

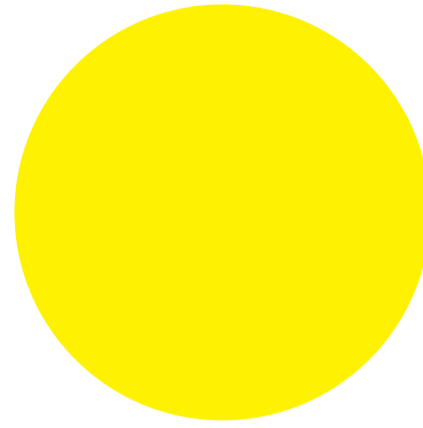
Iran plans to boost its caviar industry

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Why feeding wild animals is wrong

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Iran Daily



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Vol. 7343 • Wednesday, July 19, 2023 • Tir 28, 1402 • Muharram 1, 1445 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

Iranian Muslims preparing for mourning season of Muharram

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On the first day of the lunar month of Muharram, people hold a large flag in Isfahan, central Iran, on July 18, 2023, to mark the beginning of mourning for the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (عليه السلام), the third Shia Imam.
● RASOUL SHOJAEI/IMNA

US firms won't touch Iran's seized oil: *WSJ*



Suez Rajan tanker
● BLOOMBERG

US federal prosecutors can't auction off 800,000 barrels of seized Iranian oil sitting in a Greek tanker off the coast of Texas because US companies are reluctant to unload it, according to people familiar with the matter. Prosecutors commandeered the Suez Rajan tanker carrying the oil earlier this year after charging its Greek owner with sanctions evasion, and directing the ship into the muddy-green waters 65 miles off Galveston's coast, the Wall Street Journal wrote. The US Coast Guard cleared the tanker for unloading, but the companies that manage those transfers — known as lightering — say they are too worried about Iranian reprisal to handle the captured oil. "Companies with any exposure whatsoever in the Persian Gulf are literally afraid to do it," said a Houston-based energy executive involved in the matter. The executive said that several of the companies contacted about unloading the oil declined. Another executive at a shipping company involved in lightering in the Gulf of Mexico also said, "I don't know if anybody's going to touch it."

Doha parties to brief Iran on Lebanese dialogue: *Report*



Qatari Minister Mohammed al-Khulaifi will soon visit Tehran to brief the high-ranking officials of the key player in Lebanon on the outcomes of a five-nation meeting on devising a roadmap for reaching a Lebanese dialogue. Representatives from Egypt, France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United States held their second quintet meeting on Monday in the Qatari capital, Doha, MTV Lebanon reported. The representatives met to discuss the urgent need for Lebanon's leadership to "expedite presidential elections and implement imperative economic reforms in order to fulfill their responsibilities to their citizens", the five nations said in their joint statement. [Page 2 >](#)



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Raeisi: World turns its eyes on Iran due to its stability



IRNA – President Ebrahim Raeisi said on Tuesday that Iran's stability and strength in various fields has caused the countries in the world to turn their eyes on Iran.

"When they see that Iran is still powerful despite the sanctions and has something to say in various industries, they show eagerness to expand relations with our country," Raeisi said in a press conference in the city of Yasuj, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province.

US to deploy F-35s to Persian Gulf



US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has ordered F-35 and F-16 fighter jets deployed to the Middle East, as well as the destroyer USS Thomas Hudner, despite Iran's warning.

"In response to a number of recent alarming events in the Strait of Hormuz, the Secretary of Defense has ordered the deployment of the destroyer USS Thomas Hudner, F-35 fighters and F-16 fighters to the US Central Command Area of Responsibility to defend US interests and safeguard freedom of navigation in the region," Pentagon deputy press secretary Sabrina Singh said Monday, CNN reported. In response, Iran's Foreign Ministry warned the US to refrain from any "provocative" moves in the region, especially close to the country's borders, according to IRNA.

Heat index hits 66°C at Iran's southern airport

An Iranian airport hit a sweltering "feels like" temperature of 66 degrees Celsius as heat and high humidity combined. The Persian Gulf International Airport in Asaluyeh, on the country's southern coastline, hit a temperature of 40 degrees Celsius on Sunday. But Weatherzone reported the "heat index," which measures air temperature and humidity combined, flocked the outdoors as feeling like a whopping 66.7°C.

Iran: Russian explanations over islands 'insufficient'

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that explanations provided to Tehran by Russia about a recent joint statement by Moscow and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council on three Iranian islands claimed by the UAE were not sufficient.

Amir-Abdollahian said the Islamic Republic will never tolerate any interference when it comes to its territorial integrity amid recent claims about the three Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater and Lesser Tunbs.

"After the Russian ambassador was summoned by the [Iranian] Foreign Ministry, we received certain explanations from Russian officials, but we do not consider them to be sufficient and we do not tolerate the repetition of such an approach by Russia or any other side in issues pertaining to Iran's territorial integrity," Amir-Abdollahian said while addressing a joint press conference with his Omani counterpart Sayyid Badr Albusaidi in Tehran



Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (R) speaks during a joint press conference with Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Albusaidi in Tehran on July 17, 2023. **ALI-SHARIFZADEH/IRNA**

on Monday. Amir-Abdollahian said Tehran would never pull any punches with any party over the country's national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. He made the remarks in reaction to a joint statement issued last week by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Russia that challenged Iran's sov-

ereignty over the three islands. In their statement, 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.

On Wednesday, Iran's Foreign Ministry summoned Russia's ambassador to

Tehran, Alexey Dedov, and voiced the Islamic Republic's objection to the joint statement.

The three Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater and Lesser Tunbs have historically been part of Iran, proof of which can be found and corroborated by countless historical, legal, and geographical documents in Iran and other

parts of the world. However, the United Arab Emirates has repeatedly laid claim to the islands. The islands fell under British control in 1921 but on November 30, 1971, a day after British forces left the region and just two days before the UAE was to become an official federation, Iran's sovereignty over the islands was restored.

Iran should tap into wealth of its neighbors

International Desk

EXCLUSIVE

High-ranking delegations from Japan and Turkey are currently being hosted by three Persian Gulf countries — Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida initiated his four-day tour of the Persian Gulf region, commencing with Saudi Arabia, followed by the UAE, and concluding in Qatar. The primary purpose of his visit to these oil-rich Arab nations is to secure the necessary energy resources.

Conversely, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are aiming to diminish their reliance on oil and diversify their economies, taking into account the global trend of decarbonization and the

projected future decline in oil prices. As such, they seek Japan's expertise and capabilities in this direction. Accompanying the prime minister on this trip are CEOs from prominent Japanese companies in the trade and industrial sectors. During his first stop in Saudi Arabia, Kishida has already signed 26 contracts and memorandums of understanding related to economic ventures.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has recently begun a new term in office, is looking to secure investments from affluent Arab countries to address Turkey's economic crisis. Before embarking on a three-day journey to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, Erdogan expressed optimism that this visit would attract substantial investments to Turkey. He

has said that over the past 20 years, such investments have amounted to approximately \$22 billion, and the aim is to explore avenues to increase this figure further. According to Reuters, two senior Turkish officials have revealed that Ankara anticipates substantial financial gains resulting from Erdogan's visit to the Persian Gulf nations. It is projected that the initial impact of the visit will lead to approximately \$10 billion in direct investments within Turkey. Looking further ahead, Turkey expects the combined investments from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar to reach \$30 billion, primarily directed toward its defense, energy, and infrastructure sectors.

Prior to this, China and Russia have already taken measures to bolster eco-

economic ties with the Arab Persian Gulf nations. Moreover, some European and American countries have had longstanding and extensive cooperation with these nations. This global interest and engagement with the affluent Persian Gulf countries underscore the tremendous potential this region holds for any nation seeking fruitful economic partnerships. Last year, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman made a significant announcement regarding the establishment of five special investment companies in five Arab countries by Saudi Arabia's "Public Investment Fund." These companies are set to inject a substantial sum of \$24 billion into Iraq, Sudan, Jordan, Bahrain, and Oman. Similarly, the UAE and Qatar also possess consider-

able financial resources for investments in foreign nations.

However, the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced challenges in fully leveraging the region's potential due to severed diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia, leading to reduced relations with some Arab countries aligned with the latter, and compounded by the impact of US sanctions. Tehran, like Ankara, is in dire need of enhancing economic cooperation and tapping into the capacities of its neighboring Arab nations to overcome its ongoing economic crises. Moreover, given the cultural and historical commonalities shared with these countries, Iran stands to benefit further from closer collaboration.

Thanks to the regional de-escalation process, some misunderstandings have either been resolved or are being addressed. Tehran now must seize the

opportunity to embrace the diverse capacities of its prosperous neighbors. This process of de-escalation should not be limited to security and politics alone; the government must prioritize defining cooperative efforts and large-scale economic projects with these Arab countries.

Simultaneously, it is crucial for Iran to engage in dialogue with Western nations to reach mutual understanding and seek the removal of sanctions, which will open doors for greater economic cooperation with its Arab neighbors.

Iran cannot afford to lag behind in the fierce global competition for influence in the Middle East, particularly when it comes to developing economic ties with neighboring Arab countries. The paramount goal of Iran's diplomatic apparatus should be to shift the focus from political to economic relations and create conducive conditions



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Doha parties to ...

The TV network reported that the Qatari minister presented a joint paper by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the US that included a clear plan aimed at reaching a Lebanese dialogue under the ceiling of the Lebanese parliament and with international and regional sponsorship. MTV also revealed that al-Khulaifi "will soon visit Tehran and meet with officials there to put them in the picture of the results and discussion of the five-party meeting". "While our five countries

underscored our commitment to Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, we noted with concern that nearly nine months after the end of President Michel Aoun's term, Lebanon's political leaders have yet to elect a successor. We discussed concrete options with respect to implementing measures against those who are blocking progress on this front," the representatives added.

The five countries also urged Lebanon to form a broad and inclusive coalition to implement es-

essential economic reforms, particularly those recommended by the International Monetary Fund, expressing their willingness to help Beirut on this path. They also underscored the desperate need for judicial reform and implementation of the rule of law, especially in regard to the 2020 Port of Beirut explosion investigation.

The conferees agreed to exchange information as well as follow up on and enhance the outcome of the visits of French envoy Jean-Yves Le Drian to Lebanon and the region's countries, in coordination with the visits of the Qatari envoys.

US deploys nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea in show of force against N Korea



Protesters stage a rally against a meeting of Nuclear Consultative Group between South Korea and the US in front of the presidential office in Seoul, South Korea, on July 18, 2023.
● AHN YOUNG-JOON/AP

The United States deployed a nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea on Tuesday for the first time in four decades. Periodic visits by US nuclear ballistic missile-capable submarines to South Korea were one of several agreements reached by the two countries' presidents in April in response to North Korea's expanding nuclear threat. They also agreed to establish a bilateral Nuclear Consultative

Group and expand military exercises.

The USS Kentucky, an Ohio-class submarine, arrived at the South Korean port of Busan on Tuesday afternoon, South Korea's Defense Ministry said. It is the first visit by a US nuclear-armed submarine to South Korea since the 1980s, it said, AP reported.

Defense Minister Lee Jong-Sup called the submarine's visit a demonstration of US resolve in implementing its "extended deterrence" commitment, a pledge by the US to use its full military capabilities, including nuclear weapons, to protect its allies, the ministry said in a statement.

He said the submarine's visit "shows the allies' overwhelming capability and posture against North Korea." During the Cold War in the late 1970s, US nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines made frequent visits to South Korea, sometimes two or three times per month, according to the Federation of American Scientists. It was a period when the US had hundreds of nuclear warheads located in South Korea. But in 1991, the United States withdrew all of its nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea threatened to use nuclear weapons in conflicts with its rivals and conducted about 100 missile tests since the start of last year. Last week, North Korea conducted a second test of a more mobile and powerful intercontinental ballistic missile designed to strike the mainland United States. After observing that launch, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un vowed to further strengthen his country's nuclear combat capabilities. Also on Tuesday, South Korean and US officials held the inaugural meeting of the Nuclear Consultative Group in Seoul to discuss ways to strengthen deterrence against North Korea's nuclear threats.

In a statement Monday, Kim's powerful sister and senior adviser, Kim Yo-jong, warned that US moves to reinforce its extended deterrence commitment to South Korea will make North Korea "go farther away from the negotiating table desired by (the US)" and beef up its own military capability.

"(North Korea) is ready for resolutely countering any acts of violating its sovereignty and territorial integrity," Kim Yo-jong said. "The US should stop its foolish act of provoking (North Korea) even by imperiling its security."

Wildfire burns forests north of Athens, other blazes tamed

A wildfire swept uncontrolled through forests north of Athens for a second day on Tuesday after intensifying overnight, and authorities told residents of nearby villages to leave their houses as flames approached.

The blaze raged in the area of Dervenochoria about 30 km (18.6 miles) north of Athens. An alert through the pan-European Union 112 emergency phone number urged villagers to evacuate, Ioannis Artopoios, a Greek Fire Service spokesman said in a televised briefing, Reuters reported.

Fire fighters managed to contain other blazes southeast and west of the Greek capital but the fronts were still active.

"Civil protection forces gave an all-night fight," he said, adding that about 250 firefighters assisted by 75 fire engines, 11 aircraft and nine helicopters battled the fire in Dervenochoria.

France and Italy will send four Canadair water bombers upon Greece's request for assistance, EU Crisis Management Commissioner Janez Lenarcic tweeted on Tuesday. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis cut short his trip to Brussels for an EU-Latin America summit due to the ongoing fires, a government official said.

Another fire weakened on Tuesday, having first broken out on Monday in the village of Kouvaras, about 27 kilometres southeast of the Greek capital. Fanned by shifting winds, that fire had quickly spread to the coastal towns of Anavyssos, Lagonisi and Saronida, forcing people to flee their homes.

A mayor told Greek television that more than 7,000 acres of land was reduced to ashes along a coast, where many Athenians have holiday homes.

"(I only have) my bathing suit which I swim in, nothing else, and this shirt, I have nothing else, I don't even have other shoes. Nothing. I am finished," said Giorgos Nikolaou, 89, who saw his house in Lagonissi severely damaged by the fire.

A thick layer of white smoke was visible from Athens earlier on Tuesday as a third blaze burned near the seaside resort of Loutraki, about 80 km west of the capital. The Greek meteorological service has warned of a high risk of fire this week, just as the country is recovering from the first major heatwave of the summer. A second heatwave is forecast for later this week.

Greece still has memories of a wildfire disaster in 2018, when a blaze killed 101 people in the seaside town of Mati, east of Athens.



A firefighter tries to extinguish a wildfire burning near the village of Pournari, Greece, on July 18.
● LOUIZA VRADI/REUTERS

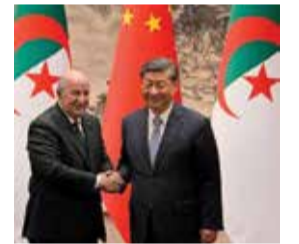
NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudi Arabia buys Turkish drones



REUTERS – Saudi Arabia agreed on Tuesday to buy Turkish drones in the biggest defence contract in Turkey's history as President Tayyip Erdogan reaped the benefits of his diplomatic push to repair ties with Persian Gulf powers and help Ankara's struggling economy. Erdogan and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman attended the signing ceremony between Turkish defence firm Baykar and the Saudi Defence Ministry, Saudi state news agency SPA reported.

Xi pledges stronger ties with Algeria



AFP – China's President Xi Jinping pledged on Tuesday stronger ties with Algeria in a meeting with the gas-exporting North African nation's President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, as Beijing looks to diversify its energy supply.

Tebboune began a five-day state visit to China on Monday, his first since assuming the presidency in late 2019.

"China is ready to work with Algeria to strengthen strategic communications, deepen exchanges and cooperation and ensure the steady and long-term development of China-Algeria comprehensive strategic partnership," Xi said.

More Brits than ever say Brexit was wrong choice: Survey

REUTERS – The proportion of Britons who say Brexit was a mistake hit a new record high this month, a survey from pollsters YouGov showed on Tuesday. With few economic benefits to show for the June 2016 vote to leave the European Union, 57% of Britons said the decision to leave the European Union in 2016 was the wrong one, compared with 32% who thought it was correct.

Russia strikes Ukraine grain port after exiting export deal

Russia struck Ukrainian ports on Tuesday, a day after pulling out of a UN-backed deal to let Kyiv export grain, and Moscow claimed gains on the ground in an area where Ukrainian officials said Russian forces were going back on the offensive.

Russia said it hit fuel storage in Odesa and a plant making seaborne drones there, as part of "mass revenge strikes" in retaliation for attacks by Ukraine that knocked out its road bridge to the Crimean Peninsula, Reuters reported.

Shortly after the bridge was hit on Monday, Moscow withdrew from a year-old UN-brokered grain export deal, a move the UN said risked creating hunger around the world. "Today's decision by the Russian Federation will strike a blow to people in need everywhere," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Monday. Falling debris and blast



waves damaged several homes and unspecified port infrastructure in one of Ukraine's main ports, Odesa, according to Ukraine's southern operational military command. Local authorities in Mykolaiv, another port, described a serious fire there.

Ukraine's air force said six Kalibr missiles and 31 out of 36 drones were shot down. Moscow, for its part, said it had foiled a Ukrainian drone strike on Crimea, with no major dam-

age on the ground, and reopened a single lane of road traffic on the Crimea bridge. Six weeks since Ukraine launched a counteroffensive in the east and south, Russia is mounting a ground offensive of its own in the northeast.

Russia's Defence Ministry said its forces had advanced 2 km in the vicinity of Kupiansk, a frontline railway hub recaptured by Ukraine in an offensive last year. Kyiv acknowledged a "complicated" situation in

the area. Since Ukraine began its counteroffensive last month, Kyiv has recaptured some villages in the south and territory around the ruined city of Bakhmut in the east, but has yet to attempt a major breakthrough across heavily defended Russian lines.

The Black Sea grain export deal brokered a year ago by Turkey and the UN was one of the only diplomatic successes of the war, lifting a de facto Russian blockade of Ukrainian ports and heading off a global food emergency.

Russia told Turkey on Tuesday that it was disbanding a coordination centre in Istanbul and lifting security guarantees for cargo ships following Moscow's exit from the deal, AFP reported. "The implementation of grain agreements has been terminated," the Foreign Ministry said after Russia's top diplomat Sergei Lavrov spoke to his Turkish coun-

terpart Hakan Fidan.

Moscow's exit from the deal means "the dissolution of the Joint Coordination Center in Istanbul" and the lifting of "safe navigation guarantees", among other conditions, the ministry said in a statement.

Ukraine and Russia are both among the world's biggest exporters of grain and other foodstuffs. If Ukrainian grain is again blocked from the market, prices could soar around the world, hitting the poorest countries hardest.

Moscow spurned calls from Ukraine to allow shipping to resume without Russian participation, with the Kremlin openly saying ships entering the area without its guarantees would be in danger.

Russia says it could return to the grain deal, but only if its demands are met for rules to be eased for its own exports of food and fertiliser.

A part of a Russian cruise missile Kalibr is seen inside a building damaged during a Russian missile and drone strikes, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Odesa, Ukraine, on July 18, 2023.
● REUTERS

Bardgori and stone lion, symbol of Bakhtiari tribe

Bardgori
● IRNAStone lions
● IRNABardgori
● IRNAStone lions
● hipersia.com

Iranica Desk

Iran is a rainbow of tribes, each of which has its own customs and traditions. The Bakhtiari tribe is one of the largest in the country, mostly residing in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province.

Their way of life is full of beauty and wonder. They have special customs and traditions for all aspects of their lives, including mourning and celebrating, many of which are very old.

Based on the Bakhtiari culture, the lion is a symbol of courage and bravery; that is why stone lions were placed on the graves of the tribe's heads or those who excelled in hunting, shooting and riding during their lifetime. This tradition is not unique to the past and is still common among the tribe's members. Based on the position of the deceased, stone lions with various dimensions have been placed on their graves.

Moreover, since a long time ago, Bakhtiari people have chosen a place known as *bardgori* for the burial of their dead. *Bard-*

gories were the hand-carved structures built as graves for the deceased in the heart of mountains and rocks. A number of ancient graves discovered in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province have turned into the places used by history and culture lovers for research and studies.

A number of *bardgories* are very old and date back to the Achaemenid era. Similar structures have been identified in various parts of Iran, showing that they are not unique to the Bakhtiari tribe. Vahed Joolaei, head of the Preservation and Revival Department of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, told ISNA that the *bardgories* were hand-carved structures built in the Middle East and other parts of the world for various purposes.

"A special type of rock structure was used for the burial of the dead in some regions of Turkey and Armenia in the first millennium BCE. This architecture has been seen in

various parts of the world including India," he noted. He added that studies carried out on the *bardgories* built in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province show that the old structures date back to Sassanid and Parthian eras.

"Some of the *bardgories* which are very small in size were probably used as ossuaries" he added.

Referring to the use of stone lions, he said that the lion was of great significance in ancient Persia, adding that the lion motifs can be seen on pottery items dating back to the fourth millennium CE. He said the oldest stone lion discovered in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province dates back to the Safavid era.

Farideh Ahmadi, an expert from the province's Cultural Heritage Organization, said that there are more stone lions found in the city of Koohrang than in other parts of the province.

The sides of the lions are adorned with a sword, horse, gun, and rosary. The personal information of the deceased is carved on the back of the stone lions.

The notion of "Persia" is a key to understanding of what we now widely conceive as the Islamic Iranian art style but equally as the Central Asian art style of the Islamic period, evoking, for instance, the famous *maydan* (square), Naqsh-e Jahan Square, in Isfahan or quadrangular formal gardens in Shiraz, as well as the blue tiles on a four-ivan building in Samarqand or knotted pile medallion carpets from Herat.

"Persian art," in the first place, had developed in a succession of Persian empires, first under the Achaemenid kings, later under their Arsacid, Sassanid and Muslim descendants. The core lands of these empires changed from time to time, but as the Persian administration expanded, this generated a broad Persianisation that affected vast swathes of Central Asia as well as the art history of even farther regions.

A lasting visual bond between Persia and the region of Transoxiana became self-evident after the

integration of this region into the greater Islamic world under the Abbasids, Samanids, Ilkhanids, Timurids and their successors. In the words of Robert Byron (1905-1941 CE): "Timur, in founding an empire [...], had delivered Oxiana from the nomads and brought the Turks of Central Asia within the orbit of Persian civilisation."

Such sweeping statements are, however, bound to be challenged.

While the impact of the Persian style is undeniably reflected in most aspects of the art and architecture of Islamic Central Asia, this Perso Central Asian connection was chiefly formed and articulated by the Euro American movement of collecting and interpreting the art and material culture of the Persian Islamic world during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This exerted an enormous impact on the formation of scholarship and connoisseurship in Persian art, for instance with an attempt to define the characteristics

of how the Islamic art of modern-day Iran and Central Asia should be viewed and displayed at museums and how these subjects should be researched in academia. This important historical fact, which has attracted scholarly interest only in recent years, should be treated as a serious subject of research, accepting that the abstract image of Persian art was not a pure creation of Persian civilisation but can be the manifestation of particular historical times and charismatic individuals. Attention should therefore be given to various factors that resulted in the shaping of "Persian" imagery across the globe, not only in terms of national ideologies, but also within the context of several protagonists, such as scholars, collectors and dealers, as well as of objects themselves. Besides the on-going debate as to whether or not the cultural term "Persia" should be replaced by the more politically-oriented term "Iran," the fundamental question

Islamic Iranian art style

arises: can "Persian" art be defined after all? Is it related to a particular style or a peculiar visual language, or, rather, does it refer to the unity of artistic traditions within a given geographic, ethnic or linguistic area at a limited time?

Why shall we still opt for the enduring term "Persia" when it comes to the art, architecture and material culture of modern-day Iran and Central Asia after the Arab conquest in the 7th century? If "Persian art" should and must only be interpreted as an abstract idea rather than a well-defined unity, was the term solid enough through its constant use in past scholarship? And, above all, can we still employ it safely?

There is no shortage of self-assured statements and attempts to classify artistic and architectural forms to different social or ethnic groups, such as the Persians, the Turks or the

Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan
● irantripedia.com

Arabs, as well as to propose certain hierarchical orders between them.

Yet "Persian art" — like most collective terms in the history of art — has always been fluid, greatly depending on who, where, when and on what purpose brought it into play. Judging by the number of books and

articles about "Persian art," it is intriguing to see that, while consensus did never exist about the items that could be packed together in this baggage, the existence of the baggage has been accepted by nearly every scholar. For some, a Coptic textile may have been Sassanid, hence Persian; others

grouped Mughal paintings into several "Indo-Persian" schools with the emphasis on the Persian pedigree. For yet others, the palace of Mshatta in modern-day Jordan was Persian, but some could regard the Mausoleum of Ismael Samani in modern-day Uzbekistan only as Tajik.

Iranians bag 12 medals at World Para Athletics Championships



Iran's Yasin Khosravi (L) and Saeid Afrooz set new world records en route to winning a couple of gold medals for the country at the World Para Athletics Championships in Paris. **MNA**

Sports Desk

Iran rounded off the World Para Athletics Championships in Paris with 12 medals – including four golds. The event also saw the Iranian athletes seal 16 quotas for next year's Paralympic Games, also to be held in the French capital. On Monday, Sajjad Mohammadian and Sadeq Beyt-Sayyah brought the curtain down on a medal-laden campaign for Iran by collecting a couple of silver medals.

Mohammadian registered a best throw of 14.38m to finish second in the men's shot put F63 contest, while Beyt-Sayyah's silver came in the men's javelin throw F41 event, where he tallied 45.46m. Mohammadian's silver was a fifth medal for Iran in the men's shot put competitions after Mehdi Olad, Rashid Masjedi, Yasin Khosravi and had all walked away with the ultimate prize of their respective classes – with Hadi Kaeidi settling for the F34 bronze.

A gold and silver medalist at the Tokyo Paralympics, Olad won the F11 gold with a 13.79m finish, with Masjedi's 8.49m throw earning him the top prize in the F53 contest. This was a second world medal for Olad in Paris, following a silver-winning run in the discus throw competitions. Khosravi, meanwhile, trashed the world record with 16.01m en route to a top-spot finish in the F57 category. Khosravi was not alone in breaking a world record for

the Iranians in Paris as Saeid Afrooz's new high of 40.27m saw the Paralympic champion claim the F34 gold in the men's javelin throw. Elsewhere in Paris, Ali Pirouj (men's javelin throw – F13), Amir Khosravani (men's long jump – T12), and Elham Salehi (women's javelin throw – F54) finished their campaigns with three silver medals. Also a gold medalist in the Games in Tokyo, Hashemiyeh Motaqian left the French capital with a consolation bronze in the women's javelin throw

F56 event. Iran finished 14th among 103 participating countries, which were represented by more than 1,200 athletes in Paris. China dominated the medals table with 16 golds and silvers apiece, plus 14 bronzes, followed by Brazil, which collected 47 medals – including 14 golds. The United States, the Great Britain, and Ukraine all won 10 golds, with the Americans finishing third courtesy of a higher number of silvers (14).

Iran far more beautiful than what I expected: Malaysian biker



Arep Kulal (L), the leader of the Malaysian Expedition of Unity of the 66th Independence Proclamation, and the Malaysian Ambassador to Tehran H.E. Khairi bin Omar pose for a photo in Tehran, Iran, on July 17, 2023. **IRNA**

Sports Desk

Arep Kulal, the leader of a group of six Malaysian motorcyclists visiting Iran, said the country is much more beautiful than he had in mind. The Expedition of Unity of the 66th Independence Proclamation: London-Kuala Lumpur 2023 embarked on an adventurous 66-day journey in late June and crosses 66 cities in 16 countries – covering a total distance of nearly 22,000 kilometers – before entering the Malaysian capital on August 31 – Malaysia's National Day.

As part of the program to celebrate the 66th anniversary of the occasion, the journey is a symbolic way to honor the Southeast Asian country's Father of Independence, HRH Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra. Having visited England, France, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey, the bikers entered Iran last week and traveled through the northwest cities of Urmia, Tabriz, and Zanjan on their path to capital Tehran, where they were welcomed at the Malaysian Embassy.

"I really appreciate that you picked Iran among your destinations in this journey. You could tell the Malaysian people about the Iranians' exemplary behavior and hospitality and take this experience as an opportunity to promote this country all around the world," Malaysian Ambassador H.E. Khairi bin Omar told the group. "I hope that by this symbolic act we can reminisce about the efforts of the Father of Independence, HRH Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, who flew to London in 1957 to hold constitutional talks and brought home the Malaysian Declaration of Independence," added the Malaysian diplomat.

Meanwhile, speaking of his time in Iran, Arep – the CEO of Global Bike Explorer Sdn Bhd – said: "Iran was different from everything I had heard. What I saw in Urmia, Tabriz, and Zanjan was nothing but alluring scenes. The country is much more beautiful than what I had in mind. When I return home I will share the truth and grandeur of Iran with my fellow Malaysians."

"I am inviting all Iranians to visit Malaysia. I am sure they will be greeted as warmly as we were treated in this country," added the Malaysian. The group crosses Gorgan and Quchan before entering Turkmenistan through the crossing point in the northeastern border city of Bajgiran.

They will also visit Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, China, Laos, and Thailand on their way to their motherland.

Rice can be a 'lighthouse' for Arsenal, says Arteta

BBC – Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta says £100m signing Declan Rice can be a "lighthouse" for the Gunners and the midfielder is "exactly what we needed". Rice, 24, has joined from West Ham in a deal that could rise to £105m. He is their third signing after forward Kai Havertz joined from Chelsea in a £65m deal and defender Jurrien Timber from Ajax for £34m. Arsenal were second last season behind Manchester City, despite leading for most of the Premier League campaign. "I see him like a lighthouse," Arteta said of England international Rice. "He is willing to put the light in others, improve others and make the team better."

"We discussed a while ago how he could evolve the team and compliment the players and take that winning hunger into a team with players who really want to push themselves to a different level. "He has an aura. The experience he has in this league is going to bring the team to a different dimension. He has the physical qualities we were missing for a while. "The way he talks and presents himself. The ambition he has and his passion for the game is exactly what we needed." Rice was restricted to bike work in the first part of training in Washington before Arsenal's opening pre-season game against Wayne Rooney's MLS All-Star today.

Arteta now has a full month to work with the team before the opening Premier League game against Nottingham Forest on 12 August. Now, the pressure is on. Even legendary former Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger recognises it, tipping the Gunners to win the league, while Arteta certainly feels it. "For sure," he said. "After what we did last year, a lot of people are going to talk about what is next. "In the end, it will be about playing better and earning the right to win every match. "We made some important signings, like other teams are doing, but when you are Arsenal, you have to handle that."



arsenal.com

Ronaldo says Saudi league 'is better' than MLS in Messi swiipe

THE GUARDIAN – Al Nassr forward Cristiano Ronaldo said the Saudi Pro League "is better" than Major League Soccer and that he has no plans to play in the United States or return to a team in Europe. Ronaldo was speaking to the media after playing the first half of Al Nassr's 5-0 pre-season friendly defeat to La Liga side Celta Vigo in his native Portugal. "The Saudi league is better than MLS," Ronaldo said when asked about whether he'd consider a move to the United States like his great rival Lionel Messi, who was unveiled as an Inter Miami

player on Sunday. "Now all the players are coming here," Ronaldo said. "In one year, more top players will come to Saudi Arabia." Ronaldo, who was substituted at half-time with the score tied 0-0, added: "I opened the way to the Saudi league, and now all the players are coming here." Several high-profile players have followed Ronaldo to Saudi Arabia, including Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema from Real Madrid and N'Golo Kante from Chelsea, who both joined champions Al-Ittihad.

The 38-year-old Portugal captain, who joined Al Nassr in December on a two-and-a-half-year contract following his exit from Manchester United, said he had paved the way for other top players to sign with Saudi teams and that more would make the move to the desert kingdom. "I'm 100% sure I won't return to any European club. I'm 38 years old," ESPN quoted him as saying. "European football has lost a lot of quality. The only valid one and still doing good is the (English) Premier League. They're way ahead of all the other leagues." Messi, Ronaldo's longtime rival during their time in La Liga, was also linked with a move to Saudi Arabia before the Argentine World Cup winner completed a transfer to Inter Miami, signing a deal until 2025.

Al Nassr's Cristiano Ronaldo gestures during a pre-season friendly match against Celta Vigo in Faro, Portugal, on July 17, 2023.

FRAN SANTIAGO/GETTY IMAGES



NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran-China
three-month
trade hits
\$7.8b: **IRICA**

TASNIM – Iran and China traded \$7.8 billion worth of non-oil commodities during the first three months of the current Iranian year (March 21-June 22), announced the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA). Pointing to the \$30-billion trade between Iran and China last year, Mohammad Rezvanifar said that Iran exported \$3.5 billion worth of non-oil goods to China during the three months to June 22. In the said period, Iran imported \$4.3 billion worth of products from China, he added.

Germany adds
60% more
onshore wind
power in H1

REUTERS – German wind industry lobbies on Tuesday said the country added 60% more onshore wind capacity in the first half of 2023 than a year earlier, a total of 1,565 megawatts (MW), but far more was needed to reach government targets for 2030. Wind power is central to Germany's transition to renewable energy as Berlin aims to reach at least 80% of electricity output by 2030 from green sources, such as solar and wind, to lower carbon emissions.

Iran's crude
aluminum
tops 166,000
tons

IRNA – Iran produced over 166,000 tons of aluminum ingot in the first three months of the current Iranian year (March 21-June 22, 2023), according to a report by the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO). Aluminum smelters of the country produced 166,986 tons of aluminum ingot during the said three months.

Iran plans to boost
its caviar industry

Economy Desk

Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) has set its sights on a significant annual production target, aiming to produce 20,000 tons of sturgeon meat and 200 tons of caviar. Hossein Hosseini, the head of the organization, unveiled the plan during the 8th National Sturgeons Conference in Tehran on Tuesday, ISNA reported. To achieve this goal, the country currently relies on 196 sturgeon breeding farms spread across 22 provinces, with approximately 50% of the sturgeon production concentrated in the three northern coastal provinces, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Golestan. Prior to 2011, sturgeon fishing was the primary

method, but with the species being listed as endangered, a significant shift occurred. In response to this ecological threat, the IFO collaborated with other Caspian Sea littoral countries to protect and restore the sturgeon reserves. Commercial fishing of sturgeon was banned, and conservation efforts were prioritized. Funding for this cause has increased substantially in Iran, with last year's allocation reaching 90 billion tomans (\$1.84 billion), up from 38.5 billion tomans (\$790,000) previously. According to Hosseini, these conservation measures have yielded remarkable results. Over the last decade, Iran's sturgeon meat production surged from 363 tons to nearly

4,650 tons last year. Similarly, caviar production rose from 11 tons in 2020 to 18 tons in 2022, with a value of 2.5 trillion tomans (\$51 million). Additionally, to bolster sturgeon reserves, two million fry were released last year, and the target is to raise this number to 5 million fry, he added. In the realm of Iranian fisheries exports, sturgeon plays a notable yet modest role, constituting a mere 0.3% of the overall export quantity. However, when it comes to economic significance, its value takes on a more substantial role, representing 2.2% of the total export revenues.

Efforts to safeguard sturgeon reserves
Looking ahead, the holding



IRNA

company of Iran's Agricultural Services plans to adopt advanced methods, such as caesarean section and micro caesarean section, to ensure the continued productivity and preservation of sturgeon populations. The implementation of these techniques aims to safeguard the precious sturgeon reserves for future generations. Speaking at the same event, Mohammad Mojabi, the

CEO of the company, said they had set up facilities in the three northern coastal provinces to house both fertile and immature fish. He invited potential investors to participate in the venture. Highlighting the significance of Iran's position in the global caviar market, Mojabi stressed the need to safeguard this reputation. He expressed concern over incidents where caviar was illegally imported into

the country and then re-exported under the guise of having an Iranian origin. Thus, preserving the brand image of Iranian caviar is crucial, he said. Furthermore, the CEO said the agricultural services company envisions establishing a caviar museum city in the port of Kiashahr, located in the province of Gilan. The project aims to showcase the rich heritage and significance of caviar in the region.

Baku intent on expanding economic ties with Tehran:
Deputy PM

IRNA

Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev said his country is intent on expanding trade and economic ties with Iran despite political rifts caused by an attack in late

January on the Azerbaijani Embassy in Tehran. Shahin Mustafayev, who co-chairs an intergovernmental economic commission between Iran and Azerbaijan, said that Baku

seeks to complete joint border projects with Iran to help boost trade between the two countries, reported Press TV. Mustafayev made the remarks in a meeting held in the Iranian border city of Astara with Iranian transportation minister and co-chair of Iran-Azerbaijan joint economic commission Mehrdad Bazrpash. "Azerbaijan believes in expanding continued and stable cooperation with Iran," he said, adding that some 2,452 Iranian companies are currently operating in Azerbaijan as a

result of growing economic ties between the two countries. Before the meeting, Mustafayev and Bazrpash toured an unfinished bridge on the Astarachay river on the border between Iran and Azerbaijan. The project seeks to facilitate the movement of cargo trucks between the two countries. Senior government officials from the two sides, including regional governors, were present in the Monday meeting in Astara. The meeting comes some five months after Baku decided to evacuate its em-

bassy in Tehran following an attack on the mission which Tehran blamed on personal motives of the attacker. Iranian and Azerbaijani officials sought to repair their ties during a recent summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Baku. The two countries have stakes in a major international transport corridor project that passes through their territories. Tehran and Baku have also expanded their energy cooperation in recent years under a gas swap arrangement that also involves Turkmenistan.

New markets available to Iran
after Raeisi's visit to Africa

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi's recent three-leg tour of Africa has provided new economic opportunities for Iranian business people, a spokesman said. In comments at a press conference on Tuesday, the Iranian administration's economic spokesman said new markets have become available to Iranian business people after the president's recent tour of Africa. Raeisi visited Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe last week, Tasnim reported. Ehsan Khandouzi further described Africa as the land of new opportunities, saying the Iranian administration strives to turn these opportunities into practical capacities and make up for the shortcomings of its predecessors, who had neglected such lucrative markets for 11 years. Putting the value of the African market at over \$1.2 billion, the spokesman



TASNIM

said the share of Iran's trade with the Africans at the end of the previous administration stood at only \$600 million, while the administration of President Raeisi has increased that number to \$1.2 billion. Speaking to reporters upon return from his African tour on Friday, Raeisi stressed the need to promote ties with African nations, de-

scribing the continent as the land of opportunity, the potential of which should not be overlooked. He said his three-nation tour of Africa was aimed at strengthening economic and trade relations with those countries and entering new markets with technology-based products made by Iranian experts.

Iran to dispatch commercial attaché
to Brazil: **TPOI**

The caretaker of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) announced the appointment of Iran's commercial attaché to Brazil and said that the envoy will be sent to the South American country in the near future, with the aim of strengthening bilateral ties. Bolstering trade and economic ties with Brazil is the main aim of dispatching the envoy to Brazil, Mehdi Zeyghami said, addressing a Forum entitled, "Introducing Trade Opportunities with Brazil in Healthcare Sector," IRNA reported. The forum, held in Tehran on Tuesday, was also attended by Director General of TPOI for European and American Affairs Ahmad Firouzi, head of Iran Trade Center in Brazil, as well as a number of traders and



IRNA

merchants in the health care field. Zeyghami pointed to the significance of doing trade with Latin American countries and emphasized that Iran and Brazil enjoy many potentials to boost their bilateral trade. The officials of the two countries should make their utmost efforts to

boost relations in all fields, especially in trade and the economy, he said. TPOI is ready to back the participation of companies at exhibitions in Brazil and other countries in the Americas, he said, adding that a comprehensive road map should be devised to actively enter international markets.

Why feeding wild animals is wrong

Social Desk

EXCLUSIVE

A video has recently gone viral in Iran, in which we see bears are being fed by mountaineers. What the bears are eating in the video is dry bread, thrown in front of them, whose nutritional value is unknown. In the video, the bears are treated like trained animals, and they are filmed while eating. The bears are being used as a form of entertainment, with some people taking advantage of their hunger. In addition, there have been advertisements for bear-feeding tours, which in all probability are illegal.

Feeding animals in the city is a mistake, but feeding wildlife in nature is an even bigger mistake. Unfortunately, Iran has been grappling recently with the dangerous trend of feeding stray dogs and feral cats, against which many experts have constantly warned. Yet, perhaps even the sternest critics wouldn't have thought that the trend might take on such bizarre twist.

Feeding wildlife not only disrupts the delicate balance of natural ecosystems, but also poses a serious threat to the survival of wild animals. Recent incidents, including tours that focus on feeding animals such as bears in their natural habitats, have once again brought this issue to the forefront, prompting experts to highlight the detrimental effects and call for responsible actions.

One of the key reasons why feeding wild animals is its disruptive impact on the natural food chains that exist in ecosystems. Animals have finely tuned instincts that guide their foraging behavior. They search for food according to their natural instinct and maintain their survival through dependencies on the food chain. When humans intervene and provide alternative food sources, it disrupts this delicate balance.

Feeding animals, especially with inappropriate or unhealthy food, can lead to numerous health risks. Human-made food may lack the essential nutrients and natural components that wild animals need for their well-being. Additionally, wild animals accustomed to human-provided food



gradually become dependent on it, reducing their ability to forage naturally. This dependence can have severe consequences when environmental changes occur or humans are unable to provide sustenance.

Repeated feeding of wild animals can trigger aggressive behavior. Animals quickly associate humans with a source of food and become conditioned to rely on this artificial feeding. When food is irregularly provided or unavailable, they may exhibit aggressive tendencies or even attack humans in their desperate search for sustenance. This poses a significant risk to both humans and the animals themselves.

Every organism plays a crucial role in maintaining the balance of an ecosystem. When humans disrupt this delicate equilibrium by feeding specific species, it can have cascading effects throughout the entire ecosystem. Overfeed-



ing certain animals can lead to overpopulation, resulting in competition for resources and potentially driving other species to the brink of extinction. This disruption can trigger a domino effect, wreaking havoc on the natural biodiversity of the area.

Human-made food may lack the essential nutrients and natural components that wild animals need for their well-being.

FARS

Feeding wildlife without proper authorization or permits is often illegal. Many countries, including Iran, have strict regulations in place to protect wild animals and their natural habitats. Organizing tours or activities that involve feeding wild animals, without proper permission, not only contravenes these laws but also reflects a lack of responsible attitudes towards the environment.

While the act of feeding wild animals might seem harmless or even well-intentioned, it has long-term

detrimental effects on both the animals and the ecosystems they inhabit. By disrupting natural food chains, promoting dependency, triggering aggressive behavior, causing ecological imbalances, and often violating legal and ethical guidelines, feeding wildlife poses significant risks. To truly safeguard the well-being of wild animals and preserve the delicate balance of our ecosystems, we must refrain from feeding them and instead advocate for responsible conservation practices.

FARS

special series on ta'zieh

Ta'zieh, Iran's national, religious art form

1
PARTBy Mahdieh
Ghazvinian
Staff writer

Ta'zieh, a national and religious art form of Iran, symbolizes the harmonious coexistence of art and religion. Throughout history, ta'zieh artists have strived to uphold this religious art form. Despite facing numerous challenges, such as a brief period of obstacles in the second Pahlavi era, ta'zieh continues to thrive in Iran. Among the Ta'zieh artists, Majid Khosrovan is a notable figure, with whom we had a conversation for our special series on ta'zieh.

Born in 1989, Majid Khosrovan holds a bachelor's degree in cultural management. He currently serves as the director of the religious board of the University of Applied Science and Technology. Khosrovan's journey into this art form began at the age of six, encouraged by his father, with his own interest guiding the way.

"I was fortunate to learn from esteemed teachers such as Hashem Fayyaz and the late Rahmatollah Eskandi," he said.

His first public recital was the ta'zieh 'Bazaar-e Sham' – recounting the passions of Imam Hossein's family – which he recalls with fondness, particularly the excitement he felt when the trumpets and drums were played.

Khosrovan shares some of his cherished memories from performing ta'zieh. One such memory is his first performance as Hazrat-e Abdollah in the ta'zieh of Imam Hossein. He recalls the joy of showing his body, painted blood red to signify his character's martyrdom, to his family after the performance. He also fondly remembers the anticipation of attending weekly ta'zieh meetings during his childhood.

Khosrovan takes great pride in his ability to evoke the events of Karbala and Ashura through his performances. He believes that performing ta'zieh has a profound impact on a performer's behavior and

morals, serving as a deterrent against committing sins. For him, ta'zieh is a priority in all situations, as it has enriched his life with love and blessings.

Khosrovan expresses his preference for playing the role of Imam Hossein. He finds it spiritually fulfilling when people ask him for prayers in light of Imam Hossein's role and his ta'zieh costume. He believes that the art form conveys significant messages such as sacrifice, martyrdom, chivalry, and freedom.

"Those who understand and live by these principles will undoubtedly succeed in life," he said.

Since ta'zieh is a national and religious art form of Iran, Khosrovan has had the opportunity to perform the role of Imam Hossein in four European countries – Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. His performances were well-received by European audiences. He has also participated in numerous festivals and currently serves on the board of directors of the Ta'zieh

Association of Iran. His group has performed over 500 assemblies at cultural centers and universities. Khosrovan concluded our conversation with the expression of his desire for more support to promote

professional ta'zieh. He urged all relevant bodies to contribute to the elevation of this art form.

"I also appeal to anyone who could assist in any way to help enhance and expand ta'zieh," he said.



Iranian children shine in French competition



ILNA – Eight members of the cultural and artistic centers affiliated with Iran's Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) were awarded in the International Visual Arts Competition, "Louis François" "Three members from the IIDCYA received honorary plaques, while five others from the IIDCYA's children and adolescent centers achieved the honorary diplomas of the event.

The International Visual Arts Competition, "Louis François", held in France in 2022, had the theme of "The Landscape I Love, Nature I Must Preserve and Protect."

Seven-year-old Reyhaneh Salehian from Darab, Fars Province, Yeganeh Kan'aani, aged 10, from Ardebil Province, and 18-year-old Frank Pourali from Lar, Fars Province, were among those honored with the honorary plaques.

16 provinces to host 1st Nat'l Iranian Ethnic Film Festival



IRNA – The 1st National Iranian Ethnic Film Festival will be held simultaneously in 16 provinces, according to the festival's president Mehdi Heidari.

The festival is scheduled to take place from October 31 to November 5 in the northwestern city of Tabriz, Iran. It aims to showcase a diverse range of films that highlight the ethnic diversity and cultural heritage of the country.

Heidari emphasized that the festival belongs to Iran as a whole, rather than being tied to a specific individual or city.

As the first edition of the festival, Heidari acknowledged that there may be certain shortcomings, but the goal is to create a celebration that represents the Iranian ethnic communities.

He further added that filmmakers interested in participating in the festival can submit their works to the festival's secretariat until October 2. Films produced from 2017 onwards that explore the themes of ethnic diversity are eligible for participation in the festival.

● 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
 irandaily@icpi.ir
 ● Email:
 ● Printing House: Iran Cultural & Press Institute

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



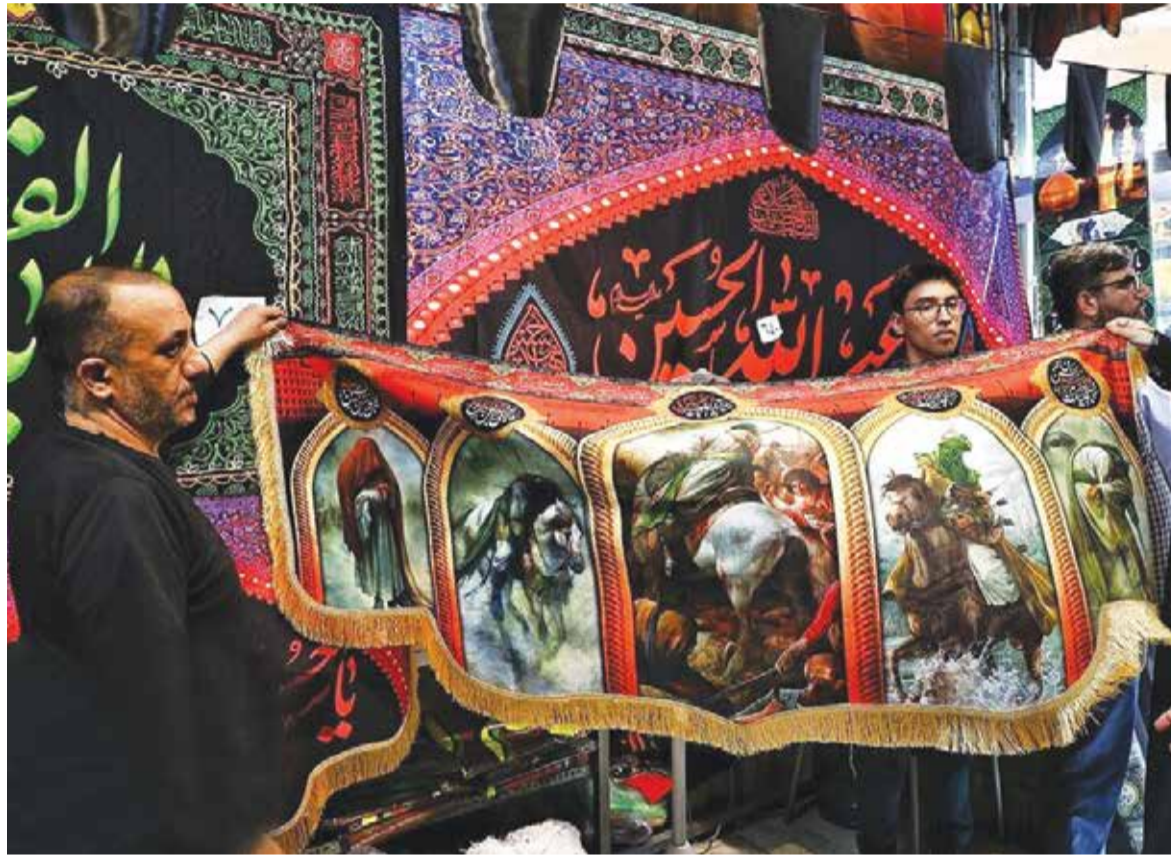
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Iran Daily

irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir

Vol. 7343 ● Wednesday, July 19, 2023 ● Price 40,000 Rials ● 8 Pages

Iranian Muslims preparing for mourning season of Muharram



Arts & Culture Desk

Every year, as the lunar month of Muharram approaches, the people of Iran and millions of Shia Muslims worldwide embark on a solemn journey of grief and reverence. This sacred month holds significance as it marks the martyrdom anniversary

of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Shia Imam, and his loyal companions. It was during those days, some 1,400 years ago, that they valiantly sacrificed their lives in the city of Karbala, in present-day Iraq, facing the forces of the 2nd Umayyid caliph, Yazid. Through the first 10

days of Muharram, Muslims don black attire, set up mourning tents, and participate in collective processions to honor the memory of Imam Hussein's martyrdom. Even after centuries have passed, the legacy of Imam Hussein continues to resonate deeply in the hearts and minds of Muslims.

Among the most notable expressions of mourning are the religious plays and ta'zieh, which are central to the commemoration of Muharram in Iran. Ta'zieh performances serve as a powerful medium to depict religious events, historical narratives, mythical stories, and folk tales. The art form incorporates the elements of poetry, music, song, and motion, captivating audiences with its profound emotional impact.

Rooted in the Ashura culture and the courageous struggle and martyrdom of Imam Hussein, ta'zieh originated during the 9th century, in the time of the Abbasids and Buyids. However, it flourished and gained prominence during the Safavid era (1501-1736) and further blossomed during the Qajar era. These performances have become an integral part of the Muharram tradition.

This year, the Tehran City Theater commenced its ta'zieh performances on July 11, opening with 'Love to the Horizon of the Sun' by Zahra Jarban. Meanwhile, the Simorgh Hall of the Bidel Dehlavi Foundation in Tehran will host a series of ta'zieh performances throughout the initial ten days

of the lunar month of Muharram, which begins today.

One notable group, the Haj Saqqa Mosaffa Ta'zieh Group, under the direction of Seyyedeh Mitra Hassani, will recount stories from the martyrdom of Imam Hussein and his devoted companions during the events of Ashura. Their performances aim to evoke deep emotions and bring alive the sacrifice and heroism exhibited on that fateful day.

In the days to come, the City Theater will also feature two other special performances titled, 'Jaryan' and 'Personal Cell,' adding to the diverse array of artistic expressions during this significant period.

While the circumstances of this year's Muharram may have necessitated adjustments and adaptations to traditional observances, the unwavering spirit and reverence for Imam Hussein continue to resonate within the hearts of the Iranian people. Through their steadfast devotion and creative adaptations, they ensure that the memory of Imam Hussein's sacrifice and the timeless message of justice, bravery, and selflessness remains alive and cherished during the holy month of Muharram.

Iranian poet Abdolmalekian receives Italian Roddi Prize

Iranian poet Garous Abdolmalekian was honored with the prestigious Roddi Prize at a ceremony held in Turin, according to reports from Italian media outlets. The event featured a section titled 'Witness of Beauty 2023,' in which Abdolmalekian was recognized, as reported by the Italian media cited by IRNA on Tuesday. Abdolmalekian, known for his minimalist style and concise language, is highly regarded as an author in Iran today, stated the source. His poems have been translated and published in French, German, English, Arabic, Kurdish, and Turkish. The poet has achieved numerous national and international awards, in-

cluding his recent nomination for the Pen Prize for his anthology of translated poems, *Lean on* at this late hour (2020). The closing ceremony of this cultural event took place on July 17, 2023. Born in 1980, Abdolmalekian currently serves as a poetry editor at Cheshmeh Publication in Tehran. Translation of the statement by the jury regarding Abdolmalekian's selection is as follows: "Garous Abdolmalekian is one of the most prominent voices of contemporary Persian poetry worldwide. His poems and verses have not only circulated within Iran but have also made an impact in various languages. His works, which contin-



ue the grand tradition of Persian poetry spanning thousands of years, reflect the life, suffering, dreams, and destiny of a people who have always fought for peace, freedom, and equality. The book 'War, Love, Solitude' (a selection of Abdolmalekian's poems in Italian) offers an opportunity to hear the human

outry of his poetry in Italian. Therefore, in recognition of his poetic influence and the depth of his works, as well as his social, civic, and human commitment, we present the 'Witness of Beauty' award to Abdolmalekian. We hope that poetry will once again lead us towards a more beautiful world."

The book 'War, Love, Solitude' is a collection of Abdolmalekian's work in Italian, comprising selections from three of his collections: 'Cavities,' 'Middle Eastern Trilogy,' and 'Acceptance.' It was translated into Italian by Faezeh Mardani and Francesco Occhetto and published by Caraba in 2022.