



Iran Daily



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Narration of Ashura portrayed through arts

This is the 'Ashura evening' painting by renowned epic artist, Hassan Rouholamin, depicting a scene related to Muharram and Ashura.

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Iran offers help in reconstruction of Libya

Iranian foreign minister expressed Tehran's readiness to assist Libya in the process of its reconstruction.

During a meeting with his Libyan counterpart Najla Mangoush in



Tehran on Tuesday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian also expressed satisfaction with the restoration of security and stability to Libya.

He noted that Iran is prepared to expand relations with Libya as a friendly country and assist the North African nation in its reconstruction.

For her part, Mangoush said she was delighted to become the first high-ranking Libyan official to visit Tehran after 17 years, noting that her trip signifies the two countries' determination to broaden ties.

The senior diplomats agreed on various plans to expand relations between the two countries.

Mangoush and Amir-Abdollahian also lauded the promotion of Libya's diplomatic mission in Tehran to ambassadorial level, the resumption of the Iranian embassy's activities in Tripoli, and the restart of shipping services between the two countries.

During the meeting, the Iranian and Libyan foreign ministers also condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and Denmark.

Tehran-Baku ties should not be affected by foreign interference: MP



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

An Iranian lawmaker said it is not appropriate for relations between Iran and Azerbaijan to be affected by the interference of the Israeli regime.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Ahmad Alireza Beigi said that the Israeli regime and its media have publicly announced that Azerbaijan has given territorial access to Israel to act against Iran.

It is not good for both neighbors that Israel makes such claims, the Iranian lawmaker said. Of course, we know that the regime aims to incur hostility between Iran and Azerbaijan by publicly making such claims, although our intelligence agencies are carefully monitoring the movements that are taking place on the other side.

Alireza Beigi, however, acknowledged that the Israeli regime has taken advantage of our failure to seriously and carefully expand our mutual cooperation with our neighboring countries. He said that we should not have given such an opportunity to the regime.

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Iran welcomes China's balanced policy in West Asia

The secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) emphasized that Tehran appreciates Beijing's sound policy toward West Asia, praising China's contributions to regional peace.

"In addition to its huge economic benefits, Iran's cooperation with China sets the ground for regional security as well," Ali-Akbar Ahmadian stated during a meeting on Monday with China's top diplomat Wang Yi on the sidelines of the 13th Meeting of BRICS National Security Advisers and Representatives in South Africa, Press TV reported. He further pointed out that Iran seeks to "strengthen its ties with independent and friendly countries across Asia, particularly China."

Ahmadian also underlined the significance of identifying mechanisms to achieve the common interests of aligned countries. "We believe that multilateral cooperation helps to strengthen regional and international peace and stability, and further sets fertile ground for the protection of global peace and development of nations," added the senior Iranian official.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

China replaces FM Qin after weeks of speculation

REUTERS - China removed Foreign Minister Qin Gang from his post on Tuesday after a one-month absence from public duties, replacing him with his predecessor Wang Yi, state media said, after weeks of speculation about what had happened to him.

Qin, 57, who only took up the job in December after a brief stint as envoy to the US, had not been seen in public since June 25 when he met visiting diplomats in Beijing.

After he missed an international diplomatic summit in Indonesia, his ministry later said he was off work for unspecified health reasons.

Wang, 69, who filled in for Qin during his absence, retakes the role he held between 2018 and 2022. It came amid a flurry of international engagements and frayed ties with rival superpower the United States, which Beijing has described as at their lowest point since the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Israeli forces kill three Palestinians in Nablus

PRESS TV - Israeli forces opened fire on a vehicle in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus on Tuesday, killing three Palestinians. In a statement, the Palestinian Health Ministry said the fatal shooting took place in Nablus' Al-Tur area.

Citing security sources, the Palestinian Wafa news agency reported that the occupation forces closed the area for several hours and prevented medical staff and journalists from approaching the scene.

The slain Palestinians were later identified as Nour al-Arda, 32, Montaser Salama, 33, and Saad al-Kharaz, 43.

The regime's soldiers also seized the car as well as the bodies of the victims, the report added.

Meanwhile, eyewitnesses said that Israeli troops deliberately targeted surveillance cameras in the area in an attempt to hide evidence of their crime, it said.

The Israeli military said its forces had "engaged and neutralized" three alleged Palestinian gunmen, claiming that three assault rifles, a handgun, and other equipment were confiscated from their vehicle.

The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement said that the crime is added to the list of atrocities committed by the fascist Zionist regime.

Iran naval forces take delivery of homegrown 'Abu Mahdi' cruise missile

New system to enhance Iran's naval defense range: Minister

National Desk

Iranian naval forces have taken delivery of the domestically-designed and manufactured "Abu Mahdi" long-range cruise missile, featuring state-of-the-art technologies tailored for electronic warfare capabilities.

Addressing the delivery ceremony of the system to the naval forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as the IRGC on Tuesday, the defense minister expressed his confidence that the new system would significantly enhance Iran's naval defense range compared to previous capabilities.

Mohammadreza Ashtiani praised the long-range missile system as being of strategic importance and said that it has no equal in terms of its capabilities, IRNA quoted him as saying.

Ashtiani said that the missile, with a range of 1,000 kilometers, enjoys pinpoint accuracy and very high destruction power, can cross geographical barriers and cruise at low altitudes, is radar-evasive, can counter the enemy's electronic warfare, and employs artificial intelli-

gence in its flight path design software.

The development of the "Abu Mahdi" cruise missile has reportedly been developed by military experts at Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO), a subsidiary of the Iranian Defense Ministry, and a leading high-tech complex headquartered in Tehran. The acquisition of this advanced cruise missile system represents a significant milestone for the Navy and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy, empowering them with enhanced naval defense capabilities.



Homegrown "Abu Mahdi" naval cruise missiles are put on display during a ceremony in Tehran, Iran, on July 25, 2023.

● PAYAM SANI/IRNA

It is said to be the first homegrown long-range naval cruise missile that employs artificial intelligence in the software for designing the missile's flight path and the command-and-control systems.

The missile can penetrate into natural and artificial barriers, as well as the enemy's radar and defense



systems and strike designated targets from different directions.

Due to the incorporation of highly destructive explosive materials in its warhead, "Abu Mahdi" can destroy all types of ships, frigates, and destroyers. "Abu Mahdi" is the first long-range naval cruise missile in Iran that uses dual-mode active and pas-

sive seekers.

The technology enables the missile to counter the enemy's electronic warfare and increases its stealth capabilities when approaching the target and hitting it. All this happens with the enemy not having noticed the missile and missing the opportunity to give a timely response. Its launcher can load and

fire missiles in the shortest possible time and can launch several projectiles in quick succession and from different directions toward a specific target, with the missiles hitting the designated target all at once.

During the ceremony, Commander of the IRGC Navy Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri explained that

if an Iranian military vessel sails 1,000 kilometers offshore and launches an "Abu Mahdi" missile, the enemy's aircraft carrier will have to retreat at least 1,000 kilometers further away to evade the long-range naval cruise missile. "This means that the fighter jets on board that aircraft carrier will be rendered useless," he said.

Iran releases documents about Salwan Momika's links to Israel

Iran's Ministry of Intelligence has released new documents that prove Salwan Momika's links to the Zionist regime, IRNA reported. Momika recently carried out a sacrilege of the Qur'an, tearing it up and setting the holy Muslim book on fire in Sweden.

The ministry issued a statement on Tuesday, publishing an image of Momika wearing a kippah, a brimless cap traditionally worn by Jewish males. According to the statement, this image was

sent to the Zionists as evidence of his loyalty to the Zionist occupying regime.

Additionally, the ministry released another image showing the flags of the Zionist regime and the Syriac Union Party flown together, noting that Momika had been trying to establish this party in Iraq and sent the image to the Zionists.

In an earlier statement, the ministry mentioned that Momika had been trying to establish the "Syriac Union Party" in Iraq, claiming to

be the main representative and voice of the Christians in northwestern Iraq.

However, his reputation for overambitiousness and charlatanry among his fellow believers led to the failure of his party's establishment. Subsequently, he applied for residency in several European countries, which also proved unsuccessful.

According to information obtained from the Zionists, Salwan Momika made significant efforts to contact

the regime in occupied lands. He presented a CV highlighting his usefulness to the Zionist spy apparatus and portrayed himself as one of the most important dissidents of the government of Iraq.

Momika also claimed to have been detained by the Iraqi Islamic Resistance on charges of collaborating with the Zionist regime and attempting to form an independent Aramaic Christian government in Iraq's Nineveh city.

Iran welcomes China's..

The Iranian official also held a separate meeting with Celso Amorim, the special assistant to the president of Brazil for international affairs.

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Iranian and Brazilian officials weighed plans to strengthen economic and trade cooperation between the two countries.

Describing the age-old relations between Iran and Brazil as a precious asset to the promotion of mutual cooperation, Ahmadian said, "Considering the Islamic Republic of Iran's principled policy of deepening and promoting relations with independent states, the comprehensive ties with Brazil have a special and significant place in Iran's foreign policy."

He also stressed the need to expand the economic relations, promote cooperation in the agriculture sector, and increase the trade exchanges by focusing on the private sectors of the two countries. Ahmadian expressed hope that Iran's membership in BRICS would help enhance the bilateral ties.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Tehran-Baku ties ...

The Iranian lawmaker said that we consider Azerbaijani people as our relatives. Currently, many of the people in Iran's East Azerbaijan Province have many relatives in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Alireza Beigi referred to the proximity between the two nations, saying that it is partly due to the Shia culture in both countries.

He said that Tehran and Baku should make the most of this capacity of friendship as well as a common language for expansion of ties, especially economic ties. Alireza Beigi said that Iran has capabilities that can be shared with the people of Azerbaijan.

By improving the level of cooperation, both neighbors can bar foreigners from interfering in their relations, he said.



He also said that both countries should prioritize the establishment of security at their borders. He noted that we are not happy about what happened in relations between the two countries. An incident such as the attack on the Azerbaijani Embassy in Tehran should not have occurred.

Development of tourism sector a promise of economic prosperity in Fars Province



An overview of Shiraz
shomanews.com



Margun Waterfall, Sepidan
chetor.com

Iranica Desk

The flourishing of the tourism sector in Fars Province is achievable through developing its accommodation centers, improving service provided to tourists, and introducing attractions which are less-known to people.

The growing trend of investment in the provincial tourism sector is a promise of economic prosperity in the wonderful and vast province.

The abundance of religious, historical, cultural

and medical tourism centers in Fars Province, having 11 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, is not hidden from anyone.

Although being a tourist-friendly destination has to some extent led to the prosperity of some businesses in Shiraz, Mardasht and Sepidan, the economy of Fars Province has not flourished as it deserves, and a huge part of its potential capabilities remains unused.

The enhancement of tourism infrastructures alongside increasing the

people's awareness of the less-known attractions of the region would help increase the number of travelers choosing Fars Province as their destination.

The average stay of foreign tourists arriving in Fars Province is presently less than two days. Some deficiencies such as accommodations, marketing and lack of direct flights from neighboring countries, as well as the absence of specific attractions have adversely impacted the province's tourism sector.

Deputy Head of Fars Prov-

ince's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, Rouhollah Ravanshad, noted that 375 tourism agencies and 650 accommodation centers are operating across the province.

He put the accommodation capacity of Fars Province at 10,000 rooms and 25,000 beds.

Managing Director of the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, Moayed Mohsennejad, noted that 32 tourism-related projects are presently be-

ing implemented across the province.

He added that a number of hotel and hotel-apartments, traditional accommodations and tourism complexes are under construction in the province.

Making investment in the tourism sector would help attract more Iranian and foreign visitors to the province, pave the way for local businesses to prosper and generate jobs in the province.

He noted that each exemplary tourism site of the province has its unique

features, making investment in which would help generate jobs and income in Fars Province.

Shah Cheragh Shrine is a major tourist destination and pilgrimage site in the provincial capital of Shiraz. The mausoleum is where one of the brothers of Imam Reza (PBUH), the eighth Shia Imam, is laid to rest. It boasts architectural elements and motifs from various centuries. The mausoleum has undergone various restoration projects over time, and was registered on the National

Heritage List in 1939.

During his trip to the province in October 2021, President Ebrahim Raeisi called for promoting the tourism industry in Fars Province. Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Ezzatollah Zarghami also announced that the government has allocated financial aid to develop the Pasargadae Complex, the capital of the Achaemenid Empire under Cyrus the Great (559-530 BCE), who had ordered its construction as well as the location of his tomb.

Efforts underway to introduce culinary culture of Sistan and Baluchestan Province

Iranica Desk

In recent years, the tourism industry has become one of the main poles of economic development generating a significant income for many countries. Culinary tourism, as a part of this industry, can have a very positive impact on attraction of tourists to a region. Culinary tourism has many enthusiasts traveling to find amazing and lesser known foods, and get acquainted with various cooking cultures, chtn.ir

reported.

The 'foodies,' or food tourists, concentrating on cultural issues, not only make unforgettable memories for themselves but also help the economy of a society to prosper. This type of tourism, if done correctly, can help countries achieve their sustainable development goals.

In fact, food is more than a means of survival; it is an important component of culture and tradition. The food diversity in Iran is greatly affected by its stra-

tegic geographic location and the ethnic diversity of its people.

Deputy Head of Sistan and Baluchestan Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization Reza Ganjali said that foods constitute a significant part of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of a nation.

Referring to the cultural, social and climatic diversity of Iran, he said that the list of Iranian foods is regarded an important cultural treasure.

He noted that 31 local foods of Sistan and Baluchestan Province have so far been registered nationally.

"Making brands in the field of the province's culinary tourism sector has been placed on the organization's agenda," he said.

He noted that holding the food festival in Sistan and Baluchestan Province in the last year, attended by its residents from Oman, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan, was a very important measure carried out to achieve a goal.

Ganjali noted that improving the welfare of people and developing the economy of local communities are among the main objectives of holding this festival. The official noted that the traditional foods of Yazdi, Birjandi and Kermani people, who reside in the provincial capital city of Zahedan, are also an integral part of the province's culinary culture.

"Out of nine food samples discovered in Shahr-e Sukhteh (Burnt City), an archaeological site of a

Bronze Age urban settlement located in the province, three were unveiled in the International Exhibition of Food Technology & Agriculture in Tehran.

"Given that some local traditions, customs and rituals are in danger of oblivion, various events should be held to help safeguard these intangible cultural heritages and also introduce the traditional foods of various Iranian tribes and communities," he noted.

Iranian cuisine has always

been a symbol of blessing and simplicity, however, adequate attention has not been paid to culinary tourism, which is regarded as a unique treasure.

The land of Iran is vast with a variety of climates, a wide range of fruits, vegetables and herbs, which has resulted in a diverse culinary culture throughout the country.

Iran culinary culture is yet to be discovered; thus, be one of the first to truly learn, experience and taste it.



A food festival in Sistan and Baluchestan Province
jamaran.news



Abgoosht-e Zaboli
aradmobile.com



Tabahag
aradmobile.com



Pakora
aradmobile.com

The development of Armenian-Iranian cooperation is a necessity



By Zhanna Vardanyan
Iranologist

After the end of the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh (Armenian: Artsakh), the region did not achieve peace; instead, new challenges arose, which are now common to both Armenia and Iran.

First of all, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains unresolved, and in addition, Azerbaijan violated the November 9, 2020 agreement by closing the Lachin Corridor, which connects Armenia and Artsakh, and has kept Artsakh under blockade for more than seven months. As a result, Baku does not even allow humanitarian cargo transportation to Artsakh, depriving Armenians of basic living conditions and deepening the humanitarian and energy crisis in the country.

Moreover, Azerbaijan extends its territorial ambitions to Armenia and Iran. To legitimize its actions against these two countries, Azerbaijan promotes the so-called West Azerbaijan and South Azerbaijan theses, claiming that the territory of Armenia and the northwest of Iran belong to Azerbaijan and should be "returned". The issue of the so-called "Zangezur Corridor" was put forward as the first action on the way to achieving that goal. "The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Armenia have common interests and common concerns in the field of national security," emphasized Iranian Ambassador to Armenia Abbas Badakhshan Zohuri in a recent interview with the Armenian think tank Orbeli. It is evident that the so-called 'Zangezur Corridor issue' is one of those common concerns for Armenia and Iran.

This corridor idea, sponsored by Turkey and Azerbaijan, aims beyond merely connecting Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan, which already have an existing connection through Iran. Instead, the actual objectives are to conquer Armenian territory, particularly Syunik, to eliminate the Armenian-Iranian border, to present territorial ambitions to the north of Iran, and pursue the unification of the Pan-Turkic world.

Many observers were surprised as to why the two governments of Azerbaijan and Turkey are insisting so much on the possibility of rising tensions among related parties. Gradually, the realities became known and the understanding of experts is that the intention behind these extensive links

that connect Nakhchivan to the Republic of Azerbaijan is that, first, they would divide Armenia into two parts and, secondly, they disconnect Iran and Armenia, severing a link that dates back to the era of the Achaemenid and Parthian Empires. Third, it would limit Iran's connection to the outside world, and from then on, we would be neighbor to 14 countries, instead of 15, and the Islamic Republic of Iran's free connection with the North Caucasus, Russia and the European Continent will be disrupted. Any change in regional borders will cause long-term tensions.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior adviser to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei pointed out in his last article.

Despite Armenia's repeated statements that it is ready to provide rail and road communication between Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan through its territory, it insists that these routes must be under the exclusive control of Armenia.

Unfortunately, Azerbaijan continues to employ threats of force to obtain the "corridor". Periodic attacks on Armenia's borders are aimed at oppressing Armenia and extracting concessions. In September 2022, Azerbaijan even launched a large-scale operation, attacking the borders of RA Syunik, Vayots Dzor, and Gegharkunik. It should be mentioned that the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia clarified that Iranian actions helped to stop a further deterioration of the September 2022 attack from Azerbaijan.

Nevertheless, Azerbaijan persists in escalating the situation to this day. It continues to arm itself, with significant purchases from Israel, and further strengthens relations with Israel through high-level visits, including the president and the minister of defense. Additionally, Azerbaijani-Turkish military exercises continue, and Azerbaijan undergoes a wide process of integration with Turkey's NATO army. All these developments indicate Azerbaijan's preparation for another potential war.

Given these circumstances, the development of Armenian-Iranian cooperation, especially in the security sector, becomes imperative. The longstanding Armenian-Iranian relations in the region must be placed on a qualitatively new basis to prevent any threat to the interests of both countries. Armenia and Iran serve as the main barriers to disrupting Pan-Turkic plans. Moreover, Armenia is considered an important route for Iran, while Iran acts as a gateway to the outside world for Armenia. This connection between the two countries must remain uninterrupted to avoid potential disaster in the region.

Armenia - Azerbaijan: Even a zero-efficiency process can be important



By Armen Petrosyan
Expert on regional issues

On July 15, the second meeting of the current year between Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev took place in Brussels through the mediation of the president of the European Council, Charles Michel. After the meeting, Michel made a final statement presenting the results of the negotiations. The Azerbaijani and Armenian sides also issued official statements regarding the meeting.

During the summary of negotiations, which lasted about two hours and 45 minutes, the most impressive circumstance was perhaps the enthusiastic attitude of a high-ranking EU official. It is natural in case of such situations, when there is an objective need to "save the face" of the negotiation format under the minimal effectiveness of the process. Since, according to Michel's statement, all the acute issues of the settlement process were discussed: border delimitation, unblocking of communications, the humanitarian crisis created in Artsakh and the rights and security of Artsakh Armenians, as well as the issues of the roadmap for a peace treaty. However, no final agreement was reached on any of the deep issues in Azerbaijan-Armenia relations, which is the core of the process.

According to the president of the European Council, the meeting was "frank and important". With the above-mentioned thematic division, regarding territorial integrity and sovereignty, the two sides reconfirmed their willingness to mutually recognize the territory of Armenia, which covers 29,800 sq. km and Azerbaijan's 86,600 sq. km. Furthermore, they reconfirmed the implementation of the delimitation based on the 1991 Almaty Declaration. The leaders of the two countries agreed to accelerate the work of the commissions. Regarding the unblocking of regional communications, the technical details of future transport agreements which will respect the principles of sovereignty, jurisdiction, equality and reciprocity. The promotion of railway construction has been encouraged, and the EU is ready to support it financially.

Regarding the humanitarian crisis caused by the blockade of Artsakh, Michel noted: "I emphasized the need to open the Lachin Road and also noted Azerbaijan's willingness to provide humanitarian supplies via Aghdam. I see both options as important and encourage humanitarian deliveries from both sides to ensure the needs of the population are met".

Regarding the issue of the rights and security of the people of Artsakh, the EU once again expressed its support for "direct dialogue between Baku and the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast."

Regarding the peace treaty negotiations, Michel said that now is the most decisive stage and called on both leaders "to take further courageous steps to ensure decisive and irreversible progress on the normalization track." They also discussed humanitarian issues, particularly the topic of the fate of Armenian detainees and Azerbaijani criminals.

As it has already been mentioned, looking point by point at all the key directions of the Brussels negotiations, it is clearly seen that no progress has been recorded in the fundamental disagreements of the parties. The reason for this is very simple: under the current geopolitical and regional realities, Azerbaijan is not ready for even the slightest compromise. The position of the Azerbaijani authorities remains fanatical and uncompromising. The political officials of Azerbaijan believe that after the 44-day war in 2020, Armenia has completely capitulated, and they should not make even the slightest concession to establish peace in the region. The presence of competing Russian and Western platforms in the Azerbaijan-Armenia settlement process significantly contributes to Baku's position, which provides an additional maneuverability opportunity for Azerbaijan, as well as the lack of mood of the international community to push Baku to concessions, which is due to the geopolitical situation caused by the Ukrainian crisis, Azerbaijan's energy and infrastructure capabilities, and the nature of Baku-Ankara relations.

As a consequence, while using the continuous policy of force and threat of force in the direction of both Armenia and Artsakh, Azerbaijan is trying its best to disrupt the negotiation process and, what's more, on behalf of Armenia, so that Yerevan would refuse the negotiation and

The need to prevent the destruction of the Armenianness of Artsakh



By Artak Khachatryan
Cultural anthropologist,
ethnographer

The rhetoric of some political officials of Azerbaijan, particularly, the statements about the disintegration of state institutions in Artsakh, are not new in the context of Azerbaijani politics. Since the Soviet times, Azerbaijan has conducted and currently continues to conduct a policy of destruction of Armenianness in Artsakh. This policy has been particularly active since the 1930s, within the framework of the so-called 'korenization' policy. Soviet korenization in the case of Azerbaijan

created institutions: Academy of Sciences, Turkic Studies Centers, and Theories about History. Institutions created processes, with the end result of forming mobilized nation. From an anthropological point of view, the important existential basis of a mobilized nation is the creation of history. Contrary to Azerbaijan, which was just on the way to creating these institutions, they already existed in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO): The territory as a compact collective existed, history, language, cultural continuity, educational centers existed, in terms of statehood, the institutional memory about the merits of khamsa was present. There was also an important fact, that both during the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920) and during the first years of the Soviet Union, the Armenians of

Perspectives on Armenia

Iran Daily plans to discuss the important issues of Iran's neighboring countries in special pages from now on. In this issue, due to the importance of Armenia's issues and its relationship with Iran and other countries in the region, the issues of this country have been discussed. It is emphasized that Iran Daily is not responsible for the content of the notes on this page and only the authors are responsible for this. Iran Daily only reflects the views of these people as experts on their country's affairs. All media activists, politicians and those interested in discussing the issues of their country are invited to cooperate with this publication.



Armenia: The new tourism hub of the region



By Meri Hovsepyan
Head of Economic Research Department,
Orbeli Analytical Center

Baku would present it as a manifestation of the Armenian side's destructiveness. One of the most recent manifestations of "powerful diplomacy" was the aggression against Artsakh at the start of the US negotiations between the foreign ministers of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan in June, as a result of which four Defense Army soldiers were killed. Moreover, it should be noted that even prior to the last Brussels negotiations, simultaneously, Azerbaijan continued to escalate the situation both in Artsakh and on the border with Armenia. One of the most outstanding examples of the latter is the use of the Armenian prime minister's willingness to recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan as a justification for blocking the Lachin Corridor by Azerbaijan. Generally, as already mentioned, the reason for such positioning of Baku is that Azerbaijan currently sees opportunities to get the most from Armenia.

Moreover, these calculations of Baku are in the range of all key issues with Armenia. In case of Artsakh, Azerbaijan sees an opportunity to completely occupy the historically Armenian-populated region and to ethnically cleanse it, therefore, at least he considers it problematic to directly negotiate with Stepanakert under any "international mechanism" by the international community, thereby gaining a new dependence on various international actors. This is the reason why the Artsakh's Road of Life, the Lachin Corridor, has remained blocked for more than seven months, resulting in the humanitarian situation in the region reaching disaster level.

Another humanitarian issue, that is, the issue of Armenian POWs forcibly kept in Baku, has not recorded any significant change since the war. More than three dozen Armenian servicemen remain in captivity; moreover, Azerbaijan continues

to criminally kidnap new servicemen, regularly terrorizing the civilian population in Artsakh and in various regions of Armenia. In the process of delimitation and demarcation, Baku tries to avoid the option of moving the process forward based on the 1970s maps of the USSR, while talking about some fictitious maps. It is within the framework of this logic that although the Armenian side has repeatedly mentioned its willingness to recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan even numerically in the Almaty Declaration, while the Azerbaijani side has not yet made a similar statement. The aim of such positioning of Azerbaijan is to get opportunities to solve the Artsakh problem with its own agenda through manipulative diplomatic practices, using the recognition of Armenia, as well as unilaterally, without exchange, to get the so-called "enclave" territories from Armenia, and not leave the sovereign territories of Armenia occupied in May 2021.

Baku adopted the same position in the process of the unblocking of regional communications, not giving up the notorious Turkish-Azerbaijani "Zangezur Corridor" project. And, although the universally accepted principle in the issue of unblocking in almost all negotiation platforms is to bring the process under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the states, nevertheless, the Azerbaijani side refuses the final agreement in every possible way, since for now it sees an opportunity to get the Azerbaijan-Nakhichevan connection through the "corridor" logic.

The above-mentioned realities are the reason why it has not been possible to establish peace in the South Caucasus over two and a half years following the bloody war of 2020. Moreover, enjoying the comprehensive support of Turkey, Baku continues to act from an extremist position, constantly creating instability in the region

and even expanding its geography. During this period, the Azerbaijani authorities purposely escalated the situation with Iran as well, wanting to neutralize the latter's principled policy in regional developments.

In the face of new realities, a purposeful attempt is being made to weaken as much as possible the levers of Iran's influence in the region and in Azerbaijan, especially the Yerevan-Tehran resistance in the issue of implementation of the "Zangezur Corridor" project.

Under the aforementioned circumstances, Armenia's position is aimed at encouraging the negotiation process on all possible platforms to exclude a new military escalation, despite its near-zero effectiveness. By ensuring the continuity of the negotiation process, it is possible to keep the attention of the international community constantly focused on our region, thereby keeping Azerbaijan's aggressive behavior as manageable as possible. At the same time, in the complicated geopolitical situation, amid the security system shaken by the 44-day war, the main problem for Armenia is coping with the non-stop challenges through various and new mechanisms.

Among such mechanisms are the preservation of the previous systems with Russia, despite the significant decrease in their effectiveness, cooperation with Iran, especially in the part of Syunik, the deepening of relations with India in the military and political fields, the diversification and deepening of cooperation with the US and the EU, especially with France and other western countries, the process of normalization of relations with Turkey, meetings with Azerbaijan in various negotiation formats, etc. That is to say, in such a crucial period of history, the actual processes are often important even in the face of zero efficiency.

Nagorno-Karabakh were not defeated. It should be noted that NKAO is not an entity created by the will of the Armenians living there, but is a coercion. Therefore, on the one hand, the above-mentioned mobilization is supposed to be pro-Azerbaijani, since an attempt is being made to establish the Azerbaijani nation; on the other hand, it is condemned to be anti-Armenian and anti-Artsakh, since by creating institutions, Azerbaijanis try to enter into competition with already existing institutions. Secondly, there is a hierarchical difference: It was "embarrassing" for the Azerbaijanis to compete and lose to a lower hierarchical-

ly subordinate entity, Nagorno-Karabakh, during the USSR years. What Azerbaijan has done and is doing is a series of actions aimed at making a political nation. The creation, or rather the appropriation of culture and history, has been a continuous chain of actions by Azerbaijan since Soviet times, as it was an imperative requirement for Baku, alongside Iran, Georgia and Armenia, neighbors with a rich history and culture in the region. Cultural appropriation for Azerbaijan is done at the expense of the peoples of the region. This creates the basis which will allow Azerbaijan to position themselves side-by-side with

Iran, Armenia and Georgia. The Azerbaijanization of Iranian culture goes parallel to the process of declaring the monuments of Artsakh as Aghvanian. By Azerbaijanization of Nizami and Aghvanization of Armenian culture of Artsakh, Azerbaijan creates/invents the complex of spiritual and material culture. Accordingly, if looking at the conflict from an anthropological point of view, Azerbaijani policy gradually limits the cultural inclusion of Artsakh (in Soviet times, NKAO), and there will come a moment when Azerbaijan will try to say that the current population of Artsakh is also Armenianized Aghvans.

In the first half of 2023, Armenia was visited by nearly 1.9 million tourists, which exceeds the historically highest result of the comparable period of 2019 by about 30%. In Armenia, as well as all over the world, among the most affected fields by the coronavirus pandemic was tourism, which was not only fully restored, but also stands for record scores. Following the pandemic, the war and other regional developments, in 2023, all prerequisites were created to reach and even surpass the 2019 indicator. Actually, Armenia changes its current positioning in the global tourism market and aspires to become a tourism hub of the region, for which it tries to create prerequisites by providing diverse offers.

On the one hand, Armenia attracts tourists from the point of view of cultural, entertainment, adventure, medical, and nature tourism; while on the other hand, due to the fact that it is a transit zone.

In fact, one of the most important prerequisites for tourism development is the presence of developed infrastructure, the availability and quality of services, for the provision of which active works are currently being carried out, such as through modernization of the transport network, the introduction of new routes from airports, etc. Private tourism companies, in turn, offer diversified inbound packages, not only in the capital, but also throughout the country. The main destinations are Gyumri, as a colorful and cultural city, Jermuk as a resort destination, Garni-Geghard, with historical and cultural places, Syunik and Dilijan with beautiful nature, Yenokavan for extreme leisure lovers, Tsakhkadzor for winter sports, etc.; and all of these are united by an important component of gastrotourism, which will please any demanding tourist.

The culture of festivals, such as wine days, workshops (especially in rural areas) has also started to develop in Armenia.

Actually, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has changed long established air routes, creating new opportunities for other countries, including Armenia. Currently, more than four dozen airlines operate flights from Armenia to various destinations, both to Europe and Asia. Especially, following the Russia-Ukraine war, both the destinations and the number of flights have increased. Moreover, in the last few years, there has been a lot of activity in the market, both with the increase of national airlines and the entry of European budget airlines. This, in turn, contributed to the increase in the offer of budget tickets and diversity of destinations, used not only by Armenians, but also by citizens of Russia, Ukraine and other countries. Thus, due to geopolitical developments, the entry of national air carriers and budget airlines, Armenia has also begun to be considered as a transit destination. Emphasizing the presence of developed transport infrastructures with neighboring countries, direct flights in this direction are also increasing. For instance, two Armenian airlines have announced the launch of the Yerevan-Tehran-Yerevan route, which can give an impetus to the Armenia-Iran passenger flow.

10 countries provided tourism growth to Armenia in January-June 2023

Rank	Country	number of tourists, k	In total, %
1.	Russia	519	52
2.	Georgia	115	11
3.	Iran	58	6
4.	USA	17	2
5.	Ukraine	12	1
6.	India	12	1
7.	Germany	10	1
8.	France	9	1
9.	Belarus	8	1
10.	China	5	1

The geographical distribution of tourists arriving in Armenia is quite concentrated. This year, more than half of the 10 countries which provided the main tourist growth are the Russian Federation, with 519,163 tourists, Georgia, with about 11%, Iran is in the third place, with 6%, or with 58,494 tourists. Moreover, about 64% of tourists prefer to visit Armenia by air (Zvartnots and Shirak airports, which had a record number of 3,697,000 passengers in 2022), and the most popular among the five land routes is the Bagratashen border checkpoint on the Armenian-Georgian border, 21.6%, followed by Bavra, 9%, and the Meghri border checkpoint on the Armenian-Iranian border, around 4%.

Tourism in Armenia attracts visitors with its accessibility, safety and diversity. In general, according to calculations of the Central Bank of Armenia, the average spending in 2022 was \$1,100-1,200 per tourist.

Based on various international rating scales, Armenia is on the list of the safest countries in the world; it is a country of low risk, where the safety of tourists is at a fairly high level. Statistical data prove that the field has a great potential to make Armenia a regional tourism hub, including developing a component of being a transit country connecting Asia with Europe.

It is noteworthy, that regional tourism also has an important component in the development of tourism in Armenia. It is estimated that 42% of tourists come to Armenia within the framework of regional visits. The number one tourists to Armenia are Russians, followed by Georgians.

Iran ranks third in Armenia by a number of tourist visits, especially the number of tourists increase during the Nouruz holidays. However, the tourism potential between the countries in the region is not fully realized; it is possible to make the field more active by developing awareness campaigns and marketing interactions as well as offering joint tourist packages.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran's
three-month
exports to
Armenia up

IRNA – The value of Iran's exports to Armenia increased 38.4 percent in the first quarter of the current Iranian year (March 21-June 21) compared to the same period last year, announced the spokesman of the Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mine, and Trade.

Rouhollah Latifi said that Iran exported 335,000 tons of commodities worth \$101.747 million to Armenia in the three-month period.

Tehran,
Baku agree
to complete
Astarachay
Bridge soon

IRNA – Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash and Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Shahin Mustafayev agreed, in a telephone conversation, to complete the construction of Astarachay Bridge on the border river of Aras, and launch it within the next four months. As the heads of the Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Committee, the officials stressed the need for the development of economic relations between the two countries.

Iran's inflation rate drops under
40%: Gov't spokesman

Downward trend for inflation continues: CBI governor

Economy Desk

The inflation rate in Iran has reached below 40 percent, said Iranian government spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi on Tuesday.

"The government's plans are aimed at controlling inflation and realizing economic growth, as the Iranian government's economic spokesman Ehsan Khandouzi has explained many times about the economic package of the government," Bahadori Jahromi told IRNA.

The latest report by the Statistical Center of Iran on the inflation rate shows the continuation of the downward trend of point-to-point inflation in the country, so that in the month to July 22, inflation decreased by nearly 2.5 percent compared to the related figure for the preceding month, which reached below 40

percent. Talking on liquidity growth during the two years of the current administration, the official said that with a decrease of about 13.8 percent, liquidity of the country has reached about 29 percent.

Meanwhile, Mohammadreza Farzin, the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), said on Tuesday, "With the decrease in the inflation rate and the stability of the currency market, we witness a decrease in property prices in Tehran."

Speaking at a meeting with Iranian economists, the CBI governor noted that since May 22, the inflation rate has started to decline, and the estimates indicate a reduction in the inflation rate for the current month (started July 23) as well.

Emphasizing that the control of exchange rate fluctua-



tions by the CBI has brought stability in various markets, he said: "With the extension

of the current monetary and currency policies, we hope that the inflation rate and

currency will drop to lower figures."

By following the present

policies, we will see a decrease in the inflation rate in the next year, Farzin added.

IRAN DAILY

How can Pakistan improve its economy?

The nation should increase its exports to \$90b



Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's
correspondent
in Pakistan

All the groups related to the economy, including exporters, are suffering due to the declining economy of Pakistan; the people suffering from inflation are demanding immediate relief, while the current government of Pakistan has lost the right to give any kind of relief to its people after signing an agreement with the IMF.

110 million people living below the poverty line have been affected by the increase in electricity prices in Pakistan after the IMF agreement, while people who are fed up with the economic conditions are looking to end their lives. However, Pakistan's private sector is still not disappointed and is advising the government to come out of the current crisis.

Former president of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and current exporters Mian Naeem Javed said that a few

years ago, Pakistan was far ahead of India in the export of textiles, leather and surgical instruments, but today we cannot even think of competing with India. To compete with India, Pakistan's annual exports should be around \$90 billion.

He further said that if we want to do something, make it possible to trade in local currencies with the Central Asian countries, Iran and China, for India has the market of America and Europe, it has become almost

impossible to compete there. Zafar Paracha, General Secretary of Currency Exchange Association of Pakistan, said that to compete with India, Pakistan will have to increase its foreign exchange reserves from \$8 billion to about \$95 billion, which is currently a dream.

Pakistan Software Warehouse Association Chairman Zohaib Khan says that Pakistan can grow faster than India in the IT sector. From 2019 to 2022, Pakistan has grown 177% in the

IT sector. Despite the economic crisis of the past year, IT exports are more than \$2.5 billion. If Pakistan's policymakers determine the right direction, Pakistan's IT exports can be around \$33 billion.

According to Zohaib Khan, Pakistan has a population of around 120 million youths, if they are given quality and world class training in the IT sector, Pakistan has the potential to overtake India in the IT sector, allowing freelancers and software exporters

to easily bring and take their earned dollars to Pakistan.

He further said that according to the State Bank, about \$2.6 billion is earned from IT exports; according to me, the actual IT exports are \$5 billion, more than half of which is kept by software houses and freelancers abroad because they have to make international payments. If those dollars are brought to Pakistan, sending foreign remittances out becomes very difficult.

Iran remains
world's seventh steelmaker

By Reza
Abesh Ahmadlou
Staff writer

Iranian steelmakers cast 3.2 million tons of crude steel in June, according to statistics released by the World Steel Association (WSA) on Tuesday, indicating that the country has remained at seventh place among steel producing countries. According to WSA data, Iran was the seventh crude steel producer of the world in May. The country's steel ingot production for June 2023 registered a 17.4 percent rise compared to the figure for June 2022. World crude steel production for the 63 coun-

tries reporting to the association was 158.8 million tons in June 2023, a 0.1 percent reduction compared to June 2022. WSA figures showed that Iran was the world's eighth crude steel producer during the first six months of 2023, with 16.1 million tons of output, 4.8 percent more than the related figure for 2022.

China produced 91.1 million tons in June 2023, up 0.4 percent over June 2022, while India produced 11.2 million tons of steel ingots last month, up 12.9 percent compared to the figure for last year, as Japan produced 7.3 million tons, down 1.7 percent compared to the

same month last year. The United States produced 6.8 million tons of crude steel in June, up 0.5 percent. Russia is estimated to have produced 5.8 million tons, up 3.8 percent. South Korea produced 5.5 million tons, down 0.9 percent.

The World Steel Association is one of the largest and most dynamic industry associations in the world, with members in every major steel-producing country. The WSA represents steel producers, national and regional steel industry associations, and steel research institutes. Members represent around 85 percent of global steel production.



NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-38-9440030

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods		
Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	COILED TUBING REEL STRING, QT-800, SINGLE TYPE H2S SERVICE, FITTING FIG.1502 WING WITH SPECIFIED AS OD SIZE, WALL THICKNESS REF.QUALITY TUBING LONG SIZE:15000 FT OD 1.25 IN., W.T. 0.109 IN.	2 RL
02	OD 1.5 IN., W.T. 0.125 IN.	11 RL

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 72,787/10 EURO or 21,148,291,971 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed

via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab
ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P. NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN
PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL
NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex,
 Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
 Tel. No.: 061 34 12 35 89 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

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Iran expands ties with neighboring countries to bolster environmental diplomacy

Social Desk

The Vice President and head of Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE) Ali Salajegheh emphasized the country's commitment to strengthening environmental diplomacy with friendly, neighboring, and Muslim nations during a meeting with the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Iran on Tuesday. Salajegheh highlighted the shared cultural and religious ties between Iran and Kazakhstan, expressing hope for the expansion of their relationship across various sectors, IRNA reported. He further underscored the importance of the Tehran Convention, a joint agreement for the protection of the Caspian Sea environment, despite its lack of tangible achievements to date.

The vice president voiced concern over the deteriorating conditions of the Caspian Sea, noting a decrease in water flow and an increase in pollutant concentration. He stressed the need for cooperative management among the coastal countries to address these issues.

Salajegheh also referred to Iran's role as host of the 7th COP summit and the anniversary of the Tehran Convention, expressing optimism for swift resolution of outstanding issues from the 6th COP summit.

In light of global climate change and its repercussions, Salajegheh identified dust storms as a significant consequence requiring international attention and joint agreements. He recalled a regional meeting of environment ministers hosted by Iran on July 12,

2022, which led to the United Nations General Assembly designating July 12 as International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms. The head of DoE announced that Iran will host an international conference on dust management on September 9-10, 2023, expecting the participation of at least 60 high-ranking officials from around the world. He extended an invitation to the Minister of Environment and the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to attend the conference.

Kazakhstan's ambassador to Iran, Askhat Orazbay, acknowledged the dust problem as a challenge in Kazakhstan as well and viewed the upcoming conference as an opportunity to explore management solutions. Orazbay also recognized the Caspian Sea as a shared heritage and stressed the



Head of Iran's Department of the Environment Ali Salajegheh (r) meets Kazakhstan's Ambassador Askhat Orazbay in Iran on July 25, 2023.
● IRNA

need for cooperation among Tehran Convention member states to address its environmental challenges.

Orazbay affirmed the strong relations between Iran and Kazakhstan across all fields, including environmental cooperation.

End of public mask mandate in Iran

Social Desk

The Public Relations and Information Center of Iran's Ministry of Health, in an announcement based on the opinion of the National Scientific Committee on COVID-19, has declared the end of the COVID-19 emergency and provided new guidelines regarding the use

of masks.

The National Scientific Committee on COVID-19 has stated that it is no longer necessary for all members of society to wear masks, according to IRNA.

The committee's opinion is based on the current stable conditions and the cessation of the COVID-19 emergency. Instead of recommending the use of masks for the entire population, the committee emphasizes that only individuals with specific risk factors should continue to use

masks. These risk factors include old age, underlying diseases, immune deficiency, and conditions related to the kidneys, heart, lungs, and liver. Additionally, individuals who have been in direct contact with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases are also advised to use masks.

In healthcare centers situated in areas where general or cluster transmission of COVID-19 has been reported, it is recommended that masks be worn by all individuals, including employees and

clients. However, in areas where there are isolated cases of definite transmission, mask usage is advised solely for employees who come into contact with patients. In recent weeks, Iran has witnessed days without any deaths attributed to COVID-19.

Regarding the vaccination campaign, the Ministry of Health has disclosed the latest figures. To date, 65,237,012 individuals have received the first dose of the vaccine, while 58,632,705 people have completed the recommend-

ed two doses. Furthermore, 31,731,549 individuals have received three doses or more, signifying the administration of a booster shot. Cumulatively, the total number of vaccine doses administered in the country has reached 155,601,266.

With these developments, the Public Relations and Information Center of the Ministry of Health aims to provide the public with updated guidance in line with the evolving situation surrounding the pandemic.



● IRNA

'Love of the hero of Alqama made me perform ta'zieh'



By Mahdieh Qazvinian
Staff writer

He was a 4-year-old boy when he saw, for the first time, the ta'zieh of Abbas ibn Ali (brother of Imam Hussein) in the main Hosseiniyeh of Damavand city. He stood alone in a corner of the Hosseiniyeh under a big black flag, staring at the arena where ta'zieh was performed. He remembers that ta'zieh artists, in their special clothes, helmets and armor, were performing the scene of Abbas ibn Ali's martyrdom – the moment when the enemy cut off the blessed hand of Abbas with a sword. "For several days, I asked my parents why they cut off his hand. Why did they shoot him in the

eye with an arrow? Who was Abbas ibn Ali," recalls Amir Masoud Alijani, a 36-year-old ta'zieh performer.

He has played the role of Abbas ibn Ali many times since then – the same hero engraved in his mind as a child. Recalling those early memories, Amir Masoud says, "In response to my questions about Hazrat-e Abbas's bravery, my father explained that he was the son of Imam Ali and Umm al-Banin – a hero who inherited courage from his father." Amir Masoud goes on with his narrative, saying, "After the martyrdom of all Imam Hussein's companions and family, when Abbas became thirsty, he asked the Imam for permission to fight, saying 'Brother! My chest is tight and I am tired of life. Let me take revenge on these hypo-

crites.' Imam Hussein said 'The children are thirsty. Let's go to the Euphrates together – maybe we can bring some water to the tents. Then you may go to battle.' This was when the children's cries of thirst were loud, and Abbas could hear them."

When Abbas ibn Ali reached the Euphrates, he filled his waterskin but did not drink a single drop, intending to bring it back for the thirsty children. On his way back, he battled the enemy troops besieging the river. In the attack, they cut off first his right hand, then his left.

Amir Masoud says, "From my father's stories, I fell in love with ta'zieh and the Ahl al-Bayt. My love for the hero of Alqama made me become a ta'zieh performer myself."

But later, when he became a performer, he was drawn to the role of Hurr ibn Yazid, who had been part of the forces sent to confront Imam Hussein but later repented and joined the Imam's side. Of Hurr, Amir Masoud says, "When Hurr saw Imam Hussein, he pledged allegiance to him. Out of shame, he hung a boot around his neck as a sign of repentance, and fought sincerely for the Imam at Karbala. He is one of the great figures of Shia Islam."

Amir Masoud continues, "Ta'zieh conveys many messages, most importantly the repentance and redemption of Hurr, Hazrat-e Abbas's selflessness at the Euphra-

tes, and Imam Hussein's sacrifice of his own children to preserve Islam."

"When the ta'zieh begins and I see the mourners for Imam Hussein, I feel a sense of excitement and pride that this tradition lives on and the flag of Hussein's remembrance still flies," says Amir Masoud.

He believes ta'zieh plays a vital role in preserving Iranian culture and religion. As a dramatic form established in Iran since the Safavid era, incorporating all musical instruments and performed live without cuts, it deserves to be valued and supported so future generations may continue to experience this art.

Ta'zieh is Amir Masoud's life priority. Through it he has found his humanity, and he treasures the memories – of the audiences, the performances, all of it. A bank clerk in Damavand, Amir Masoud believes Ta'zieh should not be a source of income, as that could diminish its spirit of mourning and sacrifice.

Above all, Amir Masoud strives to emulate Imam Hussein's morals and behavior, remembering

the Ahl al-Bayt and preserving the ancient art of ta'zieh that keeps their memory alive.



● COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Iran's box office surpasses \$1.7m in a month



Arts & Culture Desk

According to the Cinema Organization of Iran, the total box office revenue for cinemas nationwide from June 22 to July 22 has reached \$1,772,220. Over the course of a month, the country's cinemas attracted a total audience of 2,084,459 attendees, Honar Online reported. Among the top-grossing cinemas, 40 theaters contributed more than \$1,160,000 to the overall sales. Daily sales statistics revealed that June 23 of the current year recorded the highest revenue in a single day, with earnings surpassing \$113,000.

Moreover, on June 27, during the mid-year ticket discount promotion, cinemas attracted an audience of 196,701 people.

The cinema industry's success during this period indicates positive momentum for the entertainment sector in Iran.

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Narration of Ashura portrayed through arts: *Minister*



Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili stated that the school of Imam Hussein (PBUH) has been intertwined with arts, expressing that the narration of all aspects of Ashura has taken place through various art forms such as composing poems, chanting elegies, playing music, and creating visual works.

According to IRNA, Esmaili made the statement while attending the Ashura arts tent in Tehran. He mentioned that in recent years, with the in-

roduction of modern arts and changes in public space, there were concerns about the possible fading of some Ashura rituals. However, fortunately, over the past two years, Tehran's Municipality has taken proactive measures to preserve and revive ancient Ashura arts. As a result, many religious ceremonies and mourning rituals during the month of Muharram have been re-created.

The minister referred to the Ashura arts tent as a gathering place to demonstrate the deep-rooted mourning culture of the people for Imam Hussein (PBUH).

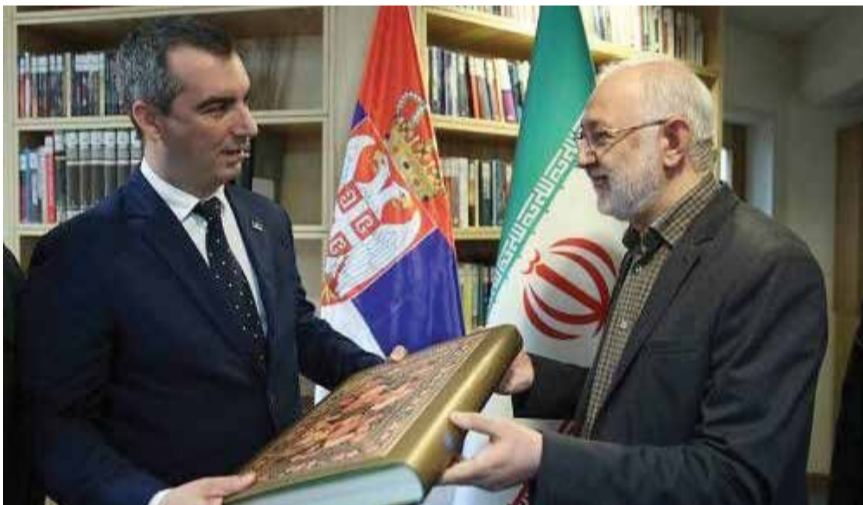
Esmaili emphasized that the significance of the event in Haft-e-Tir Square, as one of the bustling city centers where citizens with diverse tastes and perspectives gather, conveys the message that the culture of Ashura is a unifying and harmonizing factor for all the people of our country.



Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili, attends a Muharram mourning event in Tehran on July 24, 2023.

● BORNA

Serbian Parliament speaker presents five historical books



Arts & Culture Desk

Serbian Parliament Speaker Vladimir Orlic, along with his delegation, visited the National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI), exploring its vast collection of books and non-book resources. During the visit, Orlic generously donated five valuable and rare books on the cultural and social history of Serbia to the Iranian library. According to IRNA, the donation included a significant historical manuscript belonging to Serbia's 19th-century Constitution, which served as the foundation for the country's constitutional law. Additionally, a book detailing the history of the Serbian Parliament from

its establishment to the present, a volume about the history of the Kosovo region, and a publication on Serbia's cultural heritage were also among the contributions presented to the Iranian library. Alireza Mokhtarpour, the head of Iran's National Library and Archives, extended a warm welcome to Vladimir Orlic and his accompanying delegation, emphasizing the importance of strengthening cultural exchanges between the two countries. Mokhtarpour highlighted the significance of implementing the memorandum of understanding between the national libraries of Serbia and Iran. As a gesture of reciprocity, Mokhtarpour presented a valuable edition of

the Divan of Hafez, the renowned Persian poet, to the Serbian guests. Wrapping up the visit, Orlic and his delegation expressed their appreciation for the rich literary heritage preserved within Iran's National Library and Archives. Iran and Serbia have a longstanding cultural relationship, exemplified by Serbia's selection as the special guest of the 31st Tehran International Book Fair in 2018. In January, Tamara Vucic, the wife of Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic, also visited the NLAI. During her extensive tour of the library, Vucic generously presented a collection of 32 books on Serbia, which were showcased in a dedicated section.

Correction:

In yesterday's issue, on page 8, we made two errors in the "Iran-Japan..." story. The correct name is Kenju Murakami, not Kenjo. And the correct title is 'minister', not 'chargé d'affaires' of the Japanese Embassy in Tehran.



सत्यमेव जयते
 EMBASSY OF INDIA
 TEHRAN

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ON THE OCCASION OF THE 76th ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA, ALL INDIAN NATIONALS IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO A FLAG HOISTING CEREMONY ON TUESDAY, 15th AUGUST, 2023 AT 09:30 HOURS AT THE VENUE GIVEN BELOW:

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