have made special investments in this continent.

Although the volume of Iran's trade with Africa has jumped by 100% compared to recent years, according to the government's announcement, this figure is not enough and economic relations should be increased in proportion to the approximately \$600 billion market of the African continent.

The African nations' markets and Iran's advanced technological prowess in the areas of infrastructure, industries, mining, and agriculture have the potential to become pivotal points for deliberation by the Iranian president during his visit to Africa.



Energy cooperation

Iran holds various opportunities in the realm of energy within the African continent, and it can effectively harness this untapped potential.

According to Mohammad Khatibi, Iran's former representative in OPEC, the Islamic Republic has demonstrated significant capability in enhancing the refineries of other nations. Consequently, Iran can consider investing in the refineries of these African countries with the aim of bolstering its exports to these regions.

The African market boasts a substantial capacity for importing Iranian household appliances, presenting a multibillion dollar economic prospect. However, thus far, limited efforts have been made to capitalize on the export of home appliances to Africa. By implementing focused marketing strategies across the continent, Iran could rapidly increase its home appliance exports, potentially surpassing the current volume of \$600 million in a short span of time.

Extraterritorial agriculture

Africa's favorable climate and fertile land have transformed the continent into a highly lucrative hub for trans-territorial cultivation, attracting significant business interests.

Ali Rezvanzadeh, a board member of the Iranian Extraterritorial Cultivation Association, highlights Africa's high potential for trans-territorial agriculture. However, he points out the lack of necessary infrastructure as a hindrance to fully capitalize on this opportunity. In addition to focusing on extraterritorial agriculture, investments in transportation and logistics, particularly in shipping, are essential to enhance the speed of access for traders and merchants engaged in import and export activities.

Rezvanzadeh further emphasizes that both the private and public sectors have been involved in extraterritorial agriculture in Africa for over two decades. Nevertheless, the absence of a

sustainable presence and a coherent roadmap in the past and present have impeded the achievement of long-term food security.

Fortunately, the current government displays a willingness to address these challenges and actively pursue comprehensive economic cooperation with Africa, including trans-territorial agriculture. The hope is to witness increased prosperity, stability in foreign trade, and amplified investment in targeted extraterritorial countries.

Investment in mining

Iran, a nation rich in mineral resources, has the potential for fruitful collaboration with African countries in the mining sector.

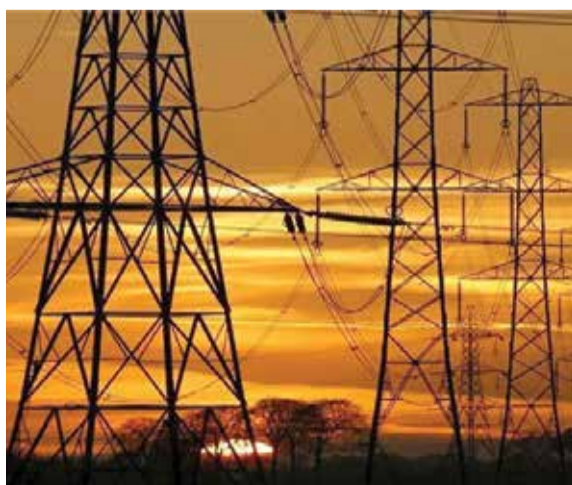
Adel Najafzadeh, the head of the Iran-Uganda Parliamentary Friendship Group who will accompany the president on this trip, highlights that Iran's possession of advanced technologies across various industries enables the country to transfer technology and

invest in mines in African nations. He emphasizes the need for proactive measures to be taken.

Despite the impact of the global economic crisis and anti-Iranian sanctions over the past 15 years, resulting in limited commercial cooperation between Iran and Africa amounting to \$1 billion, experts are optimistic about the future. With Africa gaining prominence in diplomatic agendas and Iran's focus on expanding foreign trade, it is believed that trade volume could reach \$10 billion within the next three years.

In recent years, the Iranian government has underscored the significance of the African continent and expressed a strong commitment to deepening relations as part of its foreign policy. Considering the prevailing conditions in Africa, there is now a more favorable environment for planning and implementing "commercial diplomacy" alongside increased political integration with African countries.

Simple measures can help avoid power outages



Economy Desk

Electricity consumption in Iran on the hot sum-

mer days of the current week reached a record high of 72,500 megawatts.

For the stability of the electricity network, and to prevent power outages, it is necessary to save or consume correctly in the home, office and commercial sector, and with a few simple measures, power outages can be prevented.

According to IRNA, these days, as the air temperature increased in most parts of the country, the amount of electricity consumption also increased. The surge in air temperature occurred on Saturday, and it caused

more cooling systems to enter the circuit which led to an increase in the amount of electricity consumption.

On Saturday, Iran's Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian said, "According to the forecast, the historical record of electricity consumption in the country will be set." A major part of the country's electricity generation is by thermal power plants, and it is necessary for the Thermal Power Plants Holding Company to have a plan using maximum capacity of private and state power plants to supply the energy needed during the country's peak

electricity consumption days, he said.

Director of the Operation and Control Department of Electricity Grid System Maziar Jamshidi said, "The coming days will also be hot days; therefore, we request that people use maximum savings to ensure a more stable electricity supply."

In order to provide a reliable and stable electricity supply in the hot summer days, it is necessary to continue cooperation with people in the electricity industry in the form of electricity consumption management. The minister also asked the people to save ener-

gy to meet the country's electricity needs.

About 30,000 megawatts of electricity consumption in Iran are used for cooling systems; and to reduce the figure, the use of comfortable temperatures (23-25.5°C) in air conditioners and evaporative coolers is effective. Not using unnecessary lighting and turning off unused electrical appliances are also among simple measures to reduce consumption.

The commercial sector and large commercial complexes can also avoid turning on extra lamps and use evaporative coolers.

Srebrenica victims commemorated in Tehran: 'Immortal March'

Social Desk

The remains of 30 victims of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia were laid to rest yesterday, as thousands commemorated the atrocity's 28th anniversary. Bosnian Serb forces captured the ill-fated eastern town – then a UN-protected enclave – on July 11, 1995, and in the following days summarily killed some 8,000 Muslim men and boys, in an act of genocide under international law, AFP reported. The remains of most of the victims were later found in mass graves in eastern Bosnia, where the perpetrators moved them from original burial sites to cover up the crime. Many of the 30 victims buried on Tuesday were identified in previous years, but the families chose to wait until more of their remains were recovered. Relatives of the victims can bury only partial remains of their loved

ones as they are typically found scattered over several different mass graves, sometimes miles apart, as per ABC News. Such was the case of Mirsda Merdzic, who will bury her father on Tuesday. "Only a very few bones of his were retrieved because he had been found near the Drina River," she said while huddling next to a casket shrouded in the green burial cloth. "Maybe the river washed him away." In Iran, the arts department of the Islamic Republic, organized the 'Immortal March' event in memory of Srebrenica genocide, according to Borna News. The organization hosted the memorial event on Tuesday evening in order to pay tribute to the victims of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event served as a platform to commemorate Iranian soldiers who partici-

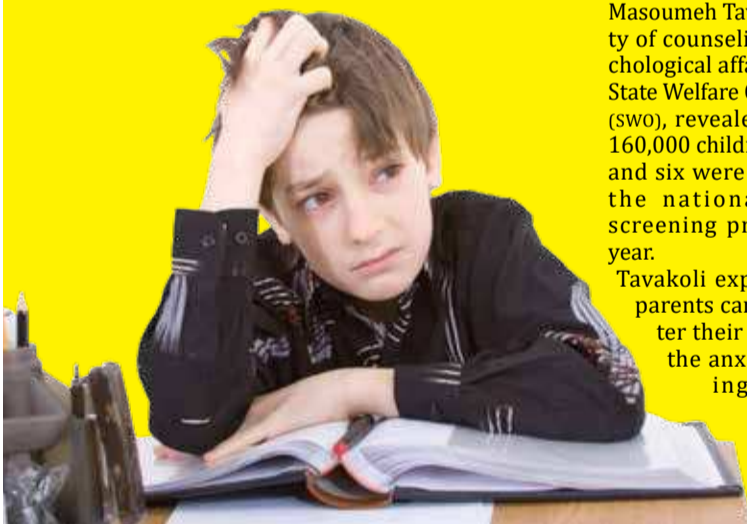
The remains of most of the victims were later found in mass graves in eastern Bosnia, where the perpetrators moved them from original burial sites to cover up the crime.

pated in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while also shedding light on the tragic Srebrenica massacre and the unique bond formed between Iranian art and media activists and the Bosnian people during the 'Death March'. Hamed Asgari, a renowned Iranian poet moderated the proceedings. The 'Immortal March' offered a unique opportunity for fighters and attendees to share their personal recollections and memories.



Anxiety screening of more than 160k Iranian children

Social Desk



Masoumeh Tavakoli, deputy of counseling and psychological affairs of Iran's State Welfare Organization (SWO), revealed that over 160,000 children aged five and six were included in the national anxiety screening program last year.

Tavakoli explained that parents can now register their children for the anxiety screening by filling out a questionnaire on the

system's website, IRNA reported.

Upon completion, they will receive an SMS notification about their child's condition. If the child is suspected of having anxiety, the system will recommend counseling centers and psychological services supervised by SWO. Parents are then expected to accompany their children for further evaluations and to receive necessary counseling and psychological services.

The official emphasized that childhood anxiety disorder is not a fleeting

issue. If left untreated, it can persist into adolescence and adulthood, leading to a host of problems. Due to their nature, childhood anxiety disorders are often underdiagnosed and, consequently, undertreated. These disorders can lead to depression, drug use, selective mutism, and physical illnesses. Tavakoli further noted that research has shown that untreated anxiety disorders during adolescence can significantly disrupt a person's social, academic, occupational, and other important func-

tional areas. This disorder can also negatively impact the child's growth and personality development, as well as their relationships with parents and siblings. The deputy also highlighted that adults who suffered from these disorders in their childhood often face significant challenges in their marriages and relationships. Tavakoli underscored that one of the main objectives of the deputy of counseling and psychological affairs is to promote mental health and prevention. To

this end, the deputy has prioritized the design of early childhood interventions in its programs, including the anxiety screening for five- and six-year-old children. Early detection of disorders and reducing the burden of diseases can significantly improve the mental health of society. Finally, Tavakoli stated that screening programs, while providing cost-effective services to society, also help reduce the occurrence of subsequent problems due to their nature of early diagnosis.

Iran in need of quick solution to its aging population

Social Desk

The deputy of health at Iran University of Medical Sciences, Mohammad Tabatabaie, has warned that the country is on the brink of a demographic crisis, with projections indicating that by 2051, approximately 30 percent of the nation's population will be elderly. This demographic shift, he explained, signifies the closing of the country's demographic window, a term referring to the period when the working-age population is larger than the non-working-age population, according to ISNA. Tabatabaie highlighted the urgency of the situation, stating that the country has less than eight years to address this impending crisis, considering the re-

productive age of the population. He also drew attention to the issue of infertility in Iran, citing a 2018 national survey that revealed approximately 3.5 million infertile couples in the country, with an additional 88,000 couples joining this figure annually. He differentiated between primary infertility, experienced by couples who have never conceived, and secondary infertility, which affects couples unable to conceive a second time after a previous pregnancy. The high costs of infertility treatments, particularly invasive procedures such as In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), place significant financial strain on couples, Tabatabaie noted. However, he pointed out that the

recent enactment of the population youth law has led to insurance coverage for all diagnostic and therapeutic measures related to infertility. As a result, 90 percent of expenses in government centers and 70 percent of costs in private infertility treatment centers are now covered by basic insurances. Tabatabaie emphasized the importance of culture in addressing the population crisis, stating that the Ministry of Health, along with other organizations, plays a crucial role in this endeavor. He underscored the need for educational and cultural programs to inform the public about the population crisis and the necessity of maintaining a young population. He further discussed the country's fertility rate, or

Total Fertility Rate (TFR), which is currently at 1.65, below the replacement level. This rate, he warned, if sustained, will lead to a decrease in population and an increase in the elderly demographic. He revealed that the country's population growth rate has halved from 1.2 in 2016 to 0.6 in 2021, indicating a rapid progression towards an aging population. Tabatabaie's comments underscore the urgency of addressing Iran's demographic challenges, as the country grapples with a declining fertility rate and an aging population. The next few years, he stressed, present a critical window of opportunity to reverse these trends and ensure a sustainable demographic balance.



Iran's 'Ti Ti' to compete at German festival



ISNA – Iranian feature 'Ti Ti', directed by Ida Panahandeh, will take part in the 8th edition of Iranisches Film Festival in Germany, slated to be held from July 13 to July 16.

The film is about a professor who seeks to prove his theory on the end of world. The movie, Panahandeh's fourth film, is starring Elnaz Shakerdoust, Parsa Pirouzfard, and Houtan Shakiba. The film previously took part in the Iranian Film Festival of Zurich (IFFZ) in Switzerland, the Rabat International Author Film Festival (FICAR) in Morocco, and the Duhok International Film Festival in Iraq. 'Ti Ti' also participated in Fajr Film Festival in Iran and Tokyo International Film Festival in Japan.

IFPEX2 opens



IRNA – The second IRAN Future Print Expo (IFPEX2) opened in Iran Mall International Exhibition Center on July 11 and will run through July 14.

The Motto of the IFPEX2 is: "Brand Printing Solutions for Tomorrow's Retail".

Babak Abedin, the head of the second edition of the event, announced that the exhibition is an indicator of progress and development in the field of printing, publishing and packaging.

He announced the main purpose of holding this exhibition is to introduce it at the international level.

"In this exhibition, domestic and international producers and traders can present their new services. Creating a place to exchange knowledge, ideas and experiences and a unique opportunity to optimize the growth and development of the industry is one of the most important achievements of this exhibition," he noted.

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Theatrical performance 'Lahad' raises awareness on domestic violence



By Hamideh Hosseini
Staff writer

The theatrical performance 'Lahad', directed by Hossein Heidaripour, which revolves around the theme of domestic violence, is on stage at Tehran's Hafez Hall, from June 19 to July 21.

Produced by Davood Zare-Gaarizi, the work features Badrolsadat Baranjani, Mehdi Pourkhedri, Iman Dabiri, Azin Raouf, Fereydoun Valaei, Sara Dadashpour, and Kourosh Zahmatkesh.

This production narrates a documentary-like story about the harsh and undeniable reality of violence in the home, which should be a safe haven for its residents. Heidaripour has previously brought performances such as 'The Murmuring Tales,' 'Buffalo' and others to the stage, addressing social and familial concerns.

The images of this documentary-style performance

were captured with the participation of artists such as Manijeh Hekmat, Kianoush Ayari, Majid Jalali, Hassan Amin, Amir Dezhakam, Majid Mozaffari, Nasim Adabi, and Hamid Mahisefat.

In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Heidaripour explained the details of the work and shed light on some of the aspects of the performance.

Although providing explanations about the name and details is not generally desirable because it reduces the audience's engagement with various elements of the performance, Heidaripour mentioned that the most important point regarding the name of the play 'Lahad', is that placing a gravestone (assuming the person being buried is a Muslim) during a burial ceremony severs all visual connection between humans and the Earth.

In other words, after placing the gravestone or *lahad*, no one can see the deceased anymore. As for the writing style, separating the

letters 'L-a-h-a-d' makes the pronunciation of the performance's name longer, hence emphasizing the name further.

Regarding the set design and its significance, Heidaripour stated that the idea behind the performance is to create a dual structure and achieve a corridor-like form that synchronizes the scenes and events of the play. This collage-like approach showcases different aspects of the main character's life and their arrangement in this corridor, which symbolizes the path of his life. Ultimately, it culminates in his death.

The final sequence involves a scenic action and a change of the white wall's color to red, indicating the transition from the performance to the act of murder, with the red wall symbolizing the end of the crime and the death of the character, with blood metaphorically encompassing the entire scene.

Regarding the main idea of the work, Heidaripour said that many incidents

of violence stem from our impatience and hastiness in everyday life. Violence is not just confined to physical altercations, fights, conflicts, or insults.

"Often, the indifferent looks and daily acts of violence originate within us. It can manifest in its simplest form at a red light when you pause for a brief moment and observe others' reactions. Therefore, I endeavored to address concerns that are part of people's daily lives, issues we can explore and derive positive outcomes from."

Speaking about the silence of the father, Heidaripour said that the role of this silence in this play is full of trampled conversations. When there is no dialogue between the father and son, the conflicts, anger, and the words stuck in the throat are piled on each other and it naturally creates a fundamental problem in the relationship. In this play, both father and son are full of these unsaid or fruitless conversations. The lack of opportunity for dialogue has closed the way for interaction, although many issues may be solved in the confrontation between these two characters.

Therefore, in my opinion, the way to talk is always open between two people who are related to each other, and this can indicate a relationship that has probably been damaged. Necessarily, these two characters cannot be completely black or white, and in the meantime, it was necessary to design a kind of game for the character of the father, who lives on the border between anger and love.

When asked about the purpose of this performance, the director stated that the goal is essentially to depict, raise questions, and to some extent, analyze different

spectrums of violence. Considering the chosen context, where the core revolves around a family, we aimed to portray various forms of violence, not necessarily involving bloodshed but rather depicting aggressive and unexpected behaviors, even those deemed inappropriate. Whether we have succeeded in conveying the intended message depends on the audience's judgment. Heidaripour mentioned that they drew inspiration from the story of violence and murder involving Babak Khorramdin, which became widely covered by the media. Like any writer or director living in a society, they draw inspiration from their surroundings. While 'Lahad' is not a documentary performance, it emerged from the heart of a society in which it was written. Every production, in my opinion, is the same; one has more imagination, another is more metaphorical, and another is more realistic. 'Lahad' combines elements from all of these.

Regarding the reception and acceptance by the audience, Heidaripour said that the majority of viewers were satisfied with the storytelling and visual representation of the play. Essentially, it prompts the audience to question whether we ourselves at times act in ways that might lead to violence.

Heydarpour concluded that "although this performance focused on a subject that caused much controversy and buzz in Tehran, the play did not receive as much acceptance as expected. From my perspective, today's audience seeks works that bring laughter. They want to laugh for a few hours and escape from the environment they are in. I had doubts from the beginning about whether it was appropriate to stage this play, and I still do."

Iran's veteran writer Ahmadreza Ahmadi dies at 83

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian writer, poet and painter Ahmadreza Ahmadi, known as the founder of New Wave Poetry in Iran, passed away at the age of 83 due to cardiac failure, according to an announcement made by his daughter, Mahur. Ahmadi had been hospitalized multiple times over the years, battling heart problems.

Ahmadi's significant contribution to Persian poetry introduced a distinct style that diverged from the tradition-

al Persian approach. Influenced by French Surrealism and American Imagists such as Saint John Perse, Paul Eluard, Louis Aragon, and Ezra Pound, his poetry stood out for its simplicity, clarity, and directness. His innovative approach inspired numerous contemporary Persian poets.

Exploring themes of individualism, personal experiences, hope, peace, childhood dreams, and imagery, Ahmadi's poetry resonated with readers.

Born on May 20, 1940, in



Kerman, he leaves behind a remarkable body of work.

Notable among his poetic achievements are "The Last

Notebooks," "The Old-Age Notebooks," "A Thousand Acacias Were Nothing in Your Eyes," and "Someday I Will Tell You."

In addition, his contributions to children's and young adult literature include notable works like "There Was Another Boy in the Seven-Chair House," "The Little Girl of Solitude," and "The Sunflower Field Farm." Ahmadi received many awards and recognition for his works, including the National Cultural and Artistic Award (Bizhan

Jalali) for Collected Poems in 2006. "Flight at Night" was nominated by the Children's Book Council as the best story on peace at IBBY India in 2009. In addition, Ahmadi was recently awarded The Flying Pen, a prestigious national recognition for his contribution to children's literature (2009). His writing is thought to be unique in the way he creatively combines poetic and prose structures. His poems have been translated into many different languages including

Arabic, Armenian, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Korean.

In recognition of his literary prowess, Ahmadi was nominated for the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2010. His legacy will endure as his poetry continues to captivate and inspire generations to come.

Also, the first solo exhibition of Ahmadi's paintings titled 'A Thousand Acacias Were Nothing in Your Eyes' was held in May 2018 at Cama Gallery.