



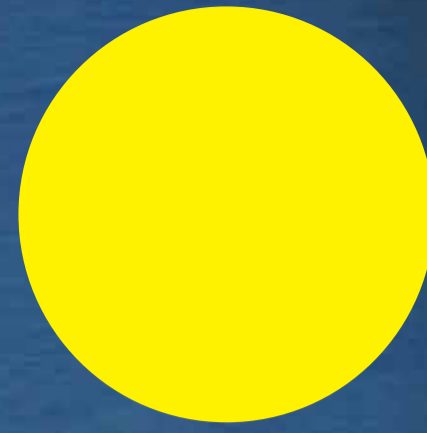
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# Iran Daily



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# SP Fully Operational



Iran inaugurated the last phase of the largest gas field in the world, which it shares with Qatar. The project was developed by local companies after several foreign firms such as France's Total abandoned the project due to US sanctions. According to Iranian officials, the development of the project by Iranian experts saved the country \$800 million. 4 >

## Iran's economy posts 'sevenfold' surge in two years



### Economic Desk

Iran's economy has witnessed a resurgence, with its economic growth averaging 4.2% over the past two years, which marks a "sevenfold" growth compared to the lackluster 0.6% average during the four years leading up to 2021.

The growth is seen as a clear sign of the nation's emergence from a prolonged period of economic stagnation.

According to economic indicators, if a country's annual economic growth exceeds 3% for two consecutive years, it is considered to have broken free from the shackles of economic inertia. Bolstering this viewpoint are statistics released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), suggesting that the nation's economy has turned a corner, leaving behind recession.

Official figures have revealed that Iran's economic expansion for 2021 and 2022 was registered at 4.4% and 4%, respectively. This is in sharp contrast to the paltry 0.6% average recorded during the four-year term of the previous government which left the office in August 2021.

The most recent data from the CBI highlights a dramatic turnaround in the oil and gas industry. Previously mired in a negative growth rate of 8.7%, the sector has staged a strong recovery, posting a robust growth rate of 10% in both 2021 and 2022.

Further analysis of the economic landscape paints a picture of steady progression. The average economic growth from 2011 to 2020 stood at a modest 0.8%. However, this figure underwent a big leap in 2021, soaring to 4.2%. Equally striking is the investment sector, where the average growth from 2011 to 2020 languished at a negative 5.9%. However, 2021 brought about a remarkable reversal, boasting an investment growth rate of 6.7%.



# Iran uses various methods to boost oil exports

### Economy Desk

The Iranian government has prioritized boosting crude and gas condensate exports through new deals, focusing on fresh target markets and utilizing several novel sales methods including bartering. Total foreign direct investment (FDI) drawn for Iran's oil and gas sector stood at \$5.5 billion via buyback during the tenure of the previous government (August 2013 to August 2021) while from August 2005 to August 2013, the corresponding figure was \$16.7 billion, according to IRNA.

The previous government attracted only \$35 million in foreign investment for the oil and gas industry during the year to March 2021, but its successor secured \$56.7 million in FDI, registering a growth of 62 percent in the year leading up to March 2022, amid harsh sanctions against Iran. Also, the current government, taking office in August 2021, has developed joint oil and gas fields and has signed contracts worth \$100 billion using new methods.

The drop in foreign investment

in the oil and gas industry under the previous government has resulted in gas shortages and consequently electricity outages throughout the country.

Iran's oil production and exports have seen a remarkable surge under the current government according to OPEC figures.

Iran's oils exports drastically decreased after the US imposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic when it pulled out of a 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran world powers in 2018. However, Washington failed to bring Iran's oil sales to zero.

Now, the conditions the export of oil has been greatly improved as Iran has granted access to its frozen assets overseas.

In October 2021, US President Joe Biden called on importing countries to cut the purchase of Iranian oil in a speech that went against a promise that the White House made to lift sanctions against Iran.

Iran has followed the right track in selling oil. Statistics also show that the country's economic development with oil has been higher than its growth without oil, which indicates an increase in Iran's oil revenues.

With the US unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal aimed at bringing the country's oil exports to nil, crude production began to decline and eventually dropped to 1.9 million barrels per day in 2020, the lowest in the last 25 years.

Also, a large part of Iran's crude oil and gas condensate reserves which were stored on land and sea reservoirs have been delivered to customers, said Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji.

Although sanctions against Iran are still in force, crude production has now reached 2.8 million bpd, according to OPEC.



## Black gold's reign continues



By Ebrahim Beheshti  
Staff writer

In the most recent BRICS summit, the bloc approved the membership of six countries, namely, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Ethiopia, and Argentina. Of these six new members, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are all major oil producers and are about to join forces with another major oil producer, Russia. Before the expansion, BRICS was comprised of the five so-called emerging markets of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. As a mainly economic organization, BRICS has the potential to become a major economic and political axis in the international arena considering its economic growth as well as its varied geographic and demographic potential, according to many analysts.

In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, the international affairs expert Shuaib Bahman stressed that this process is currently underway since "the BRICS five contribute 31.5% of global GDP, while the G7 share has fallen to 30%, making them roughly on par when it comes to dominating the global economy". Despite hearing that oil no longer plays a major role in the global economy as the most important source of energy, it seems that its time on the throne has not yet ended. Inviting three of the world's largest producers of crude oil to join BRICS is not unrelated to the significance of this strategic resource in global competitions.

Based on the outlooks provided by various credible international

institutes, particularly the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), which is a part of the US Department of Energy, oil demands will continue to rise by 2050. The predicted population growth and considerable economic growth in some parts of the world have been cited as evidence for the claim. Even though energy (oil) consumption in the member states of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development will see a low, negligible growth by 2050, oil demands in non-member states, especially in the East and Africa, will show a sharp increase.

The forecast, of course, is tightly linked to what the recent report of Goldman Sachs referred to as "a dramatic shift in the balance of global economic power in the coming decades". Most importantly, it has been predicted that the share of Asian economies in

the global economy will increase while the European countries will have less of a say. Besides China and India, Indonesia is one such Asian country that is expected to experience substantial growth by 2050, to become the fourth largest economy in the world.

Energy is still the driving force behind the economy. Despite the projected rise in the use of renewable energies in the future, oil will not be replaced by renewable energies by 2050. In fact, it is forecast that oil will remain the most important source of energy in 2050.

India, which has become the most populated country on Earth since a few months ago, is anticipated to demand 14 million barrels of crude oil per day by 2050, 12 million barrels of which it must import. By that time, China's daily oil demands will probably reach 17 million barrels per day, only four million barrels of which it

will produce. It is estimated that by 2050, some other developing Asian countries including Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Pakistan will require 15 million barrels of oil combined each day. Although Africa will not experience a population growth that would be on par with Asia's, its oil demands will double by then. The same forecasts suggest that the Middle East will produce the most crude oil. OPEC member states will produce 43 million barrels of crude oil per day, while OPEC non-member states produce around 58 million barrels of crude oil.

With this background, the membership of the three major oil producers in BRICS can be better understood. As an alliance of emerging non-Western markets that claim to compete with international organizations of the West, BRICS needs energy to overtake its competitors. In fact, the presence

of major oil producers in the bloc will be its relative advantage to stimulate economic growth.

According to Fars News Agency, through this recent expansion, BRICS will have a hold on nearly half (47.6 percent) of the crude oil that is supplied to the global market. Moreover, half of the world's proven oil reserves will be in the hands of BRICS members, amounting to 719 billion barrels.

Meanwhile, members of the G7 (the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom) have control of only 3.9 percent of the world's supplied oil in total. Of course, that relative advantage paves the way for BRICS members to realize their goal of replacing the US dollar in trade.

Therefore, in defiance of some assessments, oil will continue to play its role in the competition between major global powers or alliances for at least a few more decades. This means that Iran, as a large producer of crude oil, can also play a key role in regional and international arenas through BRICS.

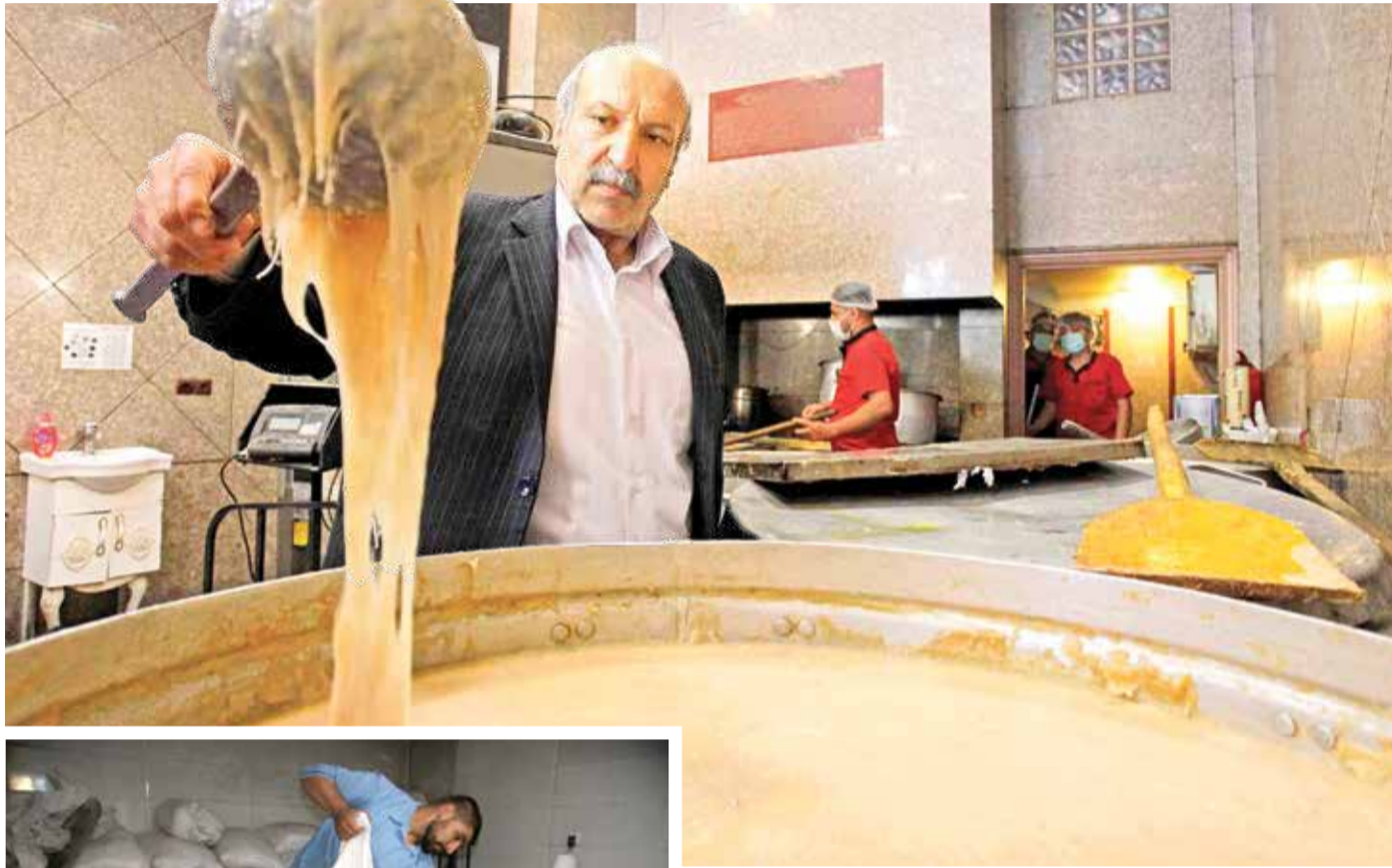
That is why Jafar Qannadbashi, an international affairs expert, told Iran Daily that Iran's admission into BRICS is not a one-sided privilege that is handed down to the country, but rather, it is a win-win deal that has its advantages for all sides.

"Iran's geopolitical position and its energy advantage are factors that would give more weight to BRICS by its admission," he said.

Shuaib Bahman also believes that Iran's geographical position, rich energy resources, and relatively large population are "interesting and advantageous" for BRICS members.



# Halim, a popular dish in Iran throughout history



## Iranica Desk

According to historical books, *halim* has been a popular dish in Persia since ancient times, said a tourism expert. Mohammad Rahimi Khosh told

ISNA that *halim* is a stew-like dish, which has been common in the Middle East, especially Iran. He added, "There are various types of *halim*, with various ingredients, but the same cooking method is used for preparing all of them."

"For example, wheat *halim* is made with peeled and pounded wheat, onions, beef or lamb and oil. *Halim*'s color can be changed by adding spices such as cinnamon and sugar."

The expert continued that the cooking time of this dish is very long in such a way that people usually put the pot containing *halim* on a stove at night, and add water to it several times until early morning. Then they stir the *halim* with a large paddle to make it soft, consistent and elastic.

Rahimi Khosh noted that al-

though *halim* is eaten sweet in most parts of Iran, in some cities, including Zanjan, it is consumed with salt. *Halim* is a special food for the cold months of the year, and it has been customary to cook and consume it in the winter.

He noted that anthropologists and archaeologists examine the evolution of foods to find their roots and reasons for their emergence.

"Although foods like *halim* are cooked in many parts of the world, their main ingredients are wheat, barley and bran."



● vaghayerooz

He added that the first grains that were consumed by humans were wild wheat and barley, on which most herbivorous quadrupeds feed.

Rahimi Khosh pointed out that in the beginning, humans ate barley and wheat raw, not ground, but this caused their molar teeth to deteriorate. Therefore, over thousands of years, they realized that these grains should be cooked in boiling water before consumption.

He said after the discovery of fire, humans learned to add other plants and meat to soups made from grains. In order to make them easier to digest, they started to stir them while cooking.

*Halim* literally means sticky, stretchy, a wheat soup prepared from wheat and chicken or beef. Persians maintained the sacred aspect of cooking *halim* but introduced a new dimension to it. Served warm, *halim* became a breakfast staple in Persian cuisine.

Today, *halim* shops can be found all over Iran. Those who crave this Persian food for breakfast often purchase it from these establishments. *Halim* is now

available year-round and in various forms.

*Halim* is a nutrient-dense dish in Persian cuisine, providing a good balance of proteins, carbohydrates, and healthy fats. The grains and meat offer a substantial amount of protein, while the slow cooking process helps break down the grains, making them easier to digest.

Persian *halim* is usually served in a bowl and traditionally eaten with a spoon. The dish can be consumed as a hearty breakfast, a warming lunch, or even a satisfying dinner.

*Halim* is often associated with religious or cultural events and gatherings, such as Ramadan or Muharram, where it is prepared and served to the community. This act of sharing Persian food strengthens social bonds and carries on the historical tradition of "giving out nazri (a Persian tradition in which people cook food and give it to others, including the poor, friends and family)."

*Halim* is eaten in many other countries, including India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Turkey. Additionally, the dish has evolved over time with different versions and variations.

## Ancient bridges in Khuzestan

Shushtar Bridge in Khuzestan Province, dating back to Sassanid era, had been constructed with bricks and it had various arches laid on different piles. When the bridge was visited by G.V. Roggen, a German orientalist, it didn't have five gates. Some of the piles of its bridge had been ruined and new piles were reconstructed. At present, except for some original parts, the rest have been destroyed.

Shushtar Bridge was made of carved cubic sandstones and the main road with the same materials with the thickness of about one meter. Roggen saw a part of piles, made of rubble stones, bricks and concrete. The width of weir of the bridge with a height of three to four meters above water level in dry season was a little more than the width of piles. The weir, which extended throughout the cross section of the river besides raising water level, fastening the piles together.

There were different arches over the bridge in order to increase the capacity of the river cross-section during overflowing.

The materials used had high quality and the places they had extracted the sandstone is still visible and can be seen the marks of peck stroke.

### Shape of piles and their dimensions

All the piles of old bridges had rectangular cross section with a sharp edge opposite to the river water current. At first it looks like the dimensions of piles, are over design, but if we realize the pressure and water strokes during overflowing, we can understand the importance of this kind of design. The thickness of piles is between five to 6.40 meters and the length is a little more than the width of the road and some how less than the width of the weir bridge.

There were some small arches on the spaces between piles and the main arches (as mentioned before) in order to increase the capacity of river cross section during overflowing.

The distance between center to center of two piles were about

13 to 14 meters so the internal diameter of large arches were two times the width of their piles.

The width of the weir bridge was one or two meters longer than the length of the piles and it was eight to 12 meters. The advantage of Shushtar Bridge respect to two other important bridges in Khuzestan was its longitudinal axis, which was not in a straight line. Roggen guessed the builder tried to put the piles of the bridge on natural rocks, so the axes of bridge got out of line. The original Shushtar Weir Bridge had 40 gates and it was about 500 meters long.

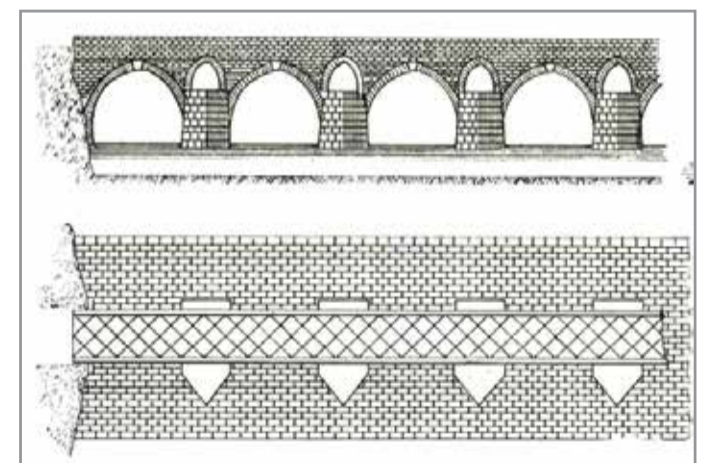
The Karun River was divided into two branches at the north of Shushtar. The eastern branch called, Gargar River and the Western one Shatit. These two branches joined together in Gheer Dam site again. That is why Shushtar and the land between these two rivers became as a peninsula.

There were two tunnels under Salasel Castle about 300 meters

upstream of Shushtar Bridge which joined together, 100 meters downstream and formed Darian Canal.

The other name of this canal was Mino-Ab or Darabian. It was said, this canal had been excavated by the order of Darius the Great. The width of both tunnels was three to 405 meters and on one side there was a passageway. They are all destroyed by now. By the way, the water intake bed of the tunnels was constructed as a weir. The height of the crest was about water level during dry season.

Darian Canal was divided into two branches in Band-e-Khak. The main branch went towards south, after 33km, it joined to Shatit River in Arab Hassan Weir. The topography between Shatit and Gargar Rivers were somehow that Darian Canal passed through ridges of the hills. So it was very easy to irrigate the land between these two rivers. There were many other irrigation canals passed through high lands. The second branch of Darian Canal after passing through Lash-



gar Bridge poured into Gargar River.

There was a dam in Band-e-Khak which store main portion of Darian Canal water discharge in original branch, because the eastern branch of Darian had 15 meters head.

Apparently they had constructed three more weirs to reduce the velocity of water. Roggen emphasized that Darian Canal had been older

than the other water structures which were constructed during Shapur the First (240-270 CE), because the max. height of weir in Darian was the same as water level during dry season. Roggen concluded that there must have been a dam for taking water before constructing the Shapur Bridge and perhaps Shapur the First repaired the weir or he had completely changed it.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

'Iran-Holland  
disputes can  
be settled'

**IRNA** – Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani, in a telephone conversation with his Dutch counterpart, Marcel de Vink, said Tehran believes dialogue can help the settlement of differences and contribute to further interaction between the two countries.

The Iranian official said both countries are in a new phase of cooperation, which is expected to expand in light of mutual will.

The Dutch deputy foreign minister, for his part, underscored the importance of dialogue between the two nations. He said diplomacy will help clear up misunderstandings.

Upgraded  
indigenous  
submarines  
to join  
IRGC Navy

**TASNIM** – Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy will receive the new generation of the Ghadir-class and Fateh-class submarines.

The two homegrown submarines are capable of launching subsurface-to-surface missiles, torpedoes, and mines.

Iran: Disputed  
gas field with  
Kuwait 'not a  
big problem'

**PRESS TV** – Iran believes a dispute with neighboring Kuwait surrounding a gas field in the Persian Gulf is not a big problem, as a senior diplomat said the issue can be resolved given the good relations that exist between the two countries. Ali Asghar Khaji, a senior aide to the Iranian foreign minister, said on Sunday that Iran is not worried that the issue of Arash gas field, known in Kuwait as Al-Durra, would become problematic in bilateral relations with Kuwait.

He said Iran and Kuwait could settle the dispute over the strategically important gas field through cooperation on the basis of the historical relations of the two countries.

Iran inaugurates  
last phase of  
SP gas field

The Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi on Monday inaugurated Phase 11 of South Pars gas field, the world's largest, located in the Persian Gulf.

Iranian experts developed Phase 11, the last phase of the gas field, which French TOTAL ceased working on, due to sanctions imposed by the US on Iran.

Phase 11 is the farthest border section of South Pars, which Iran shares with Qatar.

Iran's Oil Minister Ja-

vad Owji said the inauguration of Phase 11 of South Pars put an end to 20 years of waiting, and saved the country \$800 million in development costs.

President Raeisi described the implementation of the project "a technically complex and unique operation," saying its opening will secure a significant portion of the rights of the nation from common fields.

The phase will start production at 15 million cu-

bic meters per day and reach an ultimate capacity of 56 million cubic meters per day, plus one million tons of ethane, on top of one million tons of LPG per year, which will generate an annual income of \$5 billion, said Managing Director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr.

To reach this capacity, 24 wells will be spudded in total. "So far, four wells have been put into operation, and the rest

will gradually come on stream," Khojasteh-Mehr said.

The French company, TOTAL, signed a contract, with a 20-year duration, in 2017, after Iran had concluded a nuclear agreement with the West. It was the operator of the \$5.9 billion project with a 50.1% interest alongside the Chinese state-owned oil and gas company, CNPC (30%), and Petropars (19.9%), a wholly owned subsidiary of NIOC.

Both foreign companies pulled out of the project in 2018, shortly after then-US president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers and re-imposed sanctions.

The project was then awarded to local counterparts, which operated under the auspices of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC).

Raeisi said the implementation of the project was carried out by capable

domestic experts, while the foreign companies that were parties to the contract abandoned their obligations due to sanctions.

According to official figures, Iran currently produces about one billion cubic meters per day of natural gas and plans to raise production capacity by another 500 million cubic meters per day by 2029. Presently, Iran exports gas to Turkey and Iraq, and has swap deals with Turkmenistan and Armenia.

Dissident groups to be disarmed,  
relocated in Iraq's Kurdistan

## International Desk

Iran and Iraq have reached an agreement to disarm members of Iranian Kurdish dissident groups based in northern Iraq and relocate their members from their current bases, officials from the two countries said Monday.

Nasser Kanaani, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, said in a news briefing Monday that the Iraqi government had agreed "to disarm the armed terrorist groups stationed in Iraq's territory by September 19 and then, evacuate and transfer them from their military bases to camps designated by the Iraqi gov-

ernment", according to AP. An Iraqi government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media, confirmed the agreement was signed between the two countries and said the central government in Baghdad is "working as quickly as possible" to relocate the groups with the approval of authorities from the Kurdish regional government in Irbil and Sulaimaniyah.

He declined to give the exact location to which the disarmed militants would be moved but said it would be within the Iraqi Kurdish region. He said they "will have a camp to live in and

will be without arms".

Iran-US tensions  
escalating

The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry also said that Iran has summoned the chargé d'affaires of the Swiss Embassy over the apparent US seizure of Iranian crude oil from a ship that sat for months off Texas, as the oil now appeared to be moored in Houston. Switzerland has looked out for America's interests in Iran since the 1979 US Embassy hostage crisis.

Kanaani's statement marks the latest twist in the saga of the oil once aboard the tanker Suez Rajan, which

had become mired in the wider tensions between the US and Iran. That's even as Tehran and Washington work toward a trade of billions of dollars in frozen Iranian assets in South Korea for the release of five American prisoners held in Tehran.

What can be arguably construed as a step back in Tehran-Washington relations — after two steps forward were taken by signing the deal less than a month ago — is the Friday meeting between the US envoy for Iran Abram Paley with the family of Jamshid Sharmahd, who was convicted of heading a pro-monarchist group accused of a



deadly bombing in 2008. The United States should explain its links to the Iranian-German national Sharmahd sentenced to death in Iran, Tehran's foreign ministry spokesperson said on Monday, adding that progress had been made in

Smoke rises in the Koy Sanjaq district of Erbil, Iraq, on September 28, 2022, after Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps launched attacks on dissident groups. **FARIQ FARAJ/AA**

a prisoner swap deal with Washington, Reuters reported.



**Mohammad Ali Rajabi**  
Cartoonist

Iran awards \$2.7b airport project  
to Chinese contractor

Iran has awarded a contract to a Chinese company to develop its largest international airport, according to a senior transportation ministry official.

Saeid Chalandari, who serves as CEO of Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKA), said on Sunday that Iran will spend at least 2.5 billion euros (\$2.7 billion) to build a second phase at the airport under the contract signed with the unidentified Chinese company. Chalandari said the company had been selected to carry

out the project after intensive negotiations with several domestic and international contractors, Press TV. He said, however, that Iran will pay for the project using a barter mechanism that allows swapping crude oil for financial resources, equipment and technical services.

"The executive operation for the new terminal under the second phase development operation of the airport will probably begin until late September," said the official while speaking

to reporters in a news conference.

IKA is Iran's largest airport and is located some 25 kilometers to the southwest of the capital Tehran. The airport offers services to 29 major international airlines with flights to 64 destinations around the world.

Iran has planned major expansion projects for IKA to turn it to a regional aviation hub although some of those projects have stalled in recent years mainly because of US sanctions on the country.

# HRW reveals spike in Israeli killings of Palestinian children

Human Rights Watch called last year, 2022, the deadliest year for Palestinian children in the West Bank in 15 years.

The Israeli military and border police forces are killing Palestinian children with virtually no recourse for accountability, the report said.

Last year was the deadliest year for Palestinian children in the West Bank in 15 years, and 2023 is on track to meet or exceed 2022 levels.

Israeli forces had killed at least 34 Palestinian children in the West Bank as of August 22. Human Rights Watch investigated four fatal shootings of Palestinian children by Israeli forces between November 2022 and March 2023. "Israeli forces are gunning down Palestinian children living under occupation with increasing frequency," said Bill Van Esvelde, associate children's rights director at Human Rights Watch. "Unless Israel's allies, particularly the US, pressure Israel to change course, more Palestinian children will be killed." Human Rights Watch researchers, in documenting the four killings, interviewed in person seven witnesses, nine family members, and other residents, lawyers, doctors, staff and fieldworkers at Palestinian and Israeli rights groups, and reviewed CCTV and videos posted on social media, statements by Israeli security agencies, medical records, and news reports.

## Unlawful killings

In the other cases investigated, the security forces killed boys after they had joined other youths confronting Israeli forces with stones, Molotov cocktails, or fire-works. While these projectiles can seriously injure or kill, in these cases, Israeli forces fired repeatedly at chest-level, hitting multiple children, and killed children in situations where they do not appear to have been posing a threat of grievous injury or death, which is the standard for the use of lethal force by law enforcement officers under international norms. That would make these killings unlawful.



In all cases, Israeli forces shot the children's upper bodies, without, according to witnesses, issuing warnings or using common, less-lethal measures such as tear gas, concussion grenades, or rubber-coated bullets.

In all cases, Israeli forces shot the children's upper bodies, without, according to witnesses, issuing warnings or using common, less-lethal measures such as tear gas, concussion grenades, or rubber-coated bullets.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported in January that since "December 2021, soldiers are allowed to shoot at Palestinians who are fleeing if they had previously thrown stones or Molotov cocktails." Responding to Human Rights Watch, the police said their rules of engagement permit the use of firearms against persons who are throwing stones, Molotov cocktails or fire-works only if there is an "imminent risk to life or bodily integrity." Israeli authorities have used excessive force against Palestinians in policing situations for decades. The authorities have routinely failed to hold their forces accountable when security forces kill Palestinians, including chil-

children, in circumstances in which the use of lethal force was not justified under international norms. From 2017 to 2021, fewer than one percent of complaints of violations by Israeli military forces against Palestinians, including killings and other abuses, resulted in indictments, the rights group Yesh Din reported.

Israeli forces killed at least 614 Palestinians whom the UN classified as civilians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank during this period. But only three soldiers were convicted for killing Palestinians, according to Yesh Din, and all received short sentences of military community service.

The killings take place in a context in which Israeli authorities are committing the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution against Palestinians, including children, as Human Rights Watch and other rights groups have documented. The then International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, opened a formal investigation in 2021 into serious crimes committed in Palestine.

The UN Secretary-General is mandated by the Security Council to

annually list military forces and armed groups responsible for grave violations against children in armed conflict. Between 2015 and 2022, the UN attributed over 8,700 child casualties to Israeli forces, yet Israel has never been listed. The reports have repeatedly listed other forces that killed and injured far fewer children than Israel did.

## 'List of shame'

The stigma attached to the Secretary-General's "list of shame" is considerable, and parties named must create and carry out an action plan of reforms to end the abuses in order to be removed from the list. The UN missed an opportunity to protect children by omitting Israel, Human Rights Watch said. The Secretary-General should use objective criteria to determine the list for 2023.

"Palestinian children live a reality of apartheid and structural violence, where they could be gunned down at any time without any serious prospect of accountability," Van Esvelde said. "Israel's allies should confront this ugly reality and create real pressure for accountability."



The funeral of 16-year-old Muntasser al-Shawa killed by Israeli forces in Nablus

ALQASTAL

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Syria: Israeli attack puts Aleppo airport out of service



REUTERS - An Israeli air attack put Syria's Aleppo airport out of service on Monday, the Syrian Defence Ministry said.

"The Israeli enemy carried out an air attack ... targeting Aleppo International Airport. The aggression caused material damage to the airport's runway and put it out of service," a military source said. The Israeli military declined to comment.

### China, US agree to set up commercial working group: US

AFP - China and the United States on Monday agreed to set up a working group to "seek solutions on trade and investment issues and to advance US commercial interests in China," Washington's Department of Commerce said.

US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo and her Chinese counterpart Wang Wentao agreed at a meeting in Beijing that "the working group will meet twice annually at the Vice Minister level, with the US hosting the first meeting in early 2024," according to a readout from Washington.

### Libyan FM suspended over Israeli meeting



AP - One of Libya's rival prime ministers said Monday he has suspended his foreign minister a day after Israel revealed that its chief diplomat met with her last week - news that prompted scattered street protests in the chaos-stricken North African nation.

Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, who heads the government of national unity in Tripoli, also referred Foreign Minister Najla Mangoush, for investigation over the meeting, which was the first ever between top diplomats of Libya and Israel. Mangoush fled to Turkey following the Israeli announcement of the meeting, according to a Libyan foreign ministry official.

## Biden is 'old,' Trump is 'corrupt': Poll has ominous signs for both in possible 2024 rematch

US President Joe Biden is "old" and "confused," and former president Donald Trump is "corrupt" and "dishonest." Those are among the top terms Americans use when they're asked to describe the Democrat in the White House and the Republican best positioned to face him in next year's election.

Unflattering portraits of Biden and Trump emerge clearly in a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, which asked an open-ended question about what comes to mind when people think of them, AP reported.

For Biden, the largest share of US adults - including both Democrats and Republicans - mentioned his age. At 80, Biden is just three years older than Trump, but many Americans expressed real concerns about his ability to continue as president.



AP

## Poland, Baltics will shut Belarus border if 'critical incident' occurs: Minister

Poland and the Baltic states will close their borders with Belarus entirely if a "critical incident" involving Wagner mercenaries takes place, Polish Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski said on Monday.

EU members Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, which share a border with Belarus, have been increasingly concerned about border security since hundreds of Russian battle-hardened Wagner mercenaries arrived Belarus at the invitation of President Alexander Lukashenko, Reuters reported.

They have called Lukashenko to expel Russian mercenaries from his country and agreed on a plan to potentially shut the border in response to escalating tension, AFP reported.

Poland has also seen an increase in the number of mainly Middle Eastern and African migrants trying to cross the border in recent months and has accused Belarus of facilitating them.

"We demand from the authorities in Minsk that the Wagner Group immediately leave the territory of Belarus and that illegal migrants immediately leave the border area and are sent back to their home countries," Kaminski told a press conference.

"If there is a critical incident, regardless of whether it is at the Polish or Lithuanian border, we will retaliate immediately. All border crossings that have been opened so far will be closed," he said.



BLOOMBERG

# What next for Ataei and Iranian volleyball after yet another setback against Japan?



By Amirhadi Arsalanpour  
Staff writer

Saturday's final showpiece of the Asian Volleyball Championship against Japan was supposed to be an opportunity for Iran head coach Behrouz Ataei and his men – chasing a third successive crown on home soil – to bounce back from a dreadful Volleyball Nations League (VNL) campaign earlier in the summer, and reestablish themselves as the dominant force of the sport in the continent.

However, Iran capped a miserable 80 days with a second straight-set defeat against the Asian foe since early June, the first being in the VNL opener before 10 losses in 12 outings saw Ataei's side finish third from bottom in the 16-team table of the preliminary round, while it was even more painful for the Iranian fans to watch Japan go on to claim the bronze medal thanks to a victory over reigning world champion Italy.

As the Japanese players celebrated a record-extending 10th Asian crown in Urmia's jam-packed Ghadir Arena on Saturday, chants of protest could be heard among the home crowd, calling for Ataei to step down from his role, which indicated the razor thin margin between success and failure, admiration and disapproval, for the Iranian coach.



● PAYAM SANI/volleyball.ir

Having led the country to the world under-21 title in 2019, Ataei took over from high-profile Russian Vladimir Alekno after a group stage exit at the Tokyo Olympics to become the first domestic coach in charge of the Iranian senior team in more than a decade.

His rebuild project within the squad instantly paid off as he steered Iran to a fourth Asian trophy with just over a month into the job, courtesy of an emphatic win against host Japan. The Iranian received further praise nationwide when his team

– inspired by some new faces in Amin Esameilnejad, Amirhossein Esfandiari, Mehdi Jelveh, and Amirhossein Toukhteh – recovered from a slow start to progress to the VNL quarterfinals last year, defeating volleyball giants USA, Poland, and Serbia in doing so.

The last-16 defeat against Brazil in the World Championship later that year did little to raise doubts over Ataei's credentials, as Iran still seemed to be on the right track toward success at the 2024 Paris Olympics, which the Iranian coach had underlined as his ultimate

goal when he took the helm. Less than a year on, the VNL disappointment in July led to pundits and former players in the country urging the Iranian volleyball governing body to reinforce Ataei's coaching staff, before the latest setback against Japan drew questions over the future of the head coach himself.

The international events will come thick and fast and Mohammadreza Davarzani, the chairman of the federation, was quick to rule out Ataei's dismissal ahead of September's Asian Games and the Olympic qualifiers in Brazil.

"We intend to avoid making decisions under pressure as it could result in further blows," the Iranian volleyball chief said on Sunday. With only the top two from each of the three groups securing a berth in the Olympics, Iran will be facing a daunting task against Brazil, Italy, Cuba, Ukraine, Germany, the Czech Republic, and Qatar in Pool A of the qualification tournament. The teams will have a second chance to book the Paris ticket as the remaining slots will be filled by the top five nations not yet qualified in the FIVB World Rankings by the end of the preliminary phase of the 2024 Volleyball Nations League. On the long-term future of the national team's bench, Davarzani dropped a vague hint, saying: "We will surely come up with a more proper decision for next year's VNL and the Olympic Games."

## World Athletics Championships: Javelin thrower Chopra 'proud' to win India's first world title



Indian Neeraj Chopra is in action in the men's javelin throw final at the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, on August 27, 2023.

● KAI PFAFFENBACH/REUTERS

**BBC** – Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian to win a world athletics title by securing javelin gold in Budapest.

The Olympic champion threw 88.17m to beat Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who took silver with a season's best 87.82m. Chopra, 25, who had to settle for the silver medal at last year's championships, said: "It

was my dream to win gold at the world championships.

"This has been a great championships for India and I am proud to bring another title to my country."

The only other Indian medal winner at a World Athletics Championships came in Paris in 2003 when Anju Bobby George took bronze in the women's long jump.

Chopra, who has 6.3 million followers on Instagram, qualified for the final with a season-best of 88.77m and felt he could have performed better in Sunday's final.

"I don't think I am the best thrower here. I wanted to throw more," Chopra said.

"I wanted to throw more than 90m but it needs all parts of the puzzle to be there. I couldn't put it all together this evening. Maybe next time."

India and Pakistan are fierce sporting rivals and another chapter in their long history unfolded in Budapest as Chopra and Nadeem went head to head for gold.

Nadeem was competing in his first event of the season following elbow and knee surgery. The Pakistani won gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games but never registered an effort worthy of top spot in this final.

## Saudi Arabia name Mancini as new national team coach

**REUTERS** – Former Italy boss Roberto Mancini said he aims to make history after being named the new head coach of the Saudi Arabia national team by the country's football federation (SAFF) on Sunday.

The Italian media reported Mancini would sign a contract until 2027 worth 25 million euros (\$27 million) net per year. He will make his debut on the bench on Sept. 8 against Costa Rica.

"I made history in Europe, now is time to make history with Saudi," Mancini said in a video posted on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

Former Napoli coach Luciano Spalletti replaced Mancini as Italy boss after he resigned on Aug. 13, ending a five-year spell in charge of the national team in which they won the European Championship but missed out on qualification for the World Cup.

Frenchman Herve Renard stepped down as Saudi Arabia's coach in March. The team will attempt to win their fourth Asian Cup title at the continental championship to be held in Qatar early next year.

Saudi Arabia were knocked out in the group stage of the World Cup in Qatar last year but only after pulling off one of the biggest shocks in the tournament's history when they beat eventual champions Argentina in their first game.

The country is heavily investing in its top flight soccer league.

The Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) has announced a Sports Clubs Investment and Privatisation Project involving league champions Al-Ittihad, Al-Ahli, Al-Nassr and Al-Hilal, with a host of top players moving to the league.



● CIRO DE LUCA/REUTERS

# Uncertainty surrounds mysterious deaths of Caspian seals

## On the cusp of extinction



### Social Desk

Approximately two centuries ago, there were, in all probability, at least one million Caspian seals – the only marine mammal living in the Caspian Sea and found nowhere else. Considering the sea's 371,000 square-km surface area, it meant about two and a half seals per square km. Today, sadly, their population has drastically fallen to around 10 percent of that number.

The Caspian seal, one of the smallest members of the earless seal family, is an iconic animal for the world's largest inland body of water, and serves as a key indicator of the Caspian Sea's health – an ecosystem that sustains hundreds of thousands of people.

Such a sharp decline in their population in a period of 200 years has one main reason: unsustainable commercial hunting throughout most of the 20th century. According to Caspian Seal Project's website, "The Soviet Union – which included four of the five countries surrounding the Caspian (Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan) – considered the Caspian seal to be a 'harvested species'. Hunting records show both pups and adult seals were killed in their tens of thousands every year on the ice-breeding grounds."

Also, there are records from Azerbaijan from the 1930s, which indicate that tens of thousands of seals were killed on the Azeri islands.

### On the cusp of extinction

An alarming announcement recently reverberated through environmental circles of Iran, intensifying concerns about the fate of the Caspian seal. Ten of the species had lost their lives since the beginning of the current Iranian year (starting on March 21, 2023). The cause or causes behind these deaths remained shrouded in mystery, casting a pall over the region's fragile ecosystem.

The head of the Mazandaran Department of Wildlife and Environmental Affairs has reported that 10 dead Caspian seals have been found along the coastal areas of this province. The highest number of casualties was discovered in Juybar and Babolsar, according to IRNA.

In previous years, similar losses of Caspian seals during late spring and summer, coinciding with their migration to Iranian coastal waters, have also been observed. Last year alone, 20

dead Caspian seals were found in Mazandaran's coastal strip. It is known that Caspian seals travel to northern regions with shallower water and frozen conditions during late autumn for breeding purposes. They then migrate back to Iranian coastal waters when spring and summer arrive. Some carcasses discovered are a few days old, and samples have been taken from these deceased seals for analysis at official laboratories.

Rabiei mentioned several factors that could contribute to the loss of these seals, including lower water levels in the Caspian Sea, climate changes, and potential diseases. Further investigation is needed to understand their impact on seal populations.

The Caspian seal, once a familiar sight among the living organisms inhabiting the vast expanse of the Caspian Sea, now finds itself in an appalling situation. Recent reports revealed that several lifeless bodies had washed up on northern Iranian shores. It sounded the alarm for environmentalists, since it signals a disheartening sign that extinction looms ever closer for these marine creatures.

The Caspian Sea boasts remarkable biodiversity within its expansive boundaries. However, this marine life haven grapples with numerous perils – dwindling aquatic populations and escalating biological pollution posed significant threats to its delicate balance. The most vulnerable among its inhabitants are undoubtedly the Caspian seals. With only 70,000 remaining individuals scattered across their sole habitat in the Caspian Sea, they teeter precariously on the brink of extinction.

International conservation organizations like the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) highlighted that these unique mammals fell into a vulnerable category and urgently required protection measures to be put in place. Yet such efforts could not be confined to Iran alone; neighboring countries such as Russia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan also bear responsibility for safeguarding this population.

### Origins of Caspian seal

Scientists have long grappled with unraveling the fascinating origins of the Caspian and Baikal seals. Initially, it was believed that these seals were descendants of Arctic ringed seals (*Pusa hispida*) that had become

trapped in lakes during the last ice age, approximately 11,000 years ago. Lakes Ladoga and Saimaa, alongside Caspian and Baikal, were thought to harbor isolated populations of these landlocked ringed seals. This hypothesis holds true for Ladoga and Saimaa where they are considered subspecies of their Arctic counterparts.

However, recent advancements in mitochondrial DNA analysis have shed new light on this topic. It is now postulated that the roots of both Caspian and Baikal seals run deeper than previously imagined. Evidence suggests that these unique seal populations may share a common ancestry with other members of the Phocina group – a group encompassing present-day harbor and grey seals alongside ringed seal species. This implies that around 2-3 million years ago, during the late Pliocene period, there might have been a migration event across continents leading to their presence in the Caspian Sea and Lake Baikal.

Intriguingly, further genetic studies indicate an unexpected twist: The genetic makeup of Caspian seals might be more closely aligned with grey seals rather than their counterparts from Baikal or Arctic regions. All three species share a common trait as ice-breeding creatures whose pups don a soft white coat known as lanugo (although modern-day harbor seals no longer breed on ice). Notably, this coat is typically shed just before birth.

Spanning nearly 371,000 square kilometers in size, the Caspian Sea stands as the Earth's largest inland sea—a remarkable expanse teeming with life yet characterized by weak salinity levels. Its northern basin, fed by the Volga and Ural rivers, retains an almost freshwater quality. In contrast, the deeper middle and southern basins boast salinity levels roughly one-third that of the ocean. The shallow northern basin provides a vital ice-breeding habitat for seals as it freezes during winter months.

### Life and times of Caspian seals

Caspian seals have a unique way of giving birth and raising their young. Most of them are born on the winter ice-field in the shallow northern part of the Caspian Sea, between January and March. Unlike other seal species, these pups don't hide in dens because there isn't enough snow

to make them. Instead, they stay exposed on the surface of the ice with their mothers nearby.

Newborn pups have a special long white coat called "lanugo" that keeps them warm. It's important for them to stay dry because if their coat gets wet, they can freeze to death on the icy surface. The ice is usually about 20-30 centimeters thick, and mothers create small holes in it to access water but keep their white-coated pups away from those holes.

While most pups are born on the ice-field, there are a few exceptions. Some pups are born on sandy beaches of islands like Ogurchinsky Island in Turkmenistan. These pups usually don't go into the water until they lose their lanugo coat at around six weeks old. At this stage, some may still be with their mothers for a while before becoming independent.

Adult males also gather near the mothers on the ice during this time as they prepare for mating once again after weaning is complete. After mating, all adult seals start shedding their old fur and grow new shiny grey coats over about a month-long period. When spring arrives and the ice begins to melt, seals disperse to different islands where they continue molting while spending more time ashore than usual. During this period, seals become thinner since breeding season and molting leave little time for feeding. However, newly-weaned pups don't molt again until the following year; thus they use this time to swim, dive and learn how to feed on small fish and shrimp.

From late spring through late autumn, seals spend most of their time at sea, feeding. They occasionally rest on islands and form dense groups at the ends of peninsulas or sandbars. During this time, the personal space between individuals seen on the ice-breeding grounds is less evident as seals rest close together on beaches.

In late autumn, adult seals start returning to the northern Caspian Sea in preparation for breeding once again when the ice forms in January. Female seals begin giving birth later in January as this cycle repeats itself year after year.

### Other threats

The Caspian seal faces several significant threats – besides commercial hunting still practiced by Russia – that put its

survival at risk. These include intentional killing by fishermen near fishing areas, accidental drowning in fishing nets, diseases, contamination from harmful chemicals like DDT which can make older female seals infertile, disruption of the food chain due to overfishing and invasion by a comb jelly called Mnemiopsis leidyi, and loss of habitat.

Fishing activities often result in the unintended capture and death of around 500 seals each year along Iran's coast alone. Similar incidents likely occur in other parts of the Caspian Sea but are not as well-documented. In 2000, thousands of seals died due to an outbreak of canine distemper virus (CDV). There are concerns that such outbreaks could happen again and continue to pose a threat to the population.

High levels of DDT contamination have been found in Caspian seal blubber. This chemical is believed to be responsible for low fertility rates among female seals, with some experiencing rates as low as 20-30 percent over the past decade.

An invasive species called Mnemiopsis leidyi has also become a problem for the Caspian seal. Originally from the northwest Atlantic Ocean, it spreads through ship ballast water. This carnivorous creature feeds on zooplankton and disrupts the local food chain when introduced into new environments. By the late 1990s, it had made its way into the Caspian Sea via ships traveling through canals. The south region seems most affected by this invader since it combines with intense fisheries leading to reductions in small pelagic fish populations like kilka (*sprat*).

Loss of habitat primarily stems from human interference such as coastal development for housing or industry or disturbances caused by poachers or fishermen frequently disrupting haul-out sites where seals rest on land.

Considering historical population declines, ongoing threats faced by these animals, and their current downward trajectory, the Caspian seal is now listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List of threatened species. Urgent conservation efforts are needed to prevent their extinction.

### Conservation

The most important step in conserving the Caspian seals is to

stop all intentional killings. Currently, efforts are being made to convince the Russian authorities that the population size is still declining and cannot support any form of hunting. The annual hunting quotas set by regional authorities exceed the number of seal pups born each year as documented by international surveys. To address this, a team called CISS is working with the Darwin project to ensure that these population figures are recognized and acknowledged by regional governments.

Scientists from the Darwin project are leading by example in promoting non-lethal methods for studying seals. They have replaced traditional scientific hunts with techniques that involve capturing, tranquilizing, sampling, treating with antibiotics, and releasing seals unharmed. Other samples are collected from already deceased seals found due to interactions with fisheries or natural causes.

In Iran, efforts have been made through the Darwin project to tackle seal deaths caused during fishing operations. Workshops were organized with local fishing associations and game wardens to implement a new system where fishermen who catch a seal in their nets no longer kill it but instead keep it in a holding tank until experts arrive to record data and take samples before releasing it unharmed. By-catch (accidental capture) of seals remains an issue throughout much of the Caspian Sea in both legal and illegal fishing activities; thus quantifying its extent is an important research priority. Habitat loss has been observed on Zhilhov Island and Shakhova Kosa on the Asheron Peninsula in Azerbaijan. These areas used to be regular resting spots for seals but have become deserted recently. The Darwin monitoring program led by Tariel Eybatov aims to understand why this habitat loss occurred so that steps can be taken towards its reversal.

A comprehensive plan known as SCAMP (Seal Conservation Action and Management Plan) has been developed by the Darwin team based on similar plans implemented elsewhere, like HELCOM in the Baltic region and the Wadden Sea agreement. This plan has been accepted as a working plan by government representatives in the Caspian Sea region since late 2006, providing a framework for conservation efforts moving forward.



## Iran's Rahbari to perform in China



### Arts & Culture Desk

ISNA - Iran's world-renowned conductor Ali Rahbari will conduct the Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra during a concert set to be staged on October 6 in the historic and touristic city of Hangzhou, China. The Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra boasts 80 official members and is considered one of the top five symphony orchestras in China.

The concert, titled 'Majestic, the Sound,' is dedicated to the works of the great German composer Ludwig van Beethoven.

In this concert, Rahbari will be accompanied by renowned German performer Gerhard Oppitz.

Oppitz, who has collaborated with Rahbari in various countries, garnered special acclaim for his renditions of Beethoven's compositions. The performance will feature the 'Overture to Egmont,' the music for Goethe's play, the famous Piano Concerto No. 5, also known as the Emperor Concerto, and Symphony No. 3, renowned as the Eroica Symphony, which Beethoven had initially dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte.

Rahbari, currently holding the position of permanent conductor at the Mariinsky Theatre, in St. Petersburg, Russia, has conducted and often recorded all of the symphonic works of this German composer.

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# Repatriated Iranian artifacts from France, UK on display



### Arts & Culture Desk

An exhibition, titled 'Recovery of Cultural-Historical Objects,' featuring historically repatriated artifacts from France and the UK, began at the National Museum of Iran on August 28 and will run through September 22.

This collection, which had been illicitly transported and smuggled out of Iran, has been successfully repatriated to the country through legal efforts, ISNA wrote.

Prominently featured is a newly returned Sassanian bas-relief from the UK. Additionally, a compilation of historical objects, which were repatriated from France in March 2022, is on display. The oldest item presented is a pottery vessel of the Gowdin type, dating back around 4,500 years to the Bronze Age, originating from Gowdin Hill in western Iran's Kangavar County, an archae-

ological site believed to have been inhabited for up to 5,000 years ago.

The collection retrieved from France dates back approximately from 5,000 years ago to the Islamic era. According to prior information provided by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism, these artifacts were taken out of Iran in the years 1940 to 1946. The artifacts were later returned to Iran. Jebrael Nokandeh, the head of Iran's National Museum, confirms the historical authenticity of 29 returned artifacts from France, though the origins of some remain uncertain.

Concurrently with the artifacts display, Malekeh Mehdi-Abadi, the head of the research department at the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, who has examined



the prominent Sassanian bas-relief, provided explanations regarding the latest findings derived from tests conducted on the bas-relief.

She affirmed the monolithic bas-relief's authenticity, but noted that archaeological examinations of the artwork are ongoing.

## Center of Farsi language, Iranian culture opens in Kyrgyzstan



### Arts & Culture Desk

The Kyrgyz State University, named after Ishenaly Arabaev, has established the center for Farsi language and Iranian culture.

The university aims to delve into the historical heritage of Iranian people, extensively explore the Farsi language, gain insight into the customs and traditions of one of the earliest civilizations, and broaden the enrollment of students in this field, according to 24.kg's

report.

"The center for Farsi language and Iranian culture is a big step in strengthening bilateral ties between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kyrgyz Republic, aimed at mutual enrichment, cooperation and development of friendly relations between the two countries in the higher education sector," the statement said.

The center was founded on the basis of the Department of Fundamental and Applied Linguistics

of the Institute of World Languages and International Relations.

The opening event was attended by the Ambassador of Iran to the Kyrgyz Republic Gholamhossein Yadegari, representative of the Al-Mustafa International University of Iran for Central Asia, Ali-Purman Mohseni, Deputy Minister of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic Kairat Imanaliev, rector of the university, Agul Abdraeva and others.

## China state media calls on British Museum to return artefacts

A call for the British Museum to return Chinese artefacts after the recent theft of about 2,000 items is heating up social media in the country.

The demand became the most trending topic on Weibo after an editorial in a state-run nationalist newspaper, BBC reported.

In the piece published on Sunday night, Global Times asked the museum to give back all Chinese cultural relics "free of charge".

The Chinese government has not commented on the issue yet.

The BBC has reached out to the British Museum for comment but is yet to hear back.

The museum has been under pressure after around 2,000 items were reported "missing, stolen or damaged" two weeks ago.

A member of staff was sacked when the news first came out. Last week, its director Hartwig Fischer also announced he would step down.

In its article, Global Times argued that the world-renowned museum has failed to take good care of "cul-

tural property belonging to other countries".

"The huge loopholes in the management and security of cultural objects in the British Museum exposed by this scandal have led to the collapse of a long-standing and widely circulated claim that 'foreign cultural objects are better protected in the British Museum,'" the editorial reads.

The British Museum has the biggest collection of Chinese antiquities in the West. According to its website, it has about 23,000 Chinese objects, spanning

from the Neolithic age to the present.

These include a large range of precious items such as paintings, prints, jade, bronzes and ceramics. One of the most famous is the reproduction of a scroll called 'Admonitions of the Instructress to the Court Ladies', a masterpiece considered a milestone in Chinese art history.

This is not the first time Chinese netizens have called on the British Museum to return artefacts in recent years amid a rise in nationalist sentiment.



The 30th Iran Handwoven Carpet Exhibition, is being held in Tehran from August 23 to 29, 2023, showcases the rich heritage and potential of Persian art.  
● AMIN JALALI/IRNA

