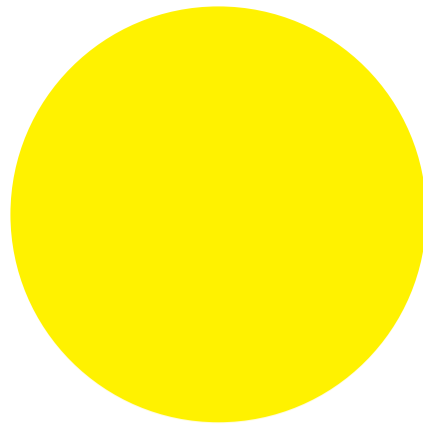




Iran begins construction of uranium complex in northwest 2 >



Sixth Iranian Film Festival underway in Tokyo 8 >



Iran Daily



irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir

Vol. 7360 • Saturday, Aug. 12, 2023 • Mordad 21, 1402 • Muharram 25, 1445 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

Blinken's 'Lie'

The recent deal between Iran and the United States regarding the release of prisoners and the release of Iran's blocked money has drawn many reactions, especially in the United States. However, in order to reduce the pressure of the internal and external influence lobbies, the US government has made false statements about this deal in the media and is trying to present it in a different way. Among these efforts are Blinken's false statements that Iran has limited access to its assets.

4 >



Tabiat Bridge of Tehran, a modern icon 3 >



Russia downs Ukrainian drone west of Moscow, two airports reopen 5 >



Underprivileged gifted students to study tuition-free at NODET schools 7 >

South Africa backs Iran's membership in BRICS

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said his country fully supports Iran's membership in the BRICS bloc of emerging markets. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Friday met and held talks with Ramaphosa at the Union Buildings, which form the official seat of the South African government, Mehr news agency reported. The president also said Pretoria is ready to implement agreements reached in the joint commission meeting on Thursday. Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi is expected to pay two visits to South Africa, one on August 24 to attend the summit of the friends of BRICS, and the other in the fall to discuss bilateral ties. Ramaphosa expressed hope that during Raeisi's visit, the two countries would sign further cooperation documents.

BRICS membership; new opportunities in a shifting global order



By Silvia Boltuc
Managing Director of SpecialEurasia

PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

In 2010, Brazilian President Lula da Silva, during his speech at the BRIC summit in Brasilia uttered the famous phrase, "We have a fundamental role in creating a new world order". What is envisioned today is effectively a shift in the global geopolitical status quo. With several Western countries entering a recession because of the consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the sanctions on Russia, which have heavily hit the driving economies of Europe, Southeast Asia is registering the largest emerging economies.

Page 4 >

Diplomacy a safer option for Iran, US

By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

In a display of political success, diplomacy once again exhibited its positive facet. Following a series of indirect negotiations spanning approximately two years, Iran and the United States have reached a consensus to put into force a prisoner exchange while concurrently releasing Iran's frozen funds held in South Korea. Nevertheless, as news of this deal reached the public sphere, it encountered criticism from various quarters. Within American circles, particularly from more radical factions, and among adversaries of the Islamic Republic of Iran that are based overseas, a wave of disapproval surged. Among the critical voices, US Republicans have branded the agreement as a "ransom payment" by the US administration to Iran.

Page 4 >

NEWS IN BRIEF

IEA: Global oil demand to hit record high

OIL PRICE – Global oil demand will hit new highs and is expected to average 102.2 million barrels per day (bpd) this year, driven by summer air travel, strong Chinese petrochemical activity, and higher oil use in power generation, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Friday.

World oil demand is set to grow by 2.2 million bpd this year, with China accounting for more than 70% of growth, the agency said in its closely-watched Oil Market Report (OMR) for August.

US CPI rises 3.2% in July

BLOOMBERG – Consumer prices in the United States showed a faster year-over-year increase in July compared to the previous month's annual gain, according to the latest data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 3.2% in July over the prior year, a slight acceleration from June's 3% annual increase.

Turkey's inflation will fall permanently: Minister

REUTERS – Turkey aims to lower soaring inflation permanently after a transitional period where prices remain high, Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek said in an interview with the Yeni Safak newspaper.

"Our goal is to bring down inflation permanently after a transitional period," Simsek said. The sustained price pressure, driven by a drop in the lira currency and tax hikes, comes as President Tayyip Erdogan's new Finance Minister Simsek and central bank chief orchestrate a policy U-turn, including interest rate hikes, that are expected to slow domestic demand.

**Iran begins construction of uranium complex in northwest**

Iran began constructing a mining complex in the northwestern region of the country, which the Iranian nuclear chief has touted as a "hub" for producing raw materials needed for nuclear power production. The project was launched in the Jang-e Sar region in Khoy, in the northwestern province of West Azarbaijan on Thursday, following the discovery of radioactive materials and rare-earth elements there, according to IRNA.

Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said at the launch ceremony that the

complex can play a "significant role" in accelerating the country's plan for nuclear electricity generation.

"The capacity of this mining complex is so great that undoubtedly it will be a hub for supplying raw materials for nuclear fuel production, and it will play a significant role in supporting the plan to produce 20,000 megawatts of nuclear electricity," he said.

According to reports, uranium, molybdenum, and a number of other rare-earth elements have been discovered in the area. Eslami said the region can also be a huge source of ra-

re-earth elements, which have various industrial applications. Pointing to the use of airborne geophysical surveys in discovering the potential mines, the official said the discovery operations in the region began last year.

The official said the project would be completed within two and a half years, and that the first phase of the project needs around 10 trillion rials (roughly \$20 million) to be completed.

Iran now runs a nuclear power plant in the southern province of Bushehr, which produces 1,000 megawatts per year.

It plans to build more nuclear power plants to boost its nuclear electricity production capacity to 20,000 megawatts, as part of efforts to meet growing electricity demand.

The plan allows the country to free more of its oil and gas resources for export and ease environmental concerns over its massive fossil fuel power plant network.

Meanwhile, legislation adopted by the Iranian Parliament requires the AEOI to increase Iran's nuclear electricity generation capacity to respond to growing demand in the country that has already passed

peaks of 73 GW this summer. In recent years, Iran has made significant strides in its pursuit of a peaceful nuclear energy program, despite facing challenges posed by US sanctions and Western-imposed obstacles.

Iran has maintained a close and cooperative relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This collaboration underscores Iran's commitment to adhering to international regulations and guidelines governing nuclear activities.

IRNA

Iran expects Pakistan to complete gas pipeline

By Reza
Abesh Ahmadlou
Staff writer

OPINION

The gas pipeline project for the transfer of Iranian gas to Pakistan could be considered one of the important issues of cooperation between the two countries, which serve the national interests of both sides.

Iran has already invested \$2 billion in the pipeline on its side of the border. The project, launched in 2013, required Pakistan to finish the construction of the pipeline on its territory by the end of 2014, but it has been on hold without explanation.

Sanctions and pressures from the US and other

countries are seen at the bottom of the standstill. Observers believe Pakistan is set to come under further pressure if more meaningful trade ties are forged between Tehran and Islamabad.

However, the changing dynamics in geopolitical relations of the region, where US clout is receding fast and the expanding field for commercial and economic cooperation hold the trump card, raising hopes that the emerging partnership will stand the test of time.

A Pakistani English-language newspaper has called upon the Islamabad government to employ all legal and diplomatic tools in order to complete the multi-billion-dollar gas pipeline.

According to the Kara-

chi-based Dawn newspaper, the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline is important for Pakistan's energy security, stressing that Pakistani authorities should convince Washington of the urgent need to implement the project.

"The lack of a coherent official narrative on the status of the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline has caused some embarrassment for the outgoing administration, while adding to the risks of a diplomatic misunderstanding with our western neighbor," Dawn wrote in its editorial on Friday.

The newspaper went on to point to a statement attributed to Pakistan's Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik placed before the National Assembly, where it was asserted that Pakistan had invoked

the 'force majeure and excusing event' clause in the agreement, effectively meaning that the project had been shelved for fear of attracting American sanctions.

It criticized Malik for acknowledging on Wednesday that the statement was the result of a bureaucratic faux pas within his ministry, and that he had not seen the policy statement submitted to the house on his behalf, while dubbing it "complete disinformation" as the force majeure notice had been given about a decade ago.

The daily underscored the need for an internal probe to determine how such outdated and incorrect information was submitted to parliament on behalf of a minister, emphasizing that information on such



SHANA

sensitive matters needs to be thoroughly vetted before it is put in the public domain.

"It is welcome that the state is still interested in the project, and is trying to convince the US to grant it a waiver in order to complete the scheme.

"If the state plays its cards right, achieving this goal is entirely possible. After all, Turkey and Iraq continue to buy Iranian gas, while China and India also lift massive amounts of Russian crude despite Ameri-

can displeasure," it pointed out.

It emphasized that Pakistani state officials "should employ all legal and diplomatic tools" to ensure the completion of the gas pipeline if they feel the project is "in the national interest". Pakistan will likely face an 18-billion-dollar fine if it terminates the gas pipeline agreement.

For elimination of barriers to develop all-out relations, Islamabad is expected to complete the gas pipeline project.

Why South Africa and Iran need each other

Iran's expansion of relations with South Africa, an emerging power, besides strengthening South-South cooperation, can help reduce Western pressures.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian is fresh from a visit to Pretoria, where he said, "Great steps have been taken to consolidate relations in various areas" since the establishment of new diplomatic relations between Iran and South

Africa. His visit aimed to pave the way for the official trip of Iran's President Ebrahim Raeisi to Johannesburg on August 24 to attend a summit of the BRICS group of major emerging economies - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran embarked on renewing relations with the African people based on Islam's prohibition of racism.

The world today is witnessing the creation of a bloc of countries that have experienced high economic growth and turned to new economic powerhouses.

China in Southeast Asia, India in South Asia, Russia in Eastern Europe, Brazil in Latin America and South Africa in the African Continent initially began to play a role in their peripheral regions, but they have gradually sought to engage in ex-

tra-regional collaborations.

They have formed new alliances such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, IBSA Group of India, Brazil and South Africa, and BRICS in order to make their mark in the world order and offer an alternative force to reckon with.

In 2001, Goldman Sachs identified Brazil, Russia, India and China as four emerging markets, with South Africa entering this

league in 2010.

The BRICS economies have been identified as the fastest growing economies of the world and the engines of the global recovery process after the US subprime mortgage crisis.

The alliance is rooted in two main phenomena, the first being the economic growth of these countries, which has allowed them to act in international financial and monetary relations.

The second phenomenon relates to transformation and change in the nature of international politics, where US power is waning and the country is losing its clout.

Since the most important needs of the emerging powers are the supply of raw materials, energy and foreign markets, the regions with the most resources and the largest commercial markets are about to be the scene of new competition.

Tabiat Bridge of Tehran, a modern icon



archello.com

Along with the iconic Milad Tower and the Azadi Tower, Tabiat Bridge in Tehran is considered another modern symbol of the capital. Located in the Abbas Abad region, Tabiat Bridge (Nature Bridge) connects two popular parks named Taleqani and Ab-o-Atash (Water and Fire). Therefore, it is a top choice for people to hang out, especially in the evenings.

As a multilevel pedestrian bridge, it was designed by Leila Araqian and Alireza Behzadi, two young Iranian architects, as part of a domestic competition

for the design of a bridge connecting the two parks. The construction project was launched in 2010 by using 2,000 tons of steel and 10,000 cubic meters of concrete. Having three levels, Tabiat Bridge covers an area of 7,000 square meters, ghoghnos.net wrote.

This 270-meter structure, built on a height of 40 meters above ground level, is the largest pedestrian bridge in the Middle East. The modern anatomy of Tabiat Bridge connects three huge trees erected by metal columns, and the interwoven branches,

which harmonize with the name of the bridge, Tabiat, which means 'Nature' in Persian. Inspired by Si-o-Se Pol (also known as Pole Khaju) of Isfahan, Araqian wanted the bridge to "be a place for people to stay and ponder, not simply pass."

For doing so, the bridge is equipped with several benches and seats in addition to restaurants, cafés and green spaces for encouraging visitors to linger.

Design

The lowest level, with an area of about 1,450 square meters,

has been covered by the second level and glass walls, proper for the cold and rainy seasons, while the third level, with two round platforms on the path, invites visitors to take amazing photos.

The bridge offers amazing scenery to visitors who feel like walking through a forest. The feeling is intensified by the soft wooden flooring of the structure, which creates a warm, natural effect to the fullest. Being designed simply for staying rather than passing, Tabiat Bridge, with its curved



shape, adds to the plurality of perspectives. That is the reason Tabiat Bridge is a huge hit with locals.

A recreation center

Surrounded by the numerous trees of nearby parks, Tabiat Bridge provides a superb view in addition to breaths of fresh air. The beautiful landscape, various eateries, and seating areas in between have all made Tabiat Bridge a top attraction. Its food court serves almost all types of cuisine.

There are some other attrac-

tions near the bridge, making the whole area a wonderful place including Gonbad-e Mina Planetarium.

Taleqani Forest Park, at the opposite end of Nature Bridge, is an amazing place for walking and lingering, especially in winter when the trees are covered with snow.

You are advised not to miss visiting the bridge at sunset, when you will have an amazing view of northern Tehran. The dream-like, colorful light of the bridge will leave you with an unforgettable memory.

A clever solution to aridity in ancient Persia

Iranica Desk

The connection between culture and nature has been a subject worthy of attention since ancient Persia, examples of which are obvious in the architectural styles of the past. They came up with several solutions for aridity, which even back in the old times was one of the challenges of the country. The most significant

of these ideas was building cisterns. Cisterns are tanks used for storing water.

Mostly built by people in dry regions of the country, it is one of

the cheapest ways to save water for the longest time, with the least energy consumed.

These beneficial resources were often used in city districts, in small and various forms. Researchers believe the antiquated structure next to Choghazanbil is Iran's oldest cistern.

As time went by, water pipes changed and this invention faded. At present, all the remaining cisterns date back to the post Safavid era (1501-1736), and the only cistern that remains from before that time is in Yazd.

An article recently released by an archaeologist

says that cisterns play a major role in some big cities like Yazd. The construction of these cisterns is extremely important due to the complications and details of the building process. Also, the outer design of these tankers is in harmony with its surrounding nature.

Mohammad Barshan, head of Kerman's aqueducts center, said, "Some cisterns remain from



Zarch cistern, Yazd
ealiya.com

other civilizations, but the ones in Iran are definitely more advanced." He highlighted that the building of these cisterns are different based on the weather conditions of each region. "Cisterns have different parts. At first, they were made from stones. But since the Seljukian era (1307-1194), bricks became one of the crucial elements of the building process, and then special bricks were used."

He noted that in some cases the construction included staircases. Most cisterns went 50 meters deep into the ground. The deepest cistern discovered so far is the

Haj Mohammad Taghi cistern in Kerman. He added, "Cisterns are built for particular purposes and the storage water is not changed seasonally so that people won't encounter problems using it."

He said that cisterns were often built by wealthy people, or they were endowed. He also confirmed the purity of the water, saying that the water is under strict supervision.

He noted, "Although today aqueducts are used instead of cisterns, we shouldn't overlook their importance."

Some cities still use cisterns as tourist attractions. They can also be transformed into museums or exhibitions.

Haj Mohammad Taghi cistern, Kerman
wikimedia.org



Diplomacy a safer ...

Simultaneously, certain Israeli officials confided to the New York Times that this prisoner exchange deal is part of a broader arrangement between Iran and the US, encompassing matters relating to nuclear affairs and regional developments. However, this was refuted by the US secretary of state, who asserted that the prisoner swap was devoid of any linkage to the nuclear issue.

The method of utilizing the newly-released assets of Iran has also generated contention and debate. The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, nonetheless, emphasized that "the modality of employing these released financial resources and assets is within the purview of the Islamic Republic of Iran and are earmarked for the country's diverse needs, as determined by competent authorities".

Divergent accounts and varying interpretations of the agreement were not unexpected, particularly given the involvement of two historically non-diplomatic entities, Iran and the United States. Their lack of diplomatic ties over four decades underscores the complexity of such a deal.

Of greater significance than these marginal issues is securing respective national interests by Tehran and Washington. It is crucial to note that the pathway to realizing these gains has been through dialogue and diplomacy. Although protracted, these talks have ultimately yielded either complete or partial satisfaction for both parties involved. The success of this diplomatic feat transpires against a backdrop of ongoing pronounced differences between Iran and America across a multitude of issues and mutual reproaches and allegations that persisted over the past two years.

Amidst this environment of continual disagreements and fluctuating tensions, the prisoner exchange deal imparts a significant lesson. It underscores that diplomacy, albeit time-taking, stands as a more reliable and less costly avenue for securing benefits. According to some experts, this agreement could serve the dual purpose of mitigating and confining tensions between the two parties while also fostering further dialogues on other contentious subjects, including the nuclear issue and the lifting of US sanctions on Iran.

However, it is prudent for both Iran and the United States to exercise caution in the face of potentially destabilizing actions and maneuvers undertaken by certain political factions and states. Such entities may harbor vested interests in stoking tensions between Tehran and Washington. It is imperative to remain vigilant and resolute in ensuring that the path of diplomacy remains unobstructed until an opportune juncture for discussions regarding sanctions and the nuclear issue presents itself.

Blinken's 'Lie' Tehran, Washington reach deal on prisoners, frozen funds



By Javad
Mohammad Ali
Staff writer

Iran and the United States have reached an agreement that would see the release of prisoners from both sides and unfreezing \$6 billion in Iranian funds illegally held in South Korea for years.

According to a statement released by Iran's Foreign Ministry on Thursday, the process of the freeing several billion dollars of Iran's oil revenues blocked in South Korea is underway. The statement added that the release of several Iranians illegally imprisoned in US prisons under the pretext of violation of US sanctions will be realized soon. The Foreign Ministry noted that Tehran had received

the necessary guarantee for Washington's commitment to the deal.

The ministry underlined that it is up to Iran and Iranian authorities on how to utilize the funds.

That assertion is at odds with comments made by the officials in the US.

John Kirby, a spokesman for the National Security Council, said on Thursday that Iran is "only going to be able to use that money for humanitarian purposes."

The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken also claimed that Iran's own funds would be used and transferred to restricted accounts such that the monies can only be used for humanitarian purposes. He said that the United States would offer no sanctions relief to Iran under the deal.

It seems that the US administration is not saying the truth to US politicians about the details of the agreement and wants to show that it has not violated the sanctions the US itself imposed on Iran. It also seems that a recent US military buildup in the Persian Gulf is a move by the Biden administration to appease Republicans before the unveiling of the deal with Iran.

The potential release of Iranian assets has drawn fierce criticism in the US, with top Republicans claiming that President Joseph Biden had paid a ransom for the US citizens, and that the deal would embolden the Islamic Republic.

The New York Times had earlier reported that under the deal, the US will unfreeze nearly \$6 billion



John Kirby, a spokesman
for the US National
Security Council

of Iran's assets in South Korea, putting the funds in an account in the Central Bank of Qatar. According to officials at the US State Department and the National Security Council, Iran has already transferred five American prisoners into

house arrest as a first step in the agreement.

Iran's mission to the United Nations also confirmed the transfer of American prisoners into house arrest, saying, "As part of a humanitarian cooperation agreement mediated by a

third-party government, Iran and the US have agreed to reciprocally release and pardon five prisoners. The transfer of these prisoners [to house arrest] marks a significant initial step in the implementation of this agreement."

BRICS membership...

Although the conflict in Ukraine seems to recreate the division of the world into two blocks as during the Cold War period, the Western world appears cohesive while a second block is formed by a heterogeneous set of powers with very different political systems, economies, cultures, and religious profiles. The goal of these powers is to sit at the negotiating table as equals and create economic growth and a balance for the benefit of the interests of all countries involved.

Against the backdrop of these momentous changes are new organisations such as the BRICS. Established in 2010, the original acronym 'BRIC' was coined in 2001 by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill to describe fast-growing economies that would collectively dominate the global economy by 2050. According to Aaron O'Neill, combined, the BRICS bloc had a GDP of over \$26.03 trillion in 2022, which is slightly more than

the United States. It is predicted that China's GDP will overtake that of the US by the end of the 2020s to become the largest economy in the world. Meanwhile, some estimate that India will also overtake the US around the middle of the century. One of the key topics on the BRICS agenda is to conduct more trade among member nations in local currencies and reduce the reliance on the US dollar. As a consequence of Washington removing Russian banks from SWIFT, several Eurasian countries already exchanged gas with local currencies last year.

According to Jo Sullivan, a former White House economist, BRICS countries collectively export more than they import. They do not need to borrow money from non-BRICS nations like the US or the EU to import goods. So, the rest of the world would have no source of leverage on them.

At the closing ceremony of the BRICS summit dubbed "Iran and BRICS: Prospects for Partnership and Cooperation" at the Foreign Ministry's Institute for Political and International Studies in Tehran on August 8, 2023, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian renewed the country's interest in joining the economic bloc, saying the Islamic Republic can be a "reliable and influential" partner. Amir-Abdollahian emphasized the need for collaboration among developing nations and the global south in his speech. In this regard, it is important to recall Iran's renewed African policy. Although Tehran is still working to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, the continued failures in the talks and the general lack of trust in the European interlocutors — who failed to maintain the pact alive when the US unilaterally withdrew — have pushed the Islamic Republic to emerge from Western isolation and reorganise a network of contacts with non-aligned countries. In line with this approach, in March 2023, the inaugu-

ral Economic Cooperation Summit between Iran and West African countries took place. Subsequently, President Ebrahim Raeisi embarked on a three-country trip to Africa in mid-July, marking the first time an Iranian president has undertaken such a visit in over 11 years. Cooperation has increased also with Latin American countries and Eurasia, including Central Asia, the Caucasus, and recently, the Gulf.

Amir-Abdollahian further added that the economic and political alliances in the developing world aim to strengthen their bargaining power during international negotiations, especially at the United Nations.

Recent Iranian foreign policies marked an improvement in the country's economic performance despite decades of sanctions. The development of existing free trade zones and the establishment of new ones has become one of the major economic approaches of the Iranian government. Secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council Hojatollah Abdolmaleki said the value of exports from Ira-

nian free trade and special economic zones last year was close to \$18 billion, with a trade balance of these zones reaching \$700 million positive for the first time. Oil export has also increased, and Iran secured membership or free trade agreements with important economic organisations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Eurasian Economic Union.

Undoubtedly, Tehran has proved an unexpected resilience, developing an ability to positively leverage the unique set of circumstances surrounding the Islamic Republic, particularly isolation, because of international sanctions. Joining BRICS, which includes Russia and China, could help Tehran bypass economic sanctions and take part in global growth. Vice versa, for BRICS, Iran represents a great opportunity. Europe has long looked at the Islamic Republic with interest given its enormous unexploited potential but wasn't able to access it due to sanctions. The Islamic Republic has the second worldwide re-

serves of gas and is rich in oil. It shares borders with 13 states and has strategic access to the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and central Asian and Caucasian regions, in addition to being part of international transit corridors. Its strong commitment to multilateralism, its focus on the growth of production and trade, and its enhancement of economic ties with regional actors despite ideological or political friction proved the country might be a valuable candidate for the bloc and contribute to balancing the Group of Seven (G7) sphere of influence. It is also important to underline that in the MENA area, Saudi Arabia is the first trading partner of the BRICS countries and is discussing joining the New Development Bank (NDB), as the UAE did in 2021. The normalisation of relations between Riyadh and Tehran in addition to Beijing's investments in both countries will further increase the success possibility of the BRICS bloc, reduce disputes, and increase Iran's international presence.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Raeisi urges involving locals in Sistan and Baluchestan's development

National Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi stressed utilizing the talents and potentials of the locals in developing the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan. Making the remarks during a meeting with the members of the province's Strategic Development Council on Thursday, the president highlighted the valuable efforts that were taken for the flourishing and development of the border province, stressing the necessity

for the continuity of such efforts, Fars news agency reported.

He described the delegation of special authorities to the governor of Sistan and Baluchestan as essential for the day-to-day management of the province and the solution of its problems, while urging all directors to cooperate with the governor. Among the issues raised and addressed during the meeting were allocating a budget for supplying water to the province, following up on the allocated credits for the



Zahedan-Chabahar railway line, and accelerating employment projects by making mines of the province operational.



Russia downs Ukrainian drone west of Moscow, two airports reopen

Russian air defenses on Friday downed a Ukrainian drone as it flew towards an unspecified target in Moscow, Defence Ministry said, the latest in a flurry of drone attacks on the Russian capital. Earlier, Moscow's Vnukovo airport and Kaluga airport, some 150 km southwest of the capital, were temporarily shut due to a suspected drone flight. They later reopened, Reuters reported.

"... an attempt by the Kyiv regime to carry out

a terrorist attack by an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) on a facility in Moscow was thwarted," the ministry said in a statement, adding the drone was jammed and crashed in a forest west of Moscow.

"There are no casualties and no damage," it said. Earlier, Vnukovo airport said it had been compelled to suspend all flights "for reasons beyond the control of the airport", adding that some flights had been redirected to other

airports in the Moscow region. It gave no further information.

Flights later resumed at both Vnukovo and Kaluga airports.

Drone air strikes deep inside Russia have increased since a drone was destroyed over the Kremlin in early May. Civilian areas of the capital were hit later in May and a Moscow business district was targeted twice in three days earlier this month.

Russia said on Thursday that it had downed 13

Ukrainian drones seeking to attack Moscow and also the largest city in Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

In recent days, Ukrainian remotely piloted boats, also referred to as drones, have attacked a Russian fuel tanker and a navy base at Russia's Novorossiysk port on the Black Sea. Ukraine typically does not comment on who is behind attacks on Russian territory, although officials have publicly expressed satisfaction over them.

On Thursday, Ukrainian authorities ordered a mandatory evacuation of nearly 12,000 civilians from 37 towns and villages near the northeastern front line as Russia ramped up the assault to capture territory already once seized during the conflict, AFP reported.

Ukraine urged civilians to evacuate the eastern Kharkiv region, where Russian forces reportedly are making a concerted effort to punch through the front line.



Russian law enforcement officers stand guard near the accident scene following a reported Ukrainian drone crash in Moscow, Russia, on August 11, 2023.

● REUTERS

20 Syrian soldiers killed in Daesh bus attack



The Daesh terror group ambushed a bus carrying Syrian soldiers in the eastern part of the country, killing and injuring a number of them.

SANA quoted a military source as saying the bus was hit overnight on a desert road in the Dayr al-Zawr Province.

Meanwhile, the Lebanon-based Al-Mayadeen quoted a Syrian security source as saying that 20 soldiers were killed and ten more wounded in the attack.

Daesh members in recent weeks have increased their surprise attacks in Syria's north and northeast, where they maintain hideouts.

The group, which seized wide swathes of Syria and neighboring Iraq from 2013, went underground since it lost its last territory in eastern Syria in 2019.

Global COVID cases up 80% as new subvariant rises

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported worldwide rose by 80% in the last month, the World Health Organization said on Friday, days after designating a new "variant of interest". The WHO declared in May that COVID is no longer a global health emergency, but has warned that the virus will continue to circulate and mutate, causing occasional spikes in infections, hospitalisations and deaths, AFP reported.

It said that nations reported nearly 1.5m new cases from July 10 to August 6, an 80% increase compared to the previous 28 days. However, the number of deaths fell by 57% to 2,500. The WHO warned that the reported number of cases and deaths do not reflect the true numbers, in part because countries carry out far less testing and monitoring than during earlier stages of the pandemic. Many of the new cases came in the Western Pacific region, which saw infections jump by 137%, the WHO said.



Challenges and shifts in Pakistan's economic landscape: From loan agreements to currency depreciation



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

The government of Pakistan has mortgaged the Islamabad International Airport for the Chinese loan. The government has signed an agreement approving the issuance of a sovereign guarantee worth \$3 billion on Chinese debt. The outgoing Cabinet's Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) made this decision en route to transferring the call to the caretaker government for a decision on importing 1 million metric tons of wheat. After the ECC meeting, the

Ministry of Finance conveyed that the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission had submitted a summary regarding government guarantees for Chashma Nuclear Power Project Unit 5.

The ECC sought approval for a sovereign guarantee for the Chashma 5 project under the IMF program. According to the terms of the agreement, China will levy an interest rate of 3% on a 21b RMB loan for a period of 20 years, with repayments commencing after eight years, and China requiring sovereign guarantees with high interest rates.

According to the financial agreement, the sovereign

guarantee issued by the government of Pakistan was the basic condition for the ratification of the agreement by China.

China National Nuclear Corporation Overseas Limited has offered a supplier credit of 21.3b for a 1,200 MW nuclear power plant construction.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the ECC has also approved a summary of the State Support Agreement for the outsourcing of Islamabad International Airport through international competitive bidding. The most negative impact of this approval will be on the employees of the Civil Aviation Authority and Pakistan International Air-

lines that has already faced severe losses. Pakistan's Democratic Movement (PDM) is selling national assets, including precious metal reserves, to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and some Western investors.

Conversely, following the arrest of Imran Khan, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's chairman and former Prime Minister, the Pakistan Stock Exchange is experiencing a sharp downturn due to economic uncertainty. The bearish trend led to an 81% decrease in share prices on Wednesday. The SE 100 index fell to 47954 points. Adding to economic concerns, the value of the dollar is continuously increasing

due to a shortage of dollars in the country. The dollar's appreciation raised Pakistan's external debt by 7%, with the dollar reaching Rs 288 in the interbank market on Tuesday and Rs 296 in the open market on Wednesday, up from Rs 303.



● REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia launches lunar lander



REUTERS - Russia launched its first moon-landing spacecraft in 47 years on Friday in a bid to be the first nation to make a soft landing on the lunar south pole, a region believed to hold coveted pockets of water ice.

The Russian lunar mission, the first since 1976, is racing against India, which launched its Chandrayaan-3 lunar lander last month, and more broadly with the US and China, both of which have advanced lunar exploration programs targeting the lunar south pole.

A Soyuz 2.1 rocket carrying the Luna-25 craft blasted off from the Vostochny cosmodrome, 5,550 km east of Moscow, at 2:11 a.m. on Friday Moscow time (1111 GMT on Thursday).

Niger tensions flare up

AP - Tensions are escalating between Niger's new military regime and the West African regional bloc that has ordered the deployment of troops to restore Niger's flailing democracy.

The ECOWAS bloc said on Thursday it had directed a "standby force" to restore constitutional order in Niger after its Sunday deadline to reinstate ousted President Mohamed Bazoum expired. Two Western officials told AP that Niger's junta had told a top US diplomat they would kill Bazoum if neighboring countries attempted any military intervention to restore his rule.

Hawaii death toll climbs to 55 with 1,000 missing



REUTERS - Maui's wildfires have killed at least 55 people, a toll expected to rise, and unleashed destruction on the resort town of Lahaina that will take many years and billions of dollars to rebuild, according to Hawaiian officials.

The fast-moving inferno, which started on Tuesday, spread from the brush outside of town and ravaged the historic city of Lahaina that was once the capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Hawaii Governor Josh Green said that around 1,000 people are still unaccounted for, as he said that the Aloha State is headed for its deadliest disaster in state history.

Liverpool agree British record £111m fee for Caicedo



● GETTY IMAGES

BBC – Liverpool have agreed a British record transfer fee of £111m with Brighton for midfielder Moises Caicedo.

After Brighton rejected a succession of bids from Chelsea, it remains to be seen whether the Blues will now match that amount.

Brighton had set a fee in excess of £100m for Caicedo and had said they felt no-one would reach it.

However, Liverpool have now done that, which leaves the 21-year-old Ecuador international free to go for a medical.

Liverpool lost midfielders Jordan Henderson and Fabinho to the Saudi Pro League last month but signed Caicedo's Brighton team-mate Alexis Mac Allister in June for £35m.

Former Reds captain Henderson, 33, joined Al-Ettifaq in a deal worth £12m plus add-ons, while 29-year-old Brazilian Fabinho switched to Al-Ittihad for £40m.

Speaking on Friday, Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said: "I got told I can confirm a deal with [Brighton] is agreed."

"What did change is that we are a club with not endless resources, so things we didn't expect, a couple of things happening in the summer [Henderson and Fabinho], stuff like this."

"We didn't think about that before the summer, to be honest and when it happened, we gave it a go and obviously, the club was really stretched there, to be honest."

The fee agreed for Caicedo exceeds the £107m Chelsea paid for Argentina midfielder Enzo Fernandez earlier this year. The Seagulls would also profit if Caicedo is sold by Liverpool because of a sell-on clause in his contract.

Caicedo joined Brighton from Ecuadorian side Independiente del Valle for £4m in February 2021 although he did not make his Premier League debut until April 2022.

He asked to leave Brighton in the January transfer window earlier this year. Arsenal then had multiple offers turned down for Caicedo before the player signed a new contract with the Seagulls until 2027 in March.

Klopp has been looking at various options to rebuild his squad after they finished fifth in the Premier League last season and failed to qualify for the Champions League.

Persian Gulf Pro League roundup:

New signings spearhead Sepahan to statement win; Nekounam off to flier with Blues

Sport Desk

The first round of matches in the new Persian Gulf Pro League season saw summer signings lead Sepahan to a massive 3-1 victory over Tractor at the Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium.

Persepolis began its title defense with a 1-0 win against Iralco in Tehran, while Javad Nekounam enjoyed a flying start to life on the Blues' bench as Esteghlal walked away with a 3-0 triumph over San'at Naft Abadan in southern Iran.

Golgozar Sirjan was also a big winner on the opening day, defeating Foolad Khuzestan by three goals at home.

Sepahan statement

Many believed Sepahan was unlucky to lift the trophy despite arguably delivering the best performances in the Iranian top flight throughout last season.

Thursday's win in the star-studded contest proved Jose Morais's men mean business again as the five-time champion will be looking to end a nine-year title drought.

Tensions were high in the battle of the two busy sides of the transfer window as 11 players were shown a yellow card with the host's Nilson Júnior and Safa Hadi of Tractor receiving their marching orders for a second bookable offence.

Shahriyar Moghanlou, the league's leading marksman last season, picked up where he had left off by bagging Sepahan's first goal of the new campaign in the 11th minute.

Morteza Asadi perhaps played a pivotal role in Sepahan's failure in the title race last season when his spot kick sealed a 1-0 win for Tractor in the fixture in the closing stages of the campaign.

Asadi's summer recruitment, however, paid off early on for Sepahan as he doubled the lead for the home side with 25 minutes into the game,



● Reza Shekari (#1) celebrates Sepahan's third goal in a 3-1 victory over Tractor in the Persian Gulf Pro League at the Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium, Isfahan, Iran, on August 10, 2023.
● RASOUL SHOJAEI/IRNA

tapping in from close range on a Reza Shekari's low cross. A first appearance on his return to Tractor turned into an absolute nightmare for goalkeeper Hossein Pourhamidi when his ill-fated attempt to clear the ball let Shekari, who also joined Sepahan in the summer, find his name on the score sheet with a header from the edge box and all but secure the maximum points for the host on the hour mark.

Substitute Saeed Karim-Azar pulled one back in the 89th minute but it proved too little too late for the for the visiting side, which will be chasing a first win of the campaign against Persepolis at home on Wednesday, with Sepahan playing Zob Ahan in

the Isfahan derby. Chances were few and far between in an empty Azadi Stadium on Wednesday as a first-half goal by Ali Nemati was enough to get Persepolis to a winning start to their quest for a seventh league crown in eight years. A perfect through ball by Soroush Rafiei found Nemati behind the Iralco backline before the Reds fullback lobbed keeper Ahmad Gohari, who joined Iralco on loan from Persepolis, as the champion is yet to drop points in the league since the home defeat against Sepahan in March.

Persepolis archrival Esteghlal could not have asked for a better beginning to the new era under Nekounam after a

preseason which was dominated by financial shortcomings and the departure of two prolific players in Mehdi Qayedi and Mohammad Mohebbi.

A 1-1 home draw against San'at Naft with two games to spare ended Esteghlal's pursuit of the league title in May but it was a different story in Abadan on Thursday. Arash Rezavand's left-footed effort from inside the box led the Blues to a first-half lead before Amir-Arsalan Motahari's thumping header two minutes after the break propelled Nekounam's side to a 2-0 advantage.

Saleh Hardani capped off a brilliant run through San'at Naft's defense when he fired the ball into the bottom cor-

ner for Esteghlal's third of the afternoon in the 58th minute.

Esteghlal will play Malavan at the Azadi Stadium on Thursday, with San'at Naft visiting Foolad Arena to take on Foolad a day earlier.

Elsewhere, Greek manager Marinos Ouzounidis enjoyed a winning debut in the Iranian league as first half goals by Ahmadreza Zenderouh, from the spot, and Aliasghar A'ashouri were followed by Alireza Alizadeh's header in the second period as Golgozar came out on top against Alireza Mansourian's Foolad. Newly-promoted clubs Esteghlal Khuzestan and Shams Azar shared the points in a 1-1 draw in Ahvaz. Pouria Sarabadani netted a

maiden top-flight goal for Shams Azar the hour mark but Behrouz Barani drew the home side level in the 90th minute.

It was pretty much the same scenario when Nassaji Mazandaran hosted Paykan in Qaemshahr as a late Vahid Mohammadzadeh's header canceled out Amir Taher's opener for the visiting side. Zob Ahan head coach Mohammad Rabiei, who was linked with the Esteghlal job before leaving Mes Rafsanjan, also revealed in a victorious debut with Zob Ahan after three second-half goals inside six minutes saw the Isfahan-based win 2-1 at Malavan. Havadar and Mes Rafsanjan played to a goalless stalemate in Tehran.

OCA chief predicts 'greatest ever' Asian Games in Hangzhou despite election review



● The Hangzhou Olympic Sports Center Stadium is the main venue of the Hangzhou Asian Games.
● VCG

REUTERS – China's Hangzhou city will stage the "greatest ever" Asian Games next month, acting Olympic Council of Asia head Randhir Singh told Reuters on Friday, asserting OCA's internal issues will not impact the continental event.

The OCA has run into troubles after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) refused to recognise its elections last month, and asked India's Singh to carry on as its acting president.

The IOC has banned Kuwait's Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah for three years for his "undeniable impact" in the OCA elections in which his

brother, Sheikh Talal Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, was appointed president of the continental body.

Former Olympic skeet shooter Singh was first appointed acting president of the OCA in 2021 when Sheikh Ahmad stepped down as president after being convicted by a Swiss criminal court of forgery. Sheikh Ahmad has denied any wrongdoing.

"The OCA election has nothing to do with the organisation of the Games," Singh told Reuters by telephone sounding upbeat about the Games, which could not be held last year because of COVID-19 re-

strictions in China. "Hangzhou was all ready to host it last year itself. Venues are ready, everything is in place, and I'm sure we are going to see the greatest ever Asian Games."

The IOC is reviewing the OCA election process in which Sheikh Talal edged out Husain Al-Musallam 24-20 to head the Asian body, which had his father, Sheikh Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, as its first president.

The IOC, in an Aug. 9 letter seen by Reuters, asked both candidates not to engage with OCA's voting members until the completion of the review process.

Underprivileged gifted students to study tuition-free at NODET schools

Social Desk

Gifted Iranian students from low-income groups will now have the opportunity to study for free at NODET schools.

The Iranian Minister of Education announced that the government would cover registration fees for exceptional students, who come from low-income backgrounds, in the National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents (NODET) schools, according to ISNA.

The resolution was passed by the Council of Ministers and will take effect in the new academic year.

The decision to provide financial assistance for registration and education expenses aims to support talented individuals from disadvantaged families. Minister of Education Reza-Morad Sahraie confirmed this initiative during a government meeting on August 2, 2023. He emphasized that these students would not be charged any tuition fees, as the government would cover all their costs.

The plan also extends to current NODET school students. However, due to unexpected credit issues, their tuition fees

will fall under what is referred to as the "President's Special Gift" category, and will be paid accordingly.

To ensure its swift implementation, a notification regarding financial support for under-

privileged gifted students was promptly delivered to Iran's Planning and Budget Organization within one week.

Funds dedicated specifically towards assisting gifted students from families in lower

income brackets attending NODET schools will be allocated through approved credit facilities. The Ministry of Education and NODET will receive the necessary funding via the president's scholarship

programs.

Furthermore, an approval letter issued by the Board of Ministers highlighted that this initiative aims to remove barriers faced by talented students from low-income families when pursuing studies at NODET schools. By encouraging them to participate in entrance exams at such institutions, adequate funding provided through relevant approved credit facilities allocated towards Ministry of Education as well as NODET will cover registration fees and educational aid.

Additionally, cooperation between NODET and Imam Khomeini Relief Committee has facilitated enrollment processes for supported students, resulting in increased attendance rates among relief committee beneficiaries at these schools. This resolution ensures that supported students no longer have to worry about paying their education expenses at these institutions.

On August 5, the results for seventh and tenth-grade exams at NODET schools were announced. This year's entrance exams saw a total of 294,300 individuals participating across both grades.



Iranian biodegradable waste bags in Armenian market



By Yeganeh Kiani
Staff writer

The generation of urban solid waste and the subsequent disposal of it are among the most critical environmental issues around the world. Among these wastes, plastic has a large volume due to mismanagement as well as incorrect human usage. Currently, most plastics are not biodegradable.

In order to solve the issue, we can use nanobiodegradable plastic as alternatives to current common plastic.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Abbas Khodabandehlou, who runs a business in nanotechnology, says nanoplastic bags decompose much faster than other types of plastic bags.

"Nanoparticles are the most important materials used in the production process of all kinds of nanobags. Nanotechnology is the brand-new technology in the field of producing various compounds including plastic bags," he said. According to Khodabandehlou, these goods have many benefits over ordinary plastics, including great tensile strength, heat resistance and biodegradability. "Also they can be used repeatedly and, for this reason, in addition to reducing the need for bags, they provide more protection for the environment. In fact, they are environmentally friendly. These bags are beneficial for farmers and businesspeople, who are about to import goods like fruits and vegetables. They protect the produce from decaying and preserve them for about one month without any

change in quality," he said.

Regular bags can only preserve such goods for about two weeks. "Current nanostartups in Iran require better domestic investments due to the fact that essential materials for this technology are so expensive, and also there is the need for contemporary fully automatic machine manufacturers to reduce labor and save on cost," he said. Khodabandehlou further stated that some knowledge-based start-ups in cities like Tehran, Isfahan, and Qom are making a lot of effort to produce raw materials for nanobag production.

"Meanwhile, there are others which import raw materials from neighboring countries like Turkey, which leads to high expenses in producing these goods."

In other news, there has been a contract signed between one of the Iranian nanocompanies and Kapan City Municipality in Armenia that will see the export of the company's biodegradable and antibacterial polyethylene rubbish bags to the city.

The company has formerly exported its goods to Germany and Uzbekistan as well as Turkey and Armenia, according to the CEO. These types of bags are also being used in fruit and vegetables markets in Tehran and Mashhad. Each individual should make an effort to preserve the environment. It would be better to use alternatives like cloth bags and paper bags. Moreover, if we are using plastic bags, we had better reuse them. We also should consider switching from plastic water bottles, which greatly contribute to plastic pollution, to bottles made of metal or glass.

Athletes, environmentalists join forces to cleanse Tehran's Tochal resort

Social Desk

A collaborative effort between Iranian athletes, environmentalists, Iranian Ski Federation, Tehran Province's Department of the Environment, and Tochal resort complex has led to a successful cleanup initiative in parts of Tochal resort in northern Tehran. This cultural program, aimed at fostering environmental awareness, took place earlier this week.

During the ceremony, Abbas Nazarian, head of the country's Ski Federation, stressed that the environment serves as a crucial platform for cultural development across various domains, with particular emphasis on environmental protection, according to IRNA.

"Green marketing, processes, and studies have gained significant attention over the past decade. These initiatives aim to convey an essential message: Earth and its environment require safeguarding – a responsibility shared by individuals from diverse backgrounds," he said.

With more than 236 active sports federations operating in Iran across various sectors, Nazarian emphasized that each sporting community possesses a unique connection to nature due to their activities' inherent relationship with it. By leveraging this bond effectively, the sports sector can contribute substantially towards preserving the environment while fostering responsible practices within the society.

Nazarian also revealed that special attention is being given to environmental concerns by including them as major programs within the World Skiing Federation's agenda for its new term. This focus will extend beyond Iran's borders, serving as an influential force globally in addressing environmental challenges.

Alireza Rahmati, the deputy director of Tehran Province's Department of the Environment, stressed the critical importance of mountain ecosystems. He noted that these ecosystems not only provide clean air but also support the strength and survival of cities and villages. Rahmati further emphasized proper utilization and sincere respect for the natural world when engaging with nature. He highlighted Iranians' innate love for nature, resulting in the country having a strong environmentalist culture.

"Iran encompasses both the

hottest and coldest points on Earth – displaying remarkable climatic and biologic diversity," Rahmati said, urging citizens and sporting communities to actively participate in preserving the country's environment, taking advantage of the country's unique geographic qualities.

Rahmati noted that the popular garbage-free campaign in Tehran Province, which began at the beginning of the year, had received wide acceptance and acclaim.

"With such initiatives gaining momentum, now we see that the environment has become a concern for various segments of society," he said. Following a successful cleanup effort in Tochal complex, athletes and environmentalists united to sign a statement affirming their support for nature preservation and environmental protection.



NEWS IN BRIEF

US suicide deaths hit record high in 2022



REUTERS – The number of people who died by suicide in the US hit an estimated record 49,000 in 2022, a 2.6 percent increase over the prior year, government data showed. Over half of all US suicides in 2022 involved firearms, according to the figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"Nine in 10 Americans believe America is facing a mental health crisis. The new suicide death data reported by CDC illustrates why," US Health Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a statement.

He added that many people still believe that asking for help is a sign of weakness.

The suicide rate in 2022 – 14.9 deaths for every 100,000 people – is 5 percent higher than the previous record high of 14.2 deaths for every 100,000 people from 2018.

Suicide deaths rose from 48,183 in 2021 to an estimated 49,449 deaths in 2022, CDC said.

US citrus crops ravaged by disease and climate



THE GUARDIAN – Orange juice prices are expected to rise further in the US after a bacterial disease and extreme weather intensified by global heating ravaged this season's crop of the citrus fruit.

Last year Florida, which produces more than 90 percent of the US's orange juice supply, was hit by Hurricane Ian, Hurricane Nicole and freezing conditions in quick succession, devastating orange producers in the Sunshine State.

Producers also battled an incurable citrus greening disease that is spread by an invasive insect, rendering fruit unusable. Most infected trees die within a few years, and some producers told the media they were giving up farming and selling their land. Industry figures said US orange production would reach its lowest level for more than a century.

Iran's 'Unseen' gears up for film festivals



Arts & Culture Desk

MEHR – The Iranian short film, 'Unseen,' directed by the collaborative effort of Mohammadreza Rafiei and Termeh Farahmand Pouya, and written by Mohammadreza Rafiei, has completed its technical stages, preparing for participation in national and international film festivals. 'Unseen' is a social drama that underwent two days of filming in Tehran, capturing moments in front of the camera.

The storyline encapsulates the essence of the film: "Parvaneh and her husband have arranged a gathering to mend a family dispute. Yet, reality unveils a different story, forcing Parvaneh to face a tough choice..."

The cast of this production includes Bita Beigi, Marjan Aqanoori, Iman Dabiri, and Siavash Isazadeh.

The completion of technical production marks an exciting step for 'Unseen,' as it embarks on a journey to captivate audiences at national and international film festivals, shedding light on its thought-provoking narrative and the talent of its cast and creators.

Renowned linguist Safavi dies at 67



Arts & Culture Desk

IRNA – Kourosh Safavi, a distinguished Iranian linguist, translator, and vice-president of the Linguistics Society of Iran, passed away at the age of 67.

He was a prominent professor at Allameh Tabataba'i University in Tehran, contributing significantly to the fields of semantics, semiotics, and the interplay between linguistics and literature.

Born on June 27, 1956, in Tehran, Safavi completed his elementary and secondary education in Germany and Austria before returning to Tehran in 1971.

He pursued studies in German language and literature at the University of Tehran, later transferring to the School of Translation, and ultimately earning his bachelor's degree in linguistics in 1975.

A prolific writer and translator, Safavi authored numerous influential works in the realm of linguistics, including 'An Introduction to Linguistics,' 'Wandering in the Philosophy of Literature,' 'Logic in Linguistics.' Additionally, he translated works by notable linguists and writers like Noam Chomsky, Roman Jakobson, Ferdinand de Saussure, and Jostein Gaarder into Persian.

- License Holder: Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)
- Managing Director: Ali Kakadezfuli
- Editor-in-chief: Mostafa Shirmohammadi
- Int'l & National Desk: Javad Mohammad Ali, Zohreh Qanadi, Ebrahim Beheshti, Amir Mollaei Mozaffari
- Economy Desk: Reza Abesh Ahmadlou, Sadeq Dehqan
- Sports Desk: Amirhadi Arsalanpour
- Iranica Desk: Leila Imeni
- Arts & Culture Desk: Hamideh Hosseini
- Social Desk: Ali Amiri
- Language Editor: Ali Mehran

Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)
 Ali Kakadezfuli
 Mostafa Shirmohammadi
 Javad Mohammad Ali, Zohreh Qanadi,
 Ebrahim Beheshti, Amir Mollaei Mozaffari
 Reza Abesh Ahmadlou, Sadeq Dehqan
 Amirhadi Arsalanpour
 Leila Imeni
 Hamideh Hosseini
 Ali Amiri
 Ali Mehran

Address: #22, Hosseini-Rad Alley, South of Shahid Mottahari St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran, Iran
 Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 88913453
 Editorial Dept. Fax: +98 21 88930684
 ICPI Publisher: +98 21 88548892, 5
 Advertising Dept. Tel & Email: +98 21 88500617
 irandaily@iranagahiha.com
 www.irandaily.ir
 newspaper.irandaily.ir
 irandaily@icpi.ir
 Iran Cultural & Press Institute



Sixth Iranian Film Festival underway in Tokyo



Arts & Culture Desk

The Sixth Iranian Film Festival commenced in Libra Hall, Tokyo, showcasing the diverse cinematic offerings of Iran. The event, which opened on August 10, features a curated selection of Iranian films and is set to run through August 14.

The inauguration ceremony, attended by Peyman Saadat, the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Japan, university professors, artists, and filmmakers, marked the beginning of this cultural celebration. Among the notable films gracing the screen are 'Leaf of Life' by Ebrahim Mokhtari, 'Gholamreza Takhti' by Bahram Tavakoli, 'The Situation of Mehdi' by Hadi Hejazifar, and 'The Miracle of Bonasan' by Habib Ahmadzadeh, according to IRNA.

The lineup also includes 'The Warden' by Nima Javidi, 'Yadu' by Mehdi Jafari,

'Walnut Tree' by Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian, and 'Bodyguard' by Ebrahim Hatamikia, each offering unique insights into various societal, romantic, comedic, and dramatic themes.

Ali Saadat Azar, the cultural attaché of Iran in Japan, highlighted the event's significance in fostering cultural exchange.

He noted that the Iranian Film Festival in Tokyo provides a platform for cross-cultural interactions and artistic discussions, contributing to the development of cultural ties between Iran and Japan.

Saadat Azar expressed optimism about the future of these collaborations, emphasizing the richness of cultural connections between the two nations. He further underscored the event's role in expanding the cinematic partnership, promoting dialogue, and deepening mutual understanding.



standing. Amid the festivities, the film 'The Miracle of Bonasan,' co-directed by Habib Ahmadzadeh, and written by Habib and Zeinab Ahmadzadeh, was screened. This joint Iranian-Japanese

production, shot in four countries including Iran, Japan, Austria, and Iraq, features prominent actors like Parviz Parastui, Shizuko Tsuya, Gerhard Freiling, Noriyuki Asakura, and Mahmoud Bankdar. The film, aimed at promoting peace, received a warm reception in Japan. Directors Ahmadzadeh and Parastui engaged with the audience, addressing their inquiries after the film's screening. The opening ceremony witnessed the presence of eight Iranian directors and actors, fostering an enthusiastic reception for the cinematic gala and subsequent

film screenings. The Iranian Film Festival in Tokyo isn't limited to movie screenings; it encompasses critical discussions about Iranian cinema, talks about film exchange between the two countries, and even traditional music performances in the Minato ward of Tokyo. This comprehensive program promises an enriching experience for cinephiles and cultural enthusiasts alike. The Sixth Iranian Film Festival in Tokyo stands as a testament to the enduring power of cinema in bridging cultural gaps and promoting international understanding.



Iran's 'Eastwood' selected for Japan's Yamagata festival

Arts & Culture Desk

The Iranian documentary 'Eastwood,' directed by Alireza Rasoulinejad and produced by the Documentary & Experimental Film Center, was chosen to be featured in the "Double Shadows" section of the 18th Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in Japan.

The Iranian film 'Eastwood' will be screened in the section titled 'Double Shadows 3: People Who Transport Films,' highlighting its thematic alignment with the festival's focus, ILNA wrote.

Among the notable entries, eight documentaries hailing from Iran, India, Colombia, France, the United Kingdom, Spain, and the United States are slated for screening in this dis-

tinctive section. The selected documentaries collectively explore the history and aesthetic dimensions of cinema, showcasing the creative vision of talented filmmakers.

The Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, a biennial event in Japan, holds a pivotal position as one of Asia's most signifi-

cant and influential documentary film festivals. The festival is scheduled to take place from October 5 to October 12, 2023.

'Eastwood' stands out for its unique narrative structure, contributing to the festival's exploration of innovative approaches within the realm of documentary filmmaking.



'Macbeth' adaptation to take the spotlight in Tehran

Arts & Culture Desk

The Tehran-based Iranshahr Theater Complex is set to host 'Freeze Macbeth Freeze,' an adaptation of William Shakespeare's masterpiece, 'Macbeth,' as of August 14. Directed by Arash Dadgar in collaboration with the Quantum Theater Group, this enthralling play is poised for its upcoming staging.

Hessam Manzour will take on the role of Macbeth, as reported by Mehr:

'Macbeth,' one of Shakespeare's most distinguished works, delves into conscience, guilt's toll on the human psyche, and the allure of dark ambition. This dark and intense play delves into reality and illusion, witchcraft and the supernatural, ambition and kingship, the natural order, light and life, as well as the interplay between darkness and death symbolized through blood and chilling imagery.

The Iranian theatrical scene has witnessed various interpretations of 'Macbeth' in multiple performances. Notably, the Titowak Theater Group, led by Iranian director Ebrahim Poshtkuhi, unveiled 'Hey Macbeth, Only the First Dog Knows Why It Is Barking' in 2009, a thought-provoking exploration of the tragedy. The group's artistic journey extended to international platforms, including the re-

nowned 2011 Festival d'Avignon in France. Further enriching the landscape, members of the Misen Scene troupe, led by director Masoud Tayyebi, presented 'When Hamlet Was Killed by Macbeth's Witches' in 2017 at the Iranian Artists Forum. This performance ingeniously wove elements from both 'Macbeth' and Shakespeare's other celebrated work, 'Hamlet.'

