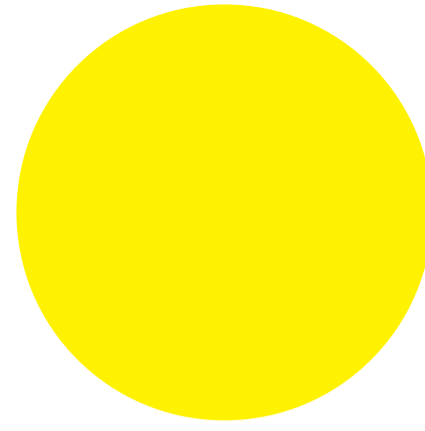




Iran to sue South Korea over frozen funds [2 >](#)



Iran projected to export 9.42m tons of LPG in 2023: Platts [6 >](#)



Iran Daily



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Malley saga no hindrance to resumption of talks



By **Ebrahim Beheshti**
Staff writer

Robert Malley's dismissal from the position of the US representative for Iran affairs has become increasingly controversial, especially after the release of an audio file containing his private remarks in an Iranian newspaper. Over the past months, analyses have suggested that Malley, as a member of the Democratic spectrum within the Biden administration, had taken Iran negotiations seriously to reach a deal over the revival of the 2015 nuclear agreement. Apparently, his seriousness led to frustration and the removal of some of his colleagues working with him over the Iran case, including Richard Nephew. [Page 2 >](#)

Iran Navy seeks effective presence in high seas

Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said his forces were committed to achieving an effective and successful presence in the international arena and raising the Iranian flag. Admiral Irani made the remarks on Saturday as he arrived at Pulkovo International Airport in St. Petersburg to attend the parade celebrating the Day of the Russian Navy, Press TV reported. The Navy chief highlighted naval diplomacy as a key mission pursued by navies worldwide, including the Iranian Navy. He stressed that annual joint exercises conducted with the navies of Russia and China in Chabahar, the Makran coast, and the Indian Ocean were part of their naval diplomacy efforts. [Page 3 >](#)

Nuclear desalination project running in Bushehr

National Desk

Iran recently started a seawater desalination project in Bushehr, facilitated by the southern port city's nuclear power plant, a top official from the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said. In an interview with Mehr news agency, Deputy Head of the AEOI Pejman Shirmardi said that Bushehr nuclear power plant features a unit capable of producing up to 70,000 cubic meters of fresh water daily. He emphasized that utilizing peaceful nuclear technology offers solutions to significant challenges, such as the scarcity of fresh water and management of industrial waste. Shirmardi mentioned that, in line with the AEOI's directive to establish nuclear power plants along the Persian Gulf's shores, specifically in Makran's coasts, and a region in the north, site selection programs for seawater desalination have commenced. [Page 2 >](#)

Nuclear desalination ...

These initiatives are expected to be implemented soon, addressing a considerable portion of the country's water supply issues, he said.

The deputy head of AEOI expressed that this signifies a tangible application of nuclear energy, illustrating how nuclear energy can directly contribute to people's lives.

He stressed that "the use of atomic energy and peaceful nuclear technology to improve the quality of life of the people is an underrepresented and often overlooked aspect, which the general public may not be fully aware of. However, this technology can play a crucial role in tackling significant challenges like water scarcity and industrial effluents."

Furthermore, Shirmardi highlighted that peaceful nuclear technology can effectively address water conservation and fresh water production. Countries around the world face critical challenges related to treating industrial effluents, reducing air pollution, and preserving food for extended periods. Fortunately, scientists have discovered effective and safe methods to address these issues using nuclear technology, offering promising solutions for the future, he concluded.

Iranian court to try 104 MKO members



IRNA

AFP – A criminal court in Tehran published an advertisement on Saturday, naming 104 fugitive members of the anti-Iran Mujahedeen Khalq Organization (MKO) terrorist group, calling on them to appoint defense attorneys for themselves within a month.

The advertisement said that since a lawsuit had been filed against them earlier and since their whereabouts were unknown, they would have to come forward and name their attorneys.

"Otherwise, the necessary decision would be taken according to law."

Among the individuals named were Masoud Rajavi and Maryam Qajar Azodanlou (Rajavi), the ring-leaders of the MKO terrorist group.

Last month, Albanian police raided a camp where the members of the MKO were housed, seizing computer devices linked to prohibited activities. Later, Fars news agency reported that some of the devices seized in the raid had been handed over to Iran.

Iran to sue South Korea over frozen funds



International Desk

The incumbent Iranian government has commenced formal legal proceedings

against South Korea, which has refused to pay off oil debts after extensive diplomatic efforts. In a letter, dated July 22,

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi referred a governmental bill about the financial dispute with South Korea to Speaker of Par-

liament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, according to Tasnim news agency. According to the bill, ratified by the cabinet on July

5, the dispute between the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Government of South Korea is going to arbitration.

South Korea was the third largest customer of Iranian crude oil and the number one buyer of Iranian condensate before 2018 when former US president Donald Trump pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal and re-imposed sanctions on Iran.

Since then, the East Asian country has refused to repatriate the funds it owes Iran for energy imports due to fears of US penalties on its economy.

Unofficial estimates suggest



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (l) and Governor of Central Bank of Iran Mohammadreza Farzin

TASNIM

Iran has more than \$7 billion worth of funds in two South Korean banks that it cannot access simply because banks and authorities

in the East Asian country refuse to process them because of fears of facing US penalties.

Earlier this year, Iranian media outlets reported that Seoul and Tehran were holding working-level consultations seeking ways to resolve the issue of Iranian assets frozen in South Korea.

Iranian officials have stated the South Korean government is obliged to release the country's frozen funds, stressing that unilateral US sanctions cannot justify Seoul's inaction in repaying debts to Tehran, Press TV wrote.

The two sides had previously agreed to use the funds for the purchase of humanitarian items by Iran, something that has again been prevented as a result of South Korea's commitment to the illegal US sanctions.

Tehran has imposed restrictions on imports from South Korea in retaliation for Seoul's illegal compliance with the US sanctions.

Malley saga no ...

Malley had discussions with Iranian representatives

Page 1 >

in Oman, Qatar, and New York. It is undisputed that he represented the US administration and made every effort in his negotiations to preserve or gain more concessions for the United States. Similarly, Iranian representatives also pursued the same principle of seeking greater concessions, and this very approach might be one of the reasons for the protracted negotiations.

However, the specifics behind Malley's dismissal are not clear, and it is uncertain who might benefit from his removal or whether it is a set-up against him, as some media outlets have suggested. Despite Iran's focus on developing relations with China and Russia, the Islamic Republic has not

neglected resolving its disputes with the West. The Iranian government engaged in several rounds of negotiations with Western counterparts to lift sanctions and even conducted talks for prisoner exchanges.

In recent months, discussions between Iranian and American delegations have taken place in Oman, Qatar, and even New York. Consequently, it is natural for the Iranian government, who had been committed to the negotiation process, not to be pleased with any halt or failure to achieve results. Emphasizing a principled framework to safeguard interests does not imply opposition to negotiations or a lack of willingness to reach a conclusion.

On the other hand, the US administration, despite facing pressure from Republican rivals

over negotiating with Iran, considers reaching an agreement with Iran a significant achievement, particularly due to the severe criticism of Trump's policies toward the Iran nuclear deal during Biden's election campaign. US officials currently view Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA as a mistake. Any agreement with Iran, regardless of its specifics, would be beneficial for Americans, providing them with a better opportunity to focus their efforts on traditional competition with China and managing the situation in Ukraine. It seems that these very considerations have led them not to display a negative reaction toward the Iran-Saudi Arabia agreement and their regional détente. The diplomatic negotiations over the past few months between Iran and

some regional countries such as Oman and Qatar indicate that Tehran and Washington are on a path to easing tensions and resolving disputes. While normalizing relations between the two countries, if there is a willingness for it, may have a long way to go, both sides have preferred to prevent further escalations in line with their national interests. In this context, there were talks about reaching a temporary understanding between Iran and the United States with the goal of initially managing the existing tensions, in order to prevent their exacerbation. This temporary agreement could potentially pave the way for more comprehensive talks to clinch a more sustainable deal in the future.

In the midst of these negotiations, it appears that certain third parties, such as Israel, do not want to see any management or control of tensions be-

tween Iran and the US. These parties prefer that the US remains preoccupied with their issues rather than focusing on them. For example, despite strategic relations with Israel, the US has criticized Benjamin Netanyahu's hardline policies. Other states also view American attention on Iran as beneficial for their military or economic rivalry with Washington. In addition to these negative influences from external actors, there are political factions within the US and Iran that are not interested in mitigating tensions through dialogue for various reasons. It is clear that Republicans in the US oppose any agreements Democrats make with Iran. Moreover, Israeli lobbies and the limited influence of the Iranian opposition in the US political landscape may also play destructive roles in relation to Iran-US relationship. Therefore, any blow to

diplomacy, as a reasonable option for managing tensions and a means to lift sanctions, will be welcomed by states or powerhouses that perceive their interests in the continuation or escalation of tensions between Tehran and Washington.

Recent media controversies surrounding Malley might help the opponents of managing Iran-US tensions and the resumption of negotiations to revive the JCPOA and lift sanctions. Nevertheless, what truly matters are the official positions of the governments involved, not media evaluations or analyses.

Although there are ambiguities and doubts about how this confidential audio file was leaked, there is a clear distinction between media positions and official government stances. Thus, it does not seem that such peripheral issues would seriously hinder the resumption of Iran-US talks.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



US threatens Kenya over links to Iran

International Desk

The administration of US President Joe Biden warned that Washington's allies, especially Kenya, will face a "reputation risk" and potential isolation from lucrative deals in case of having links to Iran and Russia.

Brian Nelson, the US Treasury's undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, raised the alarm in a meeting with Kenya's President William Ruto on Friday, Press TV reported.

"Iran and Russia are isolat-



Brian Nelson, the Treasury's undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence

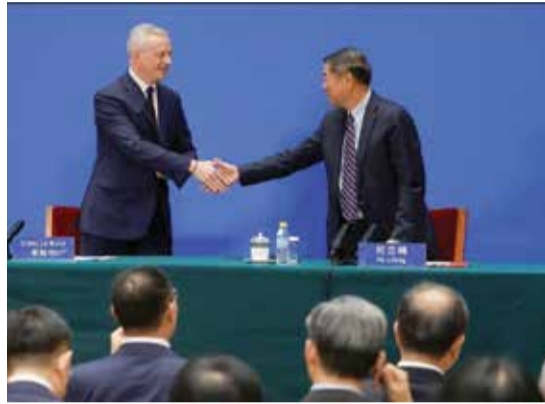
TheEastAfrican

ed economically, and either they are looking for partners or they are looking for new channels to have economic relationships," Nelson claimed. He, however, stressed that

by doing so, the US was not in any way interfering with the bilateral ties of either Kenya or any other country. "We are not going to provide a view on the bilateral relationship between Kenya and any other country in the world as that is for Kenya to decide," said Nelson in an interview with TheEastAfrican.

The Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi held talks with his counterparts in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe earlier this month and signed a total of 21 documents on cooperation in different areas.

China hopes France can help take heat out of relations with EU



China's Vice Premier He Lifeng and French Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire attend the China-France Economic and Financial Dialogue at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, China, on July 29, 2023.
● THOMAS PETER/REUTERS

China hopes France can "stabilise the tone" of EU-China relations, vice-premier He Lifeng told a senior French minister in Beijing on Saturday, as European leaders debate how to "de-risk" but also cooperate with the world's second-largest economy. He also told Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire that China is willing to deepen cooperation with France in traditional areas such as finance as well as in science and technological innovation,

in contrast with Beijing's more cautious though candid talks with visiting top US officials, Reuters reported. "It is hoped that France will stabilise the tone of friendly cooperation between China and the EU," He said.

While recent visits to China by US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen hinged on talk of "decoupling", France's top trade official suggested a "deadline of the end of 2024 to reinforce our economic and financial operations", ahead of the two countries' ninth Economic and Financial Dialogue.

China is France's third largest trade partner behind the EU and the US, but French firms are becoming increasingly concerned they could get caught in the crossfire of rising rivalry between the world's two economic superpowers. EU governments last month also approved an 11th tranche of sanctions against Russia that could hit Chinese firms considered to be circumventing measures already in place. Le Maire said the three challenges the two countries should work together on are the green transition, reorganisation of value chains, and technological revolution, while also raising market access issues for French companies in the banking, nuclear, cosmetics and agricultural industries.

"It is essential to think about the expansion and deepening of economic and financial cooperation between France and China," La Maire said.

In a news conference after the discussions, Le Maire said important advances had been made in French-Chinese relations in the cosmetics, aerospace, food and beverages, and finance sectors, while He said the Chinese side appreciated France's decision to extend Huawei 5G licences in some cities. China's He told his guests the meeting was a "positive signal that China and France will work together to address challenges and inject stability into an uncertain world", which has "accelerated into a new situation of instability and uncertainty" not seen in 100 years.

More Wagner fighters move closer to Polish border: Poland PM

A group of a hundred soldiers from the Russian Wagner group have moved closer to the Belarusian city of Grodno near the Polish border, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said on Saturday.

Poland, a former Warsaw Pact member which has been a full member of the US-led NATO military alliance since 1999, has been concerned about the possible spillover of war on to its territory ever since the war began in Ukraine in February 2022, Reuters reported.

Earlier this month, Poland began moving more than 1,000 troops to the east of the country amid rising concerns that the presence of Wagner fighters in Belarus could lead to increased tension on its border.

"The situation is getting increasingly dangerous ... Most likely they (the Wagner personnel) will be disguised as the Belarusian border guard and help illegal migrants get to the Polish territory (and) destabilise Poland," Morawiecki said at a press conference in Gliwice, western Poland.

"They will most likely try to enter Poland pretending to be illegal migrants and this poses additional threats," Morawiecki said. However he did not give the source of his information on the Wagner movements, and Anton Motolko, founder of the Belarusian opposition Hajun project which monitors military activity in the country, told Reuters his group had not seen any evidence of the Wagner group moving closer to Grodno.

The city has a potentially significant position given it is near the Suwalki Gap, a strategic strip of land along the Polish-Lithuanian border, which divides Belarus, Russia's ally, from the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad.

Earlier in July, Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin was shown in a video welcoming his fighters to Belarus, telling them they would take no further part in the Ukraine war for now but ordering them to gather their strength for Africa - where they are involved in a number of conflicts - while they train the Belarusian army.

The following day, some Wagner fighters arrived at the training ground of the 38th airborne assault brigade outside the city of Brest, just a few miles from the Polish border.

Wagner's move to Belarus was part of a deal that ended the group's mutiny attempt in June, when they took control of a Russian military headquarters, marched on Moscow and threatened to tip Russia into civil war, President Vladimir Putin has said.



Poland has put up a fence along its border with Belarus.
● REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Spain's Socialists lose seat

REUTERS - Spain's Socialists have emerged with one seat fewer after counts of votes from abroad in last week's election, making it harder for them to be able to form a left-wing coalition as they would need the support of hardline Catalan separatists rather than just their abstention, analysts told Reuters on Saturday.

In Sunday's close-fought election, neither the left or right blocs won enough seats to form a majority and Catalan separatist parties Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) and Junts emerged as kingmakers, both controlling seven seats each. Esquerra is seen as likely to back Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez but if the fresh seat count is confirmed by the electoral commission it appears that Junts, the more hardline of the Catalan parties, would also have to actively support him for him to be able to form a government.

Kenyan opposition says reached deal with gov't



AFP - Kenya's opposition on Saturday announced it had reached an agreement with the government to form a joint committee "to resolve our differences amicably", following weeks of protests and political unrest.

"Determined to resolve our differences amicably for the benefit of all our people, we have therefore agreed with Kenya Kwanza to establish a committee," said the opposition statement, referring to the ruling party alliance. Since opposition leader Raila Odinga urged Kenyans to take to the streets in March, his Azimio alliance has staged nine days of sometimes violent protests against the government of President William Ruto.

Qur'an desecrators must be punished: Hezbollah leader

The leader of Hezbollah, one of Lebanon's Shia resistance movements, said Saturday that if governments of Muslim-majority nations do not act against the desecration of the Qur'an, Muslims should "punish" those who facilitate attacks on Islam's holy book. The comments by Hassan Nasrallah came in a

video address to tens of thousands gathered in Beirut's southern suburbs to mark Ashoura, a Shia holy day commemorating the seventh-century martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Imam Hussein (PBUH), AP wrote. Nasrallah slammed recent incidents in which the Qur'an was burned or oth-

erwise desecrated at authorized demonstrations in Sweden and Denmark. He said Muslims should watch for the outcome of an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, scheduled to take place in Baghdad on Monday to discuss the organization's response to the Qur'an burnings. The organization and its

member states should "send a firm, decisive and unequivocal message to these governments that any repeat of the attacks will be met with a boycott," Nasrallah said. If they do not, he said, Muslim youth should "punish the desecrators". He did not elaborate on what such a boycott and punishment should entail.



Iran-US talks course to remain unchanged



By Hassan Beheshtipour
International
affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Amidst recent developments concerning Robert Malley, the former US representative for Iran affairs, a question arises: Does his removal from office and exclusion from Iran-US talks jeopardize the course of talks between the two countries? Past experience indicates that in

the political structures of both Iran and the US, strategies remain largely unaffected by the dismissal or replacement of an individual. Strategies are fundamentally long-term and enduring. While tactics may shift with a new president taking office, strategies seldom undergo significant alterations.

Although Malley was a politician with a positive inclination toward engaging with Iran, it is crucial to remember that he was representing the US administration, and undoubtedly, he had America's interests at heart during the negotiations with Iran. One should

not interpret the situation in a way that suggests Malley was solely focused on securing Iran's interests, and his departure closes the chapter on talks. While his departure might slow down the pace of talks or make reaching an understanding more challenging, it cannot alter the trajectory of negotiations, as critical decisions in both Iran and the US are not solely made by a diplomat or even the secretary of state. Therefore, if there remains political will in Tehran and Washington to continue talks, recent events, such as Malley's dismissal and the release of an audio file

by an Iranian newspaper, will not have a destructive impact on the negotiations. Evidence also suggest that the governments of Iran and the US continue to emphasize diplomacy concerning the nuclear dossier, the lifting of sanctions, and preventing escalating tensions. Although the conditions of Iran-US talks may not be entirely transparent, making accurate analysis or predictions challenging, what is clear is that both sides are bargaining to gain more concessions and protect their red lines. An agreement is attained when both parties move toward

each other and are willing to compromise on certain demands to safeguard their core interests. Beyond media hypes and created distractions, the essential point is that Iran and the US require a deal even if it is short-term to prevent potential escalation of tensions, resolve the nuclear issue, and lift sanctions. Iran understands that without the lifting of sanctions, it cannot advance its development plans, and the US knows that tightening sanctions cannot prevent Iran from expanding its nuclear program. Therefore, dialogue remains the only viable path forward.

Iran Navy seeks ...

Admiral Irani further noted that he has traveled to St. Petersburg upon the official invitation of the Commander of the Russian Navy, adding that Iranian ships will also take part in the parade. Russia's naval event will be held today with the presence of Russian President Vladimir Putin and high-ranking defense officials from 21 countries. The Iranian Navy has deployed three vessels to Russia to take part in the parade north of the Caspian Sea.

Ashura Tent in Tehran hosting mourners of Muharram



jamejonline.ir



jamejonline.ir

Iranica Desk

A large tent, called *khey-meh-ye Ashura*, has been set up in Haft-e Tir Square in Tehran in cooperation with Tehran Municipality's Beautification Organization to host the people participating in the mourning ceremonies held on the occasion of Ashura, the tenth day of the month

of Muharram, which is the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Imam of Shia Muslims, and his companions. Due to the fact that the arts related to Ashura have their roots in the country's culture, the tent is paving the way for Iranian artists to display their religious works for enthusiasts during the lunar months

of Muharram and Safar. Managing Director of Tehran Municipality Beautification Organization Reza Sayyadi said, "We are holding various programs during these two months, such as singing of religious hymns and performing *Ta'zieh* (a ritual dramatic art that recounts religious events, historical and mythical stories and folk tales),

pardeh khani (narration of epic stories painted on a screen) and poetry readings". Meanwhile, Head of Tehran's Islamic City Council Mehdi Chamran stated, "This tent, established to show our respect for Imam Hussein (PBUH), will definitely help create a spiritual atmosphere in Tehran during Muharram and Safar".

Lahijan, a unique tourism destination in Gilan Province

Lahijan Pool
Itto.orgSheytan Kuh waterfall
Iranicultura.itKashif al-Saltanah Tomb
kashanehlahijan.com

Lahijan, a city in the northern province of Gilan, has long been involved in the silk trade. In 1932, the first tea factory was set up in Lahijan. Also, a large part of rice and citrus crops of the province is produced there.

Traveling to Lahijan is a unique experience, thus, be sure to include it in your travel plan to Gilan Province.

In addition to its waterfalls, Lahijan Pool and cable car, Lahijan has shown a green and fresh image that attracts many tourists from all over Iran and the world, kental-travel.com wrote.

In ancient Persia, Lahijan means "the land of silk". No wonder one of the products of this 800-year-old city was silk.

Climate

The climate of Lahijan is hot and humid in the summer. Winter begins with strong and warm winds and ends with snowfall. The humidity in this city is high. The average humidity is 76 to 79 percent, but it can reach 100 percent.

Sights

Lahijan has many natural sights. Sheytan Kuh waterfall and Lahijan green roof and pool are among those which are spectacular. Do not forget to take the Lahijan cable car and experience the spectacular view of the mountain. Golshan Bath, Tea History Museum, Kashif al-Saltanah Tomb and Akbariyeh Mosque are among historical attractions of Lahijan.

If you have time, visit Amir Kalayeh International Wetland, which is also known as Shaleh Kol. This wetland is located near Lahijan, next to Chamkhaleh Road to Kiashahr. The historical tomb of Sheikh Zahed Gilani, located in the village of Sheikh Anwar, is also a very impressive historical site.

Shopping centers and souvenirs

Lahijan traditional market is full of colors, smells and tastes. But if you want to buy things other than fresh fish and vegetables, go to its shopping malls.

The image of Lahijan is tied with a cup of hot and fragrant tea. Therefore, it is not possible to go to the city of tea and return without buying it.

Cookies are the next delicious option that you should buy for yourself and as souvenirs for your family and friends. Rice, jams and pickles, smoked fish and salted fish are other famous souvenirs of Lahijan.

Lahijan's varied appetizers and dishes are exciting, delicious and memorable. Fresh fish and sour kebab, local yogurt and pickled garlic can make you hungry. You will find good restaurants in Lahijan that serve these delicacies with quality.

Being a tourist city, you can find a decent number of hotels and other types of accommodations in Lahijan.

As the density of cities in northern Iran is high, you can find luxury or budget hotels in nearby cities as well.

Shift from Persian to Islamic art



Today, Persian art is part of Islamic collections and museums all over the world, but no "Museum of Persian Art" has ever been established.

The shift from "Persian" to "Islamic" happened in parallel with the establishment of the Arab states in former Ottoman territories after World War I and the invention or reassertion of their local, modernist-national traditions. While attempts were made to recategorise the arts according to major ethnic groups in the Middle East based on the 19th-century concept—namely Turkish, Arab and Persian—or according to the religious group by adopting the adjectives such as Muhammadan or Muslim, a new taxonomical category—Islam—was introduced by western art historians in the inter-war period.

Such shifts rarely occur without conflicts. Similar processes have been taking place in many more areas over the wider region from the Caucasus to Afghanistan.

During the height of the "Orient oder Rom" debate but geographically far from the centre of the debate, the Russian Yakov Ivanovich Smirnov (1869-1918) realised that a large number, perhaps the majority, of the splendid metalwork hoards from the Russian steppe and Siberia, which had been previously considered as Persian, was in fact "Iranian."

The chapters of the art of long-forgotten Iranian peoples, such as the Sogdians, the Khwarizmians and the Bactrians, thus began to emerge as the essential narratives of a wider, more variegated Iranian civilisation. This again paralleled important political changes which were to unfold in Central Asia, a Turkic-dominated land, also called "Turan" or "Turkestan." Within a few decades, new states appeared on this part of the Persian cultural domain, such as the Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen and Azerbaijan Soviet republics, completing the fragmentation of Persian art.

Each fiercely claimed to be heir to the same patrimony, often in an exclusionist manner, and was eager to establish a historical link to great mediaeval dynasties, such as the Samanids for Tajikistan and the Timurids for Uzbekistan. To fashion local culture more authentically national, as well as to erase the history of the communist past after the 1990s, some of the best-preserved monuments in the region that had been researched by leading Soviet scholars in the 1960s-70s were, soon after the independence, extensively restored or in some cases completely remodelled as buildings with more recognisably "Persian"-style decoration. At the same time, the Turkic Uzbeks regard themselves as heirs par excellence to the Turanians, and model their monuments on this standpoint.

The above is a lightly edited version of part of a chapter entitled, 'Why Persian art needs to be studied and collected', from a book entitled, 'The Shaping of Persian Art: Collections and Interpretations of the Art of Islamic Iran and Central Asia' edited by Yuka Kadoi and Iván Szántó, published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Big four gearing up as countdown is on for Persian Gulf Pro League



● TASNIM



● IRNA



● khabarvarzeshi.com



● TASNIM

Sports Desk

Iranian football fans are to be treated to another season of excitement in the Persian Gulf Pro League when the country's top-flight action gets underway on Thursday.

It has been just over two months since Persepolis thrashed Nassaji Mazandaran by four goals on the final day to round off one of the tightest title contests recent years with a sixth league crown in seven seasons.

And now the Tehran Reds, which went on lift the Hazfi Cup trophy in May, are again tipped to be engaged in a four-horse race alongside archrival Esteghlal, Sepahan, and Tractor for the ultimate prize of the Iranian club football.

The defending champion will surely benefit from minimum changes being made to the starting XI as striker Issa Alekasir, who played a massive role in the late stages of the Reds' title run-in last season, is

the only marquee player to have left the club – signing for Sepahan.

Persepolis has managed to hold on to the integral members of the best backline in the league, including star goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand, while international center-back Hossein Kan'anizadegan has rejoined from Qatari club Al Ahli to add to the depth of the squad.

Zorya Luhansk forward Shahab Zahedi has also been recruited on loan but Persepolis will be looking to have more signings up front to fill the void caused by the departure of Alekasir as well as Brazilian Leonardo Pereira and Malian Cheick Diabaté.

Sepahan and Tractor, unlike Persepolis, have undergone a somewhat full-scale rebuild as they are desperate to end the Reds' dominance in the Iranian top flight.

Sepahan looked to be on its way to a first title in eight years under Portuguese head coach Jose Morais

last season before untimely wobbles against Tractor and most significantly in a 1-1 home draw against Malavan FC, coupled with seven successive wins for Persepolis, saw the Isfahan-based powerhouse ultimately finish one point adrift of the top spot.

The addition of Alekasir, Reza Asadi, and Kaveh Rezaei to the squad already possessing last season's top scorer Shahriyar Moghanlou promises a formidable frontline for Sepahan, while Reza Shekari and Ehsan Pahlevan have also been signed to bring more creativity to the midfield area.

Tractor will be looking to build on an impressive run in the second half of the previous campaign under Spanish manager Paco Jemez, who will start a first season on the northwest Iranian club's bench.

The defensive renovation has been the top priority for the Spaniard, whose team conceded 34 goals across 30 games – includ-

ing seven against Esteghlal on the final day.

Goalkeeper Hossein Pour-Hamidi, who was second to Beiranvand in the number of clean sheets last term, ended his loan spell at Iralco to return to Tractor, with international center-back Shoja Khalilzadeh joining former Persepolis teammates Mehdi Shiri, Saeed Aqaei, and Siamak Nemati in signing for the club – along with full-back Mohammad Naderi and ex-Foolad center-back Aref Aqasi.

Asadi and Mohammad Abbaszadeh, who finished behind Moghanlou and Mehdi Qayedi in the league's scoring chart, have both embarked on a new chapter elsewhere – a source of concern for Jemez – though former Esteghlal winger Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh ended his disappointing spell at Belgian club Charleroi to seal a move to Tractor.

Meanwhile, Javad Nekounam might regret the timing of his long-awaited

appointment as the head coach of Esteghlal, whose preseason has been hampered by chaos and controversy.

The Blues wasted a vital period of the transfer window trying to lure Beiranvand, before the club CEO Hojjat Karimi stepped down from his role following a failed attempt to sign the Iranian keeper.

The financial shortcomings have added to Esteghlal's misery in recent weeks and the Blues have been struggling to replace Qayedi and Mohammad Mohebbi – the club's leading marksmen last season. Prolific frontman Mehrdad Mohammadi, though, has been brought in from Qatari second-tier club Al Saliya to ease Nekounam's woes, while new signing Armin Sohrabian is expected to start in the backline after Brazilian Raphael Silva parted ways with the Blues.

The opening stages of the upcoming season could play a decisive role in how



L-R: Managers Yafya Golmohammadi (Persepolis), Jose Morais (Sepahan), Paco Jemez (Tractor), and Javad Nekounam (Esteghlal) will be the favorites to lead their teams to glory in the new season of the Persian Gulf Pro League.

the league table will shape up early on as all four will square off against each other until the fifth match-day.

Sepahan and Tractor will lock horns in Isfahan on Thursday, with Persepolis opening its title defense at home against Iralco on the same day, before Esteghlal visits southern Iran to play San'at Naft Abadan on Friday.

The second round of matches will see Persepolis play away to Tractor in a raucous Yadegar-e Imam Stadium in Tabriz on August 9 – nine days before Sepahan hosts Esteghlal. A much-anticipated Tehran derby is scheduled for September 1 at the Azadi Stadium.

Juve kicked out of Europe by UEFA for breaching FFP rules



● MASSIMO PINCA/REUTERS

BBC – Juventus have been kicked out of this season's Europa Conference League by UEFA and fined for breaching Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules.

European football's governing body has also fined Chelsea for breaching FFP rules as a result of "submitting incomplete financial information". UEFA says the matter relates to transactions which took place between 2012 and 2019.

Juventus have been fined £17.14m, while Chelsea have been fined £8.57m.

The Italian club will only have to pay half of their fine if their financial records for the next three years comply with regulations, while Chelsea have already agreed to pay the settlement figure.

The Blues have spent around £600m on 19 new players since new owner Todd Boehly took charge of the club in May 2022, but their fine relates to a seven-year period while Roman Abramovich had control of the club.

UEFA said: "Following the club's sale in May 2022, the new ownership identified, and proactively reported to UEFA, instances of potentially incomplete financial reporting under the club's previous ownership."

In a response, Chelsea said they "fully co-operated and assisted UEFA" in their investigations and "entered into a settlement agreement" with the governing body.

The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) must now notify UEFA of which club will replace Juve in the third-tier European competition. It is likely to be Fiorentina, who were beaten by West Ham in last year's final, after they finished eighth in Serie A.

The case against Juventus follows a 718,000 euro (£620,000) fine as part of a settlement agreement with Italian football authorities over a case concerning payment of players salaries.

Juventus had also been docked 10 Serie A points last season following a hearing into the club's past transfer dealings.

They were initially handed a 15-point penalty in January but Italy's highest sporting court overturned that decision in April and ordered the case to be re-examined.

They would have finished fourth and qualified for next season's Champions League had they not been sanctioned.

In response to the charge, Juventus said they accept UEFA's decision and will not be lodging an appeal.

Club president Gianluca Ferrero said: "Lodging an appeal, possibly to other levels of judgement, with uncertain outcomes and timing, would increase the uncertainty with respect to our eventual participation in the 2024/25 Uefa Champions League."

IOC invites Ukraine's Kharlan to Olympics after disqualification

REUTERS – Ukraine's Olga Kharlan was invited to compete at the Olympic Games in Paris next year by the IOC on Friday after the fencer was disqualified for refusing to shake hands with a Russian opponent during a tournament earlier this week.

A letter sent to Kharlan signed by International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach said she would be granted an additional quota place at the Olympics if she failed to qualify.

"Rest assured the IOC will continue to stand in full solidarity with the Ukrainian athletes and the Olympic community of Ukraine during these

extremely difficult times," it added.

Kharlan, a four-time Olympic medallist and world champion, won her individual sabre bout 15-7 and then refused to shake hands with Russian Anna Smirnova – competing as a neutral – at the World Championships in Milan on Thursday. In fencing's rules, shaking an opponent's hand is mandatory and failure to do so results in a 'black card'.

Ukraine's Youth and Sports minister Vadym Huttsait welcomed the IOC decision in a Facebook post.

"Despite all the hate that my team and I have endured over the past 24

hours, after working persistently for the benefit of Ukrainian athletes and not responding to this, we now have our first result," he said.

Ukraine's Fencing Federation (NFFU) appealed against Kharlan's disqualification and the International Fencing Federation (FIE) decided later on Friday to allow the fencer to compete in the women's team sabre team competition at the World Championships.

Kharlan said earlier that she stood by her decision not to shake hands with Smirnova.

"When I have a choice... where I shake hands I will never shake hands with



Ukraine's Olga Kharlan (L) refuses to shake hands with Anna Smirnova of Russia, presenting a sabre to tap instead, at the Fencing World Championship in Milan, Italy, on July 27, 2023. ● TADASHI MIYAMOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

her. I'm sorry but there is something bigger than Olympic Games or license

or fencing and finally I understood that, there is something more. The sup-

port for the Ukrainian people it's incredible," Kharlan told Reuters.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq to settle part of its debt to Iran with 100k bpd of oil: official



Economy Desk

According to an agreement between Tehran and Baghdad, Iran will receive a total of 100,000 barrels of oil per day in exchange for part of its demand from Iraq from the beginning of August, announced the Secretary of Iranian Oil, Gas and Petrochemical Products Exporters' Union (OPEX) Hamid Hosseini on Saturday. Hosseini told ISNA that Iran will receive 30,000 barrels of extra heavy crude oil and about 70,000 barrels of mazut on a daily basis from its Arab neighboring country. Iran can increase the volume of receiving crude oil or mazut in the next negotiations for clearing the debts, he noted. Iran's total export of gas and electricity to Iraq is estimated at \$10-15 million per day, Hosseini added.

Over 1m tons of iron ore traded in IME



The Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) announced that 1.05 million tons of iron ore were traded in its metal and mineral trading hall in the week closing on July 28. Ime.co.ir reported on Saturday that over 3.32 million tons of commodities, worth more than \$712 million, were traded in its domestic trading and export halls. A total of 2.83 million tons of various products, worth about \$496 million, were traded at IME's domestic and export metal and mineral trading hall. Among the traded products were 364,242 tons of steel, 288,000 tons of sponge iron, 5,660 tons of aluminum ingots, 11,120 tons of copper, 1,295 tons of zinc, 250 tons of molybdenum concentrate, and 1.11 million tons of cement. In addition, 442,679 tons of various commodities, valued at over \$207 million, were traded at IME's domestic and export oil and petrochemical trading halls. Other traded items were 104,508 tons of polymeric products, 148,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 50,000 tons of lube cut, 40,740 tons of chemical products, 3,675 tons of sulfur, 5,222 tons of base oil, 2,668 tons of petroleum products, 200 tons of insulation and 88,689 tons of bitumen.

Iran projected to export 9.42m tons of LPG in 2023: *Platts*



The monthly average of LPG loading over January-June stood at 784,833 tons, according to shipping sources, Platts cFlow ship and commodity tracking software and S&P Global Market Intelligence Network (MINT), as total exports for 2023 are projected at 9.42 million tons if the loading programs hold around current levels or more, according to S&P Global's calculations. The annual exports of Iranian LPG exceeds earlier projections by analysts of about 8.3 million tons, according to spglobal.com. As in previous months, China was the dominant buyer of Iranian LPG for loading in June. Iranian LPG cargoes loading in June arrived in China throughout July at ports in southern and northeastern China, according to MINT. Iran's June-loading shipments ranged between 15,000 tons and 44,000 tons, with 15 vessels departing Assaluyeh port, shipped by companies

including South Pars Gas Co., or SPGC; PARS and Palayesh Parsian Sepehr Co. or PPS – a unit of Tadbir Energy and Parsian Sepehr, according to shipping sources. Ship trackers showed cargoes were transferred ship to ship mostly off the Khor Fakkan area. Seven vessels departed from Siraf port in June, with cargoes shipped by PPK-Tombak and Kangan Petro Refining Co., shipping sources said. The ships departing Assaluyeh included Tower Rise, Sea Hermes, Danuta I, Double In, Akoya Gas, Godavari Gas, Yu I, Nereus 1, Gas Leader, Ourea, Eagle Pride, Artemis Gas, Sun

10, Cape Gas and Falcon, while vessels that left Siraf port included Oceanus Gas, Tris Gas, Kanha and Lady Sarah, according to shipping sources. The vessels were mainly bound for Chinese ports, such as Lianyungang, Dongshan, Guangzhou, Raoping, Chaozhou, Dongguan, Humen, Fujian, Gulen, Zhoushan, Zhapu, Shanghai, Jiaying, Zhuhai and Gaolan, according to MINT. Moving forward, ship broking

reports showed several VLGCs fixed for Iranian trade via STS operation in July. Danuta I loaded via STS operations off Siri Island's off port limits July 11 and discharged a full cargo to VLGC Gas Concept OPL Dubai. Tris Gas loaded a full cargo from an unknown LPG Carrier in Iraq's Umm Qasr anchorage July 15. Gas Gemini loaded via STS operations in Al Basrah anchorage July 11 and discharged a full cargo to

VLGC Arrow OPL Dubai. Rising LPG exports come with higher output in Iran, which analysts said has ramped up oil production since the start of 2023 as it has been exempted from OPEC+ cuts due to US sanctions and driven by the South Pars Gas Field expansions. The producer also has several new refinery developments which will further boost LPG production in the coming years.

Iran's exports of eggs top 60,000 tons: Official

Economy Desk

Iran has exported 60,000 tons of eggs to target countries since the beginning of the current Iranian year (March 21), announced Nasser Nabipour, the chairman of the board of directors of Tehran Laying Hens Union on Saturday.

Talking to IRNA, Nabipour said Iran has the capacity to produce 1.6 million tons of eggs annually. Iranian eggs are mainly exported to neighboring countries including Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, Oman, and the UAE, he noted. Nabipour added that Iran

produced 1.2 million tons of eggs during the last Iranian year which ended on March 20. The production of eggs is more than the current needs of the market, he said, explaining that in the first half of every [Iranian] year, the consumption of the product decreases with the intensification of heat.



Nature's golden elixir: Global appeal for Iran's honey



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

Iran, blessed with the majestic Alborz and Zagros mountain ranges, along with a variety of plains and mountainous terrain, boasts an abundance of diverse vegetation. This rich botanical landscape serves as the foundation for the production of a wide array of honeys some with medicinal properties. Thanks to the remarkable diversity in flora and the varying climates across the country, Iran stands out as a hub for producing some of the finest and most diverse natural honeys found anywhere. In particular, Damavand county and Lavasanat District in Tehran province have emerged as prominent centers for beekeeping and honey production, benefiting from their strategic locations around the Alborz range. Notably, the natural honeys of Tehran are primarily sourced from Dasht-e Lar village, Rudbar-e Qasran District, Damavand and Lavasanat. The advent of modern beekeep-

ing techniques, utilizing Langstroth hives, or contemporary beehives, was first introduced in Iran in Damavand and Lavasanat. Presently, the region boasts a honey production of 10 kilos per hive, extracted from durable concrete beehives. However, the past decade has witnessed a decline in honey harvests. Previously, up to 50 kilos of natural honey could be obtained from a single hive. Yet, the country has faced challenges in recent years, grappling with droughts that have led to a substantial decrease in the average honey yield from each hive, now ranging from 5 to 6 kilos. Hossein Yahyaieian, the head of the Beekeepers' Union of Tehran Province, has told Iran Daily that the country is the world's third-largest honey producer, trailing behind only China and Turkey. According to Yahyaieian, a substantial 30% of Iran's honey production is earmarked for export. The major destination for Iranian honey exports predominantly lies within the Persian Gulf Arab states. However, a notable portion also finds its way to European nations,

with Germany being a significant importer. The demand for premium-quality Iranian honey has prompted some individuals to transport it to the United States and various European countries during their travels, often carrying it in their luggage. Yahyaieian highlights the distinctive factor contributing to the superior quality of Iranian honey, which lies in the rich variety of flowers and plants present in the meadows, serving as the primary source of nourishment for the bees. In the Iranian honey market, two distinct types of honey are available: natural and nutritional. The former is the pure honey directly produced by bees from the nectar of flowers. However, to produce nutritional honey, bees are usually supplied with sugar, syrup, or sweet nectars. The existence of unnatural honeys in the Iranian market is also acknowledged. Some are derived from bees feeding on nectar and syrup and undergo transformations within their bodies. Such honeys have health-giving properties. On the other hand, there is a factory-produced honey that does not involve the active participation of bees in its production.



According to Yahyaieian, a concerning revelation is that approximately 90% of the honey sold in Iranian stores is the nutritional or factory-produced kind. Determining the natural or unnatural nature of honey can only be accomplished through laboratory testing, as racketeers often add various ingredients to their products to mimic the appearance of natural honey. Purchasing products like honey, tea, rice, and animal fat in Iran requires caution and trust in the seller or reputed brands. Discerning whether the products are

genuine or not is a challenging task. Yahyaieian emphasizes the need for a more comprehensive outlook on the beekeeping industry. He criticizes the prevalent perspective in Iran, which solely prioritizes honey production. In contrast, the developed countries focus on preserving plants, enhancing pollination, and developing pastures and vegetation through beekeeping. Additionally, these nations employ the beekeeping industry to produce a variety of valuable products such as pollen, royal jelly, bee venom, and bee glue.

For the love of Asiatic cheetah

Reduce Your Speed

Social Desk

EXCLUSIVE

The vast, rugged landscapes of central Iran has been the stage for a heart-breaking phenomenon for the past couple of decades – the untimely death of Asiatic cheetahs, one of the world's most endangered big cats, in road accidents. There have been many instances in which these magnificent creatures' lives were cut short due to accidents; some as recently as the last spring, when Majrad, a pregnant cheetah ready to give birth to its three cubs, died in a car accident.

Iran, as a last stronghold for this subspecies, must do more to ensure its survival. Fortunately, in order to protect the Iranian chee-

tah, a decision has been made to reduce the allowed speed of cars on the Abbasabad-Meyami route by 30 km, according to Mehr News Agency.

The Director General of the Office of Wildlife Protection and Management announced that following Saturday's meeting of the country's Road Safety Commission, it was agreed to lower the permitted speed from 110 km/h to 80 km/h in order to safeguard this endangered species.

Gholamreza Abdali, speaking about the meeting held by the Road Safety Commission to ensure wildlife protection, stated that its purpose was to enhance road safety on the Abbasabad-Meyami route. Officials from various organizations including the Ministry of Roads and the Department

of the Environment were present at the meeting. Abdali further mentioned that as per the approval during the meeting, reducing car speeds from 110 km/h to 80 km/h will minimize risks posed to wildlife in this region, especially cheetahs. In addition to speed reduction measures, other necessary actions such as fencing installation, improved lighting systems along with increased signage and CCTV cameras are responsibilities assigned to be carried out by the Ministry of Roads. Programs related to these measures will be prioritized accordingly.

The Abbasabad-Meyami road located in Semnan Province serves as one of Tehran-Mashhad road's transportation axes, traversing through Turan

wildlife reserve's northern border. Research studies indicate that road accidents are major contributors leading towards loss in population for valuable Iranian cheetah species.

Cheetah fatalities resulting from collisions with vehicles represent devastating losses for Iran's biodiversity. Hopefully, the new speed limit might help mitigate the alarming phenomenon. Yet, more should be done in terms of infrastructure planning amidst sensitive ecological zones. Wildlife corridors play an important role in preserving genetic diversity, while allowing animals like the Asiatic cheetah to move freely between habitats. This, in turn, reduces the risk of genetic isolation and promoting population growth.



IRNA

ISNA

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iranian delegation visits Baghdad to discuss dust storms

ISNA – In order to follow up on the bilateral and multilateral agreements from last year, a delegation led by the adviser to the head of Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE) and the secretary of the National Headquarters for Policy and Coordination of Dust Storm Phenomenon Management departed for Baghdad yesterday.

Ali-Mohammad Tahmasebi Birgani made the announcement, stating that numerous agreements regarding dust management have been exchanged with Iraq.

"However, they have not yet been implemented," he said.

Tahmasebi Birgani emphasized that the main objective of the trip is to carry out joint executive measures with Iraq in order to share knowledge, technology, and experiences related to dust storm control. The aim is to establish a regional technical-executive working group and secure approval for implementing the draft of a sub-regional action plan initiated by Iran. Additionally, efforts will be made towards establishing a regional dust storm fund as approved during last year's regional meeting in July.

Based on information from the DoE shared by Tahmasebi Birgani, it was mentioned that Iraq's Minister of Environment will also be invited to participate in an international conference addressing sand and dust storms scheduled for later this year. This conference aims at gathering ministers from countries significantly impacted by such phenomena along with relevant international organizations.

Iran's SWO turns to small-scale care centers for the disabled

Social Desk

Deputy of rehabilitation affairs at Iranian State Welfare Organization (SWO) highlighted several plans aimed at improving care center operations and staff training while discussing the supervision of care centers for people with disabilities.

"One plan involves implementing preventive programs to provide necessary training for staff members who work in non-governmental centers," said Fatemeh Abbasi, according to ILNA.

She then pointed out that there will be a focus on caregiver training due to their constant proximity to patients.

"A specialized program has been developed to ensure caregivers receive appropriate training and also caution is exercised when selecting caregivers for the centers," she said.

Addressing concerns about inexperienced and underqualified caregivers being employed at care centers, Abbasi clarified that special expertise is not necessarily required. "Individuals who possess a diploma and have received relevant training related to caring for sick individuals can fulfill these roles effectively," the official proclaimed.

Abbasi emphasized that family-based caregiver training is another part of their programs as maintenance and care for people with disabilities are highly important.

"Regular monitoring of the centers occurs through monthly visits by city officials, quarterly visits by provincial capital representatives, as well as annual or semi-annual inspections conducted by colleagues from central headquarters sent out to provinces and cities," she noted.

The deputy pointed out that during the COVID-19 pandemic, these visits faced challenges due to the conditions; however, revised circulars now allow inspections conducted by both specialized vice-chairs and organization inspection departments.

To address safety concerns associated with bigger care centers, Abbasi noted that efforts are being made towards downsizing them into smaller facilities.

"All provinces have been informed about separating large-scale centers and transitioning towards smaller ones. However, one challenge they face is a lack of applicants interested in establishing facilities for mental patients in

some regions," she said. Abbasi also mentioned a preference for maintaining patients within their families whenever possible.

"Currently, approximately 93 percent of targeted groups are kept within their families while offering nursing rights along with home-based care services, home visits, and provision of sanitary supplies to ensure their dignity is upheld. The goal is to minimize the need for attending care centers by providing adequate support within a home environment," she said. Abbasi also noted an increase in homeless or abandoned individuals on the streets.

"They are mainly the elderly or the mentally challenged," she said, adding that families unable to afford care for these individuals often abandon them. Abbasi acknowledged the necessity of establishing centers for such cases but highlighted that accidents occur more frequently in large-scale centers and may compromise individual dignity.

"Therefore, our solution is to establish smaller centers as an alternative," the SWO official said.

Currently, there are 191 rehabilitation homes nationwide catering to el-



ISNA

derly and chronic mental patients with up to 10 residents per center. According to Abbasi, conditions in these centers are better than large-scale centers, but the cost per person is higher, requiring more funds.

Establishing smaller centers for SWO is part of a long-term plan. Applicants interested in setting up such centers are encouraged to establish small-scale facilities. Most residents referred to these centers are unknown individuals who fall into various categories, including mentally ill people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Abbasi urges action from the Ministry of Health regarding this issue since lack of support and availability prevents admission into mental hospitals.

A meeting has been held with the deputy prosecutor's office aiming to establish joint policies concerning homeless people so that families at least contribute towards their care costs if they have the means. In situations where families cannot afford payments despite identification, expenses will be covered by SWO given its limited resources which must be utilized effectively while maintaining high-quality standards within care centers.



Fatemeh Abbasi, deputy of rehabilitation affairs at Iranian State Welfare Organization

ILNA



843m people may live with lower back pain by 2050

SCIENCE ALERT – Low back pain is the leading cause of disability in the world, with over 600 million people living with the condition. This is one of the key takeaways of a June 2023 study published in the journal *The Lancet Rheumatology*.

The study's systematic analysis synthesizes data from approximately 500 studies throughout the world over 30 years to estimate the global burden of low back pain, broken down by country, year, age, sex, and severity.

The study found that if society could directly address three major risk factors – obesity, smoking, and workplace ergonomic factors – it could cut the burden of low back pain by 39 percent.

Over 3,000 people attended Ashura performance in City Theater



IRNA – Over 3,000 people gathered at Tehran's City Theater to welcome the Ashura performance during the special program titled, 'Navay-e Arshian va Mashq-e Farshian,' that took place over the first ten nights of the month of Muharram.

According to statistics, the event saw the participation of over 330 artists and an audience of approximately 3,000 people.

On the 10th and final night of the program, which revolved around Ashura and Muharram, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, attended the mourning ceremony.

Esmaeili expressed a strong commitment to supporting their authentic artistic traditions by promoting these rituals, particularly during the lunar months of Muharram and Safar.

He mentioned that during these two months, they host ceremonial and traditional performances in most cultural and artistic centers of the ministry.

Regarding the interaction between the ministry and the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) for documenting the art of ta'zieh, he said: "We will support this art in all cities where ta'zieh exists, and this popular and historical art must be preserved. With the help of our good friends at IRIB, we aim to safeguard and document this important heritage through collaboration."

Emmy Awards to be postponed amid Hollywood strike: Reports

REUTERS – The 75th Emmy Awards, which was slated for September 18, will reportedly be moved to January due to actors' and writers' strikes in Hollywood.

An official announcement is yet to be made by the event's organiser, Fox; however, it is expected to be released soon, according to US media reports, quoting insider sources. Hollywood shut down earlier this month after tens of thousands of actors walked off their jobs as Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA) issued a strike order. The Writers Guild of America, on the other hand, has been protesting since May.

The actors and writers have been calling for better pay and protection against use of artificial intelligence in the industry. The last time the actors' union went on strike, in 1980, it lasted more than three months. Executives of the Fox network had earlier said they wouldn't proceed with the show if the protests were still by the end of July, according to reports.

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Iran introduces two writers for IBBY-iRead Award



Iran's Children's Book Council, after a rigorous evaluation process, introduced Alireza Seyyed-Abadi and Nader Mousavi as nominees for the IBBY-iRead Outstanding Reading Promoter Award. This award, established by the Shenzhen iRead Foundation and the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), aims to recognize individuals who have shown a strong commitment to promoting reading and inspire others globally to do the same. Nominees for this award are required to have actively engaged in innovative and creative efforts to promote reading among children and young

adults for a minimum of three years. The Children's Book Council, as the Iranian branch of IBBY, selects and nominates candidates for this prestigious accolade. The jury will consider a range of criteria when evaluating the nominees, including the implementation of exceptional reading promotion projects, effective strategies for advocating reading policies, and a commitment to advancing children's right to read. Factors such as sustainability, influence, innovation, and inspiration will also be taken into account during the judging process.



Seyyed-Abadi was previously nominated by the Children's Book Council for the same award in 2019 and has received the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) in both 2023 and 2024. Also, Mousavi has been nominated for the same award for the second time. He was previously

nominated for the IBBY-iRead Award in 2022 and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) in 2023. The jury for the Children's Book Council's promotion group awards includes Ja'far Tozandehjani, Atefeh Selyani, Giti Safarzadeh, Neda Movahedipour, and Fatemeh Nekoui.

Iranian documentarian nominated for Chinese prize



Iranian documentarian Saeid Nabi's film 'Stand with the Wolf' received a nomination for the Golden Panda Award for Best Film at the renowned Sichuan TV Festival (SCTVF) in China.

The festival, scheduled to take place from September 23 to 25, aims to promote the establishment of a better society by emphasizing sustainable development and a shared, intelligent future for humanity, as reported by IRNA.

'Stand with the Wolf' depicts the true story of Hadi Jalali, an environmental activist who miraculously survived more than 99 shotgun pellets fired at him by hunters, with many of them still embedded in his body. Despite receiving a presidential award for his sacrifice, he remains a stranger in his own village and town. His dedication to the envi-

ronment has led him to believe that education is a potent tool for preserving nature, but he encounters numerous obstacles in pursuit of his aspirations. Nabi, the film's director, boasts 22 years of experience in producing compelling environmental and social documentary films and television programs.

The Sichuan TV Festival is among the largest and most esteemed film festivals in Asia. Every two years, it bestows the Golden Panda Award, symbolizing China's recognition of outstanding films.

Only films that stand out for their exceptional quality and have been broadcast or distributed in specific countries or regions are eligible for submission.

The central vision of this Asian television and film festival is to foster a superior society through sustainable development



and a shared, intelligent future for humanity. By showcasing remarkable cinematic and televi-

sion works, the festival encourages reverence for humanity and its future through artistic expression.

Emperor Nero's lost theatre found under site of hotel in Rome

The ruins of Nero's Theatre, an imperial theatre referred to in ancient Roman texts but never found, have been discovered under the garden of a future Four Seasons hotel, steps away from the Vatican.

Archaeologists in Rome have excavated deep under the walled garden of the Palazzo della Rovere since 2020 as part of planned renovations on the frescoed Renaissance building. The palazzo, which takes up a city block along the broad Via della Conciliazione leading to Saint

Peter's Square, is home to an ancient Vatican chivalric order that leases the space to a hotel to raise money for Christians in the Holy Land, the Guardian reported.

The governor general of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, Leonardo Visconti di Modrone, confirmed during a news conference announcing the discovery that the hotel chain due to occupy the site was the Four Seasons. News reports have said the hotel is expected to be open in time for the Vatican's 2025 jubilee, when an

estimated 30 million visitors and pilgrims are expected to visit Rome.

Officials said the findings were "exceptional" because they provided a rare look at a period of Roman history from the empire through to the 15th century. Among the discoveries have been 10th-century coloured glass goblets and pottery pieces that are unusual because so little is known about this period in Rome. Marzia Di Mento, the site's chief archaeologist, said that previously only seven glass chalices of the era had been found,

and that the excavations of this site had turned up seven more.

Archaeologists found marble columns and plaster decorated with gold leaf, leading them to conclude that the Nero's Theatre referred to in texts by Pliny the Elder, the ancient Roman author and philosopher, was indeed located at the site, just off the Tiber River. Officials said the movable antiquities would be taken to a museum, while the ruins of the theatre structure itself would be covered again after all studies were completed.

