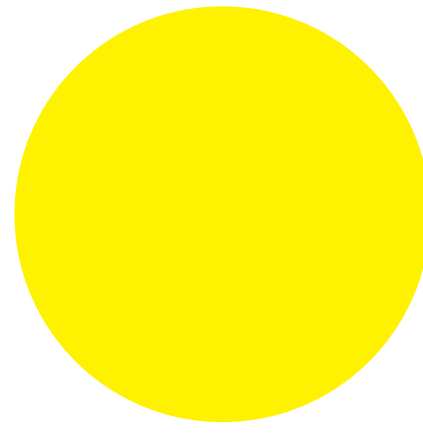


Boom in oil industry gained during 1,000-day term of Raisi

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IAEA repeats political maneuvering



By Mostafa Khoshcheshm
Nuclear affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

At its quarterly meeting, the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Board of Governors passed a resolution advanced by the European troika of Britain, Germany and France, raising allegations against Iran's peaceful nuclear program and calling on Tehran to bolster cooperation with the agency. The resolution prompted the three European nations to repeat their claims against Tehran in a letter to the UN Security Council.

Both European moves are counterproductive and rooted in political agendas. Historically, Western powers have consistently leveraged statements, resolutions, and international organizations as tools to further their interests. In Iran's case, this modus operandi has been used in the past. In the latest instance, one rationale behind turning to a resolution was to negatively affect Iran's markets, with the expectation that the approval would send shockwaves through the nation's financial landscape, particularly given the upcoming presidential election due to be held later this month. However, their efforts were stymied, and Iran's markets and its currency value remained unruffled.

Perhaps the most compelling factor underpinning the European move is the Israel issue. The Israeli regime has faced growing global isolation over the past several months, and widespread animosity has mounted due to its numerous crimes in the Gaza Strip. In a flagrant breach of international law and norms, the US House of Representatives slapped sanctions on the International Criminal Court prosecutor following the issuance of an arrest warrant for Israel's prime minister and defense minister.

Measures like the resolution against Iran within the IAEA's Board of Governors appear calculated to redirect global attention from Israel to alternative targets, notably Iran. IAEA's Director General Rafael Grossi has spent the past eight months amplifying allegations against Iran in an apparent bid to shift global focus from Israel's actions, but his attempts have yet to bear fruit. Israel's crimes remain indefensible, driving the regime further into isolation.

Yet another factor potentially driving the European Troika's decision to target Iran with a resolution may be tied to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the pressure Europe had to cope with in the wake of Russia's invasion. The European nations seemingly try to isolate Russia in order to prevent a potential Ukrainian defeat under President Zelensky. Russia has expressed support for Iran's peaceful nuclear program, and the Europeans' measure could serve as a warning to Russia through heightened pressure on Iran.

It is anticipated that Tehran will deliver a fitting response to the non-constructive move of the Europeans in two key domains. First, within the nuclear realm, where observers may soon witness an escalation in Iran's nuclear capabilities and an official announcement on the matter. Iran will likely convey its countermeasures through the IAEA. Second, Iran could leverage its regional influence to counter Israel, given the Europeans' aim to bolster Israel's position. Tehran's calculated moves could mount pressure on Israel using its regional leverage and compromise the Europeans' objective.

The current situation mirrors past political maneuvering within the IAEA. Despite Iran's extensive cooperation with the agency and repeated efforts to clarify ambiguities, the country has declared its commitment to resolving the remaining issues within the framework agreed upon with the IAEA in March 2023.

Major Projects Opened in SE Iran >2



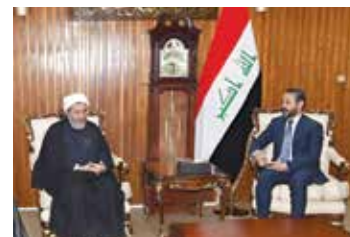
Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian (L) addresses a ceremony to launch the Middle East's largest desalination plant in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchestan province, Iran on June 6, 2024. IRNA



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Iran's economy to grow 3.2% in 2024: World Bank

The World Bank (WB) has predicted in its latest report that Iran's economy will grow by 3.2% in 2024 as the inflation rate will undergo a 35% decrease. >2

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran's economy to grow 3.2% in 2024:

World Bank



The World Bank (WB) has predicted in its latest report that Iran's economy will grow by 3.2 percent in 2024 as the inflation rate will undergo a 35-percent decrease. As estimated by the international financial institution, Iran's economy experienced a 5-percent growth and a 40.8-percent inflation in 2023. The bank has forecast that the industrial sector in Iran will take the lead in 2024, experiencing a 4.9-percent growth, followed by the services and agricultural sectors with a 2.7 and 0.9 percent increase. In addition, the World Bank has announced that Iran's export of goods and services will exceed 7.1 percent in 2024 compared to the previous year.

Also, the bank predicted that the import of products into the country will undergo a 1.8-percent rise in 2024 in comparison with a year earlier. The balance of Iran's current accounts will also experience a positive growth and reach 2.7 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2024.

US non-oil exports to Iran up 51%

The exports of non-oil products from the United States to Iran in the first four months of 2024 registered a 51-percent growth compared to the same period last year, according to a report by the US Bureau of Statistics, cited by IRNA. The statistics put the total value of the trade exchanges between Iran and the United States from January to April 2024 at more than \$30 million.

Also, the trade exchanges between Iran and United States from January to April 2024 reached \$30.6 million, showing a 72-percent growth compared to the last year's corresponding period.

Iran and the United States had exchanged over \$17.8 million worth of products from January to April 2023.

According to the report, the United States exported \$26.5 million worth of products to Iran from January to April 2024, indicating a 51-percent growth in comparison with the same period last year. The US Bureau of Statistics said the United States exported over \$17.5 million worth of goods to Iran from January to April 2023.

Major projects opened in SE Iran

Acting President Mohammad Mokhber inaugurated on Thursday major projects in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan via videoconference.

Water projects valued at about \$100 million, including the West Asia's largest desalination plant (with a total daily capacity of 100,000 cubic meters), and a total of 73 wells along with a 101-kilometer water transmission pipeline were among the projects which came into operation in the presence of Minister of Energy Ali Akbar Mehrabian. Also, a 50-megawatt (MW) wind power plant, initiated in 2020, was completed with an investment of over \$61.5 million.

The "Mil Nader" power plant in Nimruz County in Sistan and Baluchestan spans 1,000 hectares and features 20 wind turbines, each capable of generating 2.5 megawatts of electricity. The new addition brings Iran's total number of wind power plants to 11, with a combined capacity of 352.22 megawatts.

Moreover, a copper smelting complex and a gold mine plant with an annual output of 3,000 tons and 432 tons, respectively, were inaugurated by Mokhber, creating jobs for 450 people in the southeastern province.

The acting president also launched a project that will sup-



ply high-speed internet for villages with over 20 households in Sistan and Baluchestan as the total number of Iranian villages

using fiber-optic internet surpassed 1760. A total of three gas supply projects became operational across

the province and a 190-bed hospital was among the inaugurated projects in Zahedan by Mokhber on Thursday.

Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian (2nd R) inaugurates the Middle East's largest desalination plant in Zahedan, Iran on June 6, 2024. IRNA

Fruits export to India doubled in Q1

Iran's export of fresh fruits to India doubled in the first three months of 2024 compared to the same period last year, according to India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

From January to March, Iran's import of rice from India registered a 20-percent decline compared to the same period last year while Iran's export of fresh fruits to the South Asian country increased twofold.

The ministry put the total value of the trade exchanges between Iran and India in the first three months of 2024 at \$520 million, showing a two-percent growth compared to last year's corresponding period.

The value of trade exchanges between Tehran and New Delhi in

the first quarter of 2023 stood at over \$510 million.

India exported \$356 million of products to Iran from January to March 2024, showing an 11-percent hike.

India had exported \$322 million of products to Iran from January to March 2023.

According to the report, India imported \$164 million of products from Iran from January to March 2024, showing a 12 percent decrease.

The ministry added that India exported \$161 million of rice to Iran in the first three months of 2024, registering a 20-percent decline.

India exported \$202 million of rice to Iran from January to March 2023, the report added.



BRICS members urged to strengthen transport connectivity



India, Russia, Iran and other BRICS member countries need to collaborate in order to strengthen logistics and transport connectivity to reduce cost and time consumed in cross-border trade, said Vijay Kalantri, Chairman of Russia-India Trade House Mumbai (RITHM).

"India, Iran and Russia may collaborate to strengthen multi-modal transport connectivity along the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC), deccanherald.com wrote.

This corridor passes through Iran and Central Asia and it is 30% cheaper and 40% shorter than the Suez Canal route. Particularly, we need to expedite construction of the 164-km

railway line between Rasht and Astara via Anzali. Also, the member countries need to collaborate to complete the 628-km-long railway line to connect Chabahar port with the Iranian railway system (Zahedan railway line), he added.

"These projects will strengthen the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and reduce logistics time and freight cost for trading among India, Iran and Central Asian countries," said Kalantri, who is President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and Chairman of MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai Director—World Trade Centre Association New York.

Speaking at the St Petersburg International Economic Forum

2024 (SPIEF'24), he proposed various measures to foster strong business ties among BRICS countries.

In January 2024, five countries namely —Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates joined BRICS.

"BRICS forum should cooperate in energy security, artificial intelligence, cyber security, blockchain and other cutting-edge technologies. India can export its fintech technologies and solutions to BRICS countries for financial inclusion.

"Also, BRICS countries should deploy e-commerce platforms for SMEs to trade digitally without much barrier. We should also promote trade settlement in local currency among BRICS countries," he said.

Wonders of Karaftu Caves in Kurdistan Province



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IRNA

Iranica Desk

Tucked away in the rugged mountains of western Iran, near the city of Saqqez in Kurdistan Province, lies a remarkable natural wonder that has captivated archaeologists and adventurers alike – the Karaftu Caves. This intricate network of subterranean chambers and passages, carved by nature over countless millennia, holds within its depths a treasure trove of secrets from Iran's ancient past.

A journey into the Earth's embrace

The Karaftu Caves are a true testament to the power of nature and the resilience of human civilizations. Spanning over two kilometers in length, these caves are a labyrinth of winding tunnels, cavernous chambers, and awe-inspiring rock formations. As you descend into the depths of this subterranean world, you can't help but feel a sense of wonder and reverence for the natural forces that sculpted this extraordinary landscape.

Geological marvels

The caves are a geological masterpiece, formed by the relentless erosion of water and the movements of tectonic plates over millions of years. The limestone bedrock has been sculpted into breathtaking shapes and formations, including towering columns, delicate stalactites and stalagmites, and intricate flowstone patterns that seem to defy gravity.

One of the most striking features of the Karaftu Caves is the presence of underground rivers and lakes, which add an ethereal quality to the experience. The sound of water gently trickling and the play of light on the rippling surfaces create a mesmerizing atmosphere that transports visitors to a world far removed from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Traces of ancient civilizations

While the geological wonders of the Karaftu Caves are awe-inspiring in their own right, it is the archaeological discoveries within these subterranean

chambers that have truly captivated researchers and historians. Over the years, excavations have uncovered a wealth of artifacts and evidence that shed light on the lives of ancient civilizations that once called this region home.

Among the most significant finds are prehistoric tools, pottery shards, and human remains dating back thousands of years. These remnants offer a glimpse into the daily lives, cultural practices, and technological advancements of the people who sought shelter and sanctuary within the caves during those ancient times.

Prehistoric rock art

Perhaps the most captivating discoveries within the Karaftu Caves are the remarkable examples of prehistoric rock art etched into the cave walls. These ancient illustrations depict scenes of hunting, rituals, and daily life, providing a unique window into the belief systems, traditions, and worldviews of the cave's earliest inhabitants. The rock art found in the Karaftu

Caves is not only a testament to the artistic talents of our ancient ancestors but also serves as a valuable source of information for researchers studying the development of human societies and cultural expressions throughout history.

A subterranean adventure

Venturing into the Karaftu Caves is an adventure like no other. Guided tours led by experienced cavers and archaeologists take visitors on a journey through winding passages and chambers, revealing the natural and cultural wonders that lie within. As you navigate the narrow tunnels and descend into the depths, you'll be greeted by an array of geological formations that seem to defy the laws of physics. From towering columns to delicate crystal formations, each turn presents a new marvel that leaves you in awe of nature's artistry.

Responsible exploration

While exploring the Karaftu Caves is an incredible experience, it is crucial to prioritize

responsible and sustainable tourism practices. The caves are a fragile ecosystem, and any disturbance or damage can have far-reaching consequences for the preservation of this natural and cultural heritage site.

Visitors are encouraged to follow the guidance of their tour guides, refrain from touching or altering any rock formations or artifacts, and minimize their environmental impact by adhering to the principles of Leave No Trace. By respecting the delicate balance of this underground world, we can ensure that future generations have the opportunity to marvel at its wonders.

Preserving a priceless legacy

The Karaftu Caves are not only a geological and archaeological treasure but also a vital part of Iran's cultural heritage. Recognizing their immense importance, the Iranian government, in collaboration with international organizations, has undertaken efforts to protect and preserve this remarkable site. Ongoing research and excava-

tions are conducted under strict guidelines to ensure the proper documentation and study of any new discoveries. Additionally, measures are being taken to mitigate the impact of human activity and environmental factors, such as air pollution and water contamination, on the cave systems.

A window into the past

The Karaftu Caves stand as a powerful reminder of the intricate tapestry of human history and the enduring legacy of ancient civilizations. As you explore these subterranean wonders, you can't help but feel a connection to the countless generations that have called this region home, each leaving their mark on the walls and echoes in the chambers.

Whether you're an avid caver, an archaeology enthusiast, or simply someone who appreciates the marvels of nature, a visit to the Karaftu Caves is an experience that will leave you in awe and inspire a deeper appreciation for the rich cultural heritage of Iran and the resilience of human ingenuity throughout the ages.

Discover the unique hot springs of Dehloran in Ilam Province

Dehloran, located in Ilam Province, stands out as a special destination known for its unique hot springs. The water in these springs reaches temperatures of up to 50°C, making it a popular choice for visitors seeking health tourism experiences. Situated just three kilometers away from the city of Dehloran, at the foothills of Siah Kuh near Khofash (Bats) Cave, these natural hot springs provide a breathtaking sight. When the sunlight touches the water, a stunning rainbow-like color pattern emerges, creating one of the most rare and beautiful natural phenomena in Iran. The therapeutic properties

of Dehloran hot springs are well-known due to its high mineral content, especially sulfur. Every year, numerous tourists visit to find relief from joint pain, rheumatoid conditions, skin problems, and muscle ailments. It is crucial to mention that people with heart conditions should refrain from using the waters because of the elevated sulfur levels. Dehloran hot springs comprise a fossil type, influenced by the oil and gas resources of the region. The hot water, rich in minerals, originates from the convergence of two streams forming a river. The beneficial effects of the water also extend to the surrounding vegetation.

Accessing Dehloran hot springs is convenient, with two main paths available. The asphalt road leading to Dehloran provides easy access to the springs west of the city and also allows visitors to explore Khofash Cave. For a more adventurous journey, travelers can opt for the secondary dirt road leading to the fascinating tar springs. Here, instead of water, tar flows from the ground, creating a unique natural spectacle. This site is recognized as a national heritage of Iran and stands as the only tar springs discovered in the country, enhancing the attraction of Ilam Province's natural wonders.



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Boom in oil industry gained during 1,000-day term of Raisi



● president.ir



By Reza
Abesh Ahmadlou
Staff writer

The measures by the incumbent government in about 1,000 days of its service (started August 2021) led to a boom in Iran's oil and gas industry, as crude oil production increased by more than 60 percent, and oil exports increased from 300,000 barrels to an average of 1.5 million barrels per day. Iranian Minister of Oil Javad Owji has recently said from the very beginning, the current government (13th government) has never waited for negotiations to remove international sanctions, adding that in recent 2.5 years, relying on domestic new technology-based firms (NTBFs), Iran's oil industry has gained great achievements. Stating that at the beginning of the current administration, the amount of oil production and export was not favorable, the minister said: "Today, we have achieved such figures in this field that are hard for many to believe." "By the end of last Iranian year (March 19, 2024), we have completed about 132 unfinished projects worth \$28.5 billion, and at the same time, we have started the implementation of 50 projects worth \$47.5 billion," he announced. Pointing to the 54-million-cubic-meter increase in the gas production, as well as a rise of 220,000 barrels in processing capacity and 10 million tons of petrochemicals in the last 2.5 years, Owji said a large part of the achievements obtained thanks to the completion and exploitation of unfinished projects, some of which were delayed for more than 10 years. Owji said the development of Phase 11 of South Pars Gas Field, which was passed around by foreign companies for 20 years, is one of the main achievements of the Ministry of Petroleum during the tenure of the 13th government.

"This achievement was gained by the efforts of the managers and employees of the oil industry and by relying on domestic contractors, which currently produces 12 million cubic meters (mcm) of gas, and according to plans, will increase to 30 mcm by the end of the 13th administration, and in the coming years will hit 50 mcm." Pointing out that the previous government had announced that it was ready to hand over the Abadan Refinery which is the country's oldest refinery for free, Owji stated: "Today, we see that the refinery contributes greatly to the production of oil products in Iran as last year it made a profit of 12 trillion to-mans (\$200 million)." The executive works of the second part of Phase 2 of the refinery's development project will also start soon, he added.

Collecting associated petroleum gas

Contracts worth over \$5 billion were signed for the collection of associated petroleum gas (APG) in the 13th government for field gas collection of the West Karoun and East Karoun fields of Karun as well as fields in the west of Iran, the minister stated. "Currently, 11.5 mcm of APG are collected, which will reach 30 mcm by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2025). Methane from the processing of these flare gases is injected into the national gas network as heavy compounds are fed to petrochemical complexes in order to create more added value." He mentioned the completion of South Pars Phase 14 Refinery after a decade and said: With the full launch of the complex, more than 50 mcm per day was added to Iran's gas refining capacity.

Extraterritorial refinery projects

The National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) was the first Iranian

company to start extraterritorial refineries.

Venezuela was the first country, and El Palito was the pilot refinery for Iran's extraterritorial project.

The El Palito refinery project in Venezuela has progressed by about 85 percent, as 85-90 percent of its equipment has been provided by Iranian companies. Iran also has reached an agreement with South Africa to develop and equip five refineries in the African state.

The agreement was reached on the sidelines of the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, under which the Iranian Oil Ministry will help to develop five refineries in South Africa by exporting technical and engineering services.

Boosting pressure

The pressure boosting project, which started last Iranian year, requires an investment of \$20 billion as its implementation will fetch \$900 billion in income and 90 trillion cubic feet of gas for the country, has said Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr, the CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC).

Eligible companies that we have chosen for the project should work in the field of geophysical and geotechnical studies, turbo-compressor manufacturing, and pressure boosting platforms.

The official noted that his company has signed a contract with petrochemical companies for 20 gas tanks worth \$7 billion, explaining that the NIOC cooperates with petrochemical complexes and refineries, and supports them in providing feed and export issues.

Launch of megaprojects

Last year, the NIOC signed a \$13-billion contract for the development of oilfields, of which \$12.5 billion pertained to two joint fields, Khojasteh-Mehr stated, adding that Iran has 400 oil and gas reservoirs, as the



● president.ir

country's total oil and gas reserves are equivalent to 340 billion barrels of crude oil. A total of 700 low-yielding wells have been handed over to new technology-based firms (NTBFs) and technological companies because the private sector can help the entire upstream chain of the oil industry.

Gaining self-sufficiency

Referring to the implementation of very important projects in the field of gas storage, Owji has said in the last [Iranian] year of 1402, more than one billion cubic meters (bcm) of additional gas storage was done compared to its preceding year of 1401. Owji explained about the increase in the quality of petroleum products in the country's refineries stating that the production of Euro 5 products was achieved in the Isfahan Refinery last year, and according to plans, the boosting of quality for petroleum products in all refineries is carried out by relying on domestic capacity. He referred to the implementation of more than 1,000 kilometers of gas pipelines in the country, and continued: "In the current administration, five gas pressure boosting stations were put into operation and gas was supplied to more than 6,000 villages." Iran's oil industry has attained self-sufficiency in all sectors, including the development of offshore and onshore fields, marine structures, the construction

of petro-refineries, the collection of APG, and the drilling of horizontal and vertical wells, relying on the domestic manufacturers of the industry. Planning has been done to increase the production of oil and gas, oil and petrochemical products in the Seventh Development Plan which relies on the potentials of domestic companies. There is no limit to investment in the oil industry, the minister said inviting all investors to join the industry, as the Ministry of Oil will also provide full support. According to statistics released by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) and the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), the Ministry of Oil had a magnificent performance last Iranian year, Owji said adding the economic growth of the oil and gas sector was over 20 percent last year, which had a significant impact on the overall economic growth of the country.

More revenues

Iran exported \$35 billion worth of crude oil in 1402 despite all the restrictions, Owji has stated noting that the enemies made efforts to stop Iran's oil tankers, but they failed. Talking about the Ministry of Petroleum's plan for the current Iranian year, Owji said a sum of 79 projects valued at \$25 billion will be put into operation in the upstream and downstream sectors, as 50 new projects have also been kicked off. "With the implementation

of new oil industry projects, 300,000 to 400,000 bpd will be added to oil production, 35 mcm to crude gas production, 50,000 barrels to refining capacity and three million to five million tons to the annual production capacity of petrochemical complexes of the country."

Referring to the signing of contracts for the development of oil and gas fields by the NIOC with domestic contractors, the minister said adding four contracts were inked with domestic firms valued at \$20 billion for the pressure boosting project in the South Pars joint field and \$13 billion worth of contracts for the development of seven oilfields has been signed by the NIOC.

He pointed to the call of the Ministry of Petroleum to supply gas feed to petrochemical units and stated: "During last weeks, important documents were signed with 13 petrochemical companies to supply their gas feed from 20 gas fields."

Fruits of Raisi's foreign visits

The ground is paved for cooperation on oil sector with foreign countries which was done by Raisi's visits to other countries, the minister stated noting that oil cooperation with foreigners in the field of exporting oil, oil products, petrochemical products and exporting techno-engineering services is increasing day by day.

All the capacities of the country in the technical, financial, contractors and advisory sectors are used for the prosperity of the oil industry, Owji said, noting that "There is no better place than investing in oil industry, as the return on capital in the oil industry occurs in the shortest time.

Owji pointed to the development of energy diplomacy by the 13th government and added: "Today, despite all the restrictions, compared to [the Iranian year of] 1397, the highest level of exports is carried out."



● SHANA

Iran registers 30% rise in annual LPG exports

Iran's export of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) increased by about 30 percent during last Iranian year of 1402 (ended March 19), compared to the corresponding figure of its preceding year of 1401 (ended March 20, 2023), announced the caretaker of the International Affairs Department of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC).

Amir-Houshang Karami has

said his department can help to increase forex revenues through the export of natural gas and its products, which is often done through private sector.

The department can provide better conditions for the development of investment, employment and promotion of gross domestic product (GDP), the official added.

The export of natural gas to

Iraq increased by 15 percent in the Iranian year of 1402, while the related contract was extended for the next five years, Karami stated noting that "It is obvious that in addition to the commercial benefits, it plays an important role in the stability of the country's energy diplomacy and the strengthening of relations with neighboring and regional countries."

Establishment of energy corridor from Russia to Persian Gulf through Iran

Mojtaba Damirchilou, the secretary-general of the Eurasian Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has proposed the establishment of an energy corridor from Russia passing through Iran to the Persian Gulf. Damirchilou has said according to the geographical location and existing infrastructure in Iran, the capacity is available to pay attention to this area before the past, as regional countries are also interested in cooperating with Iran in this regard.

The use of existing infrastructure and the creation of new infrastructure to reach regional markets should be considered. In this field, constructive cooperation has started and we have

a clear vision, the official stated. He also noted that there is cooperation between Iran and the regional countries in the field of energy export, swap and transit. There have been long-standing ties between Iran and the countries of the Eurasian region, as these regions have extensive connections with Iran, the official stated.

The official went on to say that in the field of oil industry, Iran has ties with all the countries of the Eurasian region, explaining that these countries are either oil and gas producers and exporters or energy consumers. Iran's energy networks are connected with Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia,

Damirchilou noted, adding that effective communication between Iran and neighboring countries is underway.

"In the field of exporting petroleum products and petrochemical products, there are many capacities and a clear perspective could be imagined."

In the field of investment and joint cooperation, such as the development of oil and gas fields, a constructive understanding has been formed between Iran and Russia, as several contracts are being implemented, he said, noting that under the new conditions of Russia due to the oil embargoes on the country, a new field of cooperation has been formed.



● SHANA



● SHANA

Number of exploration drilling rigs increases fivefold

Nine oil and gas fields were discovered in the tenure of the 13th government, announced Mehdi Fakour, director of exploration at National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), adding that the number of exploration drilling rigs of his company has increased to 10 from two rigs in August 2021.

Fakour added that "In the last 2.5 years, we have witnessed growths of 400, 300, 189 and 127 percent, respectively in the field of 2D seismicography, 3D seismicography, magnetometry,

and 3D seismic processing compared to related figures for the preceding four years".

"Currently, the exploration success rate in the world stands at 10 percent, while this figure is 100 percent in Iran, as in Iraq, it hits 50 percent, in Oman 30 percent, in the United Arab Emirates 15 percent, and in Qatar five percent," he stated.

Fakour went on to say that in the past, exploration operations across the country were limited to a few num-

bers of provinces, noting that today, due to the efforts of the staff of his company, exploration drillings are being carried out in 19 provinces of Iran, equivalent to 60 percent of the country's area, which has created employment for more than 5,000 people.

Iran is currently implementing eight exploration projects; he said adding that a sum of 28 new exploration sites is on agenda for his company for drilling operations.

NTBFs help Iranian gas industry to become self-sufficient: NIGC

With the efforts made by the new technology-based firms (NTBFs), the Iranian gas industry has gained self-sufficiency as all required products have been domesticized, announced Managing Director of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) Majid Chegeni.

The official noted that innovations as well as productions presented this year by NTBFs show that the technology development of these firms is advancing at an acceptable rate as they have made significant advances com-

pared to last year.

"This achievement is a source of pride and hope for the oil industry and especially the gas sector. Therefore, we appreciate all the related officials that took fundamental steps to pass a law on supporting the NTBFs," he stated.

Chegeni went on to say that the products presented by NTBFs showed that they enjoy the potential to compete with foreign products, and due to compliance with standards, they can meet many needs of the gas industry.

"Supporting NTBFs is one of our main duties, that's why the NIGC signed a contract for the first-time production valued at \$150 million with the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology to support NTBFs."

The official added that also an equivalent credit of \$600 million has been allocated so that the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology will sign contracts for the first-time production in the field of strategic demands and new technological businesses with qualified NTBFs.



● SHANA

World Cup Asian qualifiers:

Iran coach Qalenoey pleased with performance in Hong Kong win

Sports Desk

Iran head coach Amir Qalenoey said he was satisfied with his team's performance and quality in the 4-2 away victory over Hong Kong, China in the World Cup Asian qualifiers preliminary round.

Mahdi Taremi gave Iran the lead from the spot 12 minutes into the game, only to see his strike canceled out two minutes later by Ma Hei Wai, whose effort from a tight angle went in through goalkeeper Payam Niazmand's legs.

Taremi restored the advantage thanks to a second spot-kick in the 34th minute and completed his hat-trick with a sublime curling effort from the edge of the box 11 minutes after the break.

substitute Anthony Pinto gave the home side a lifeline with his first touch of the game on the hour mark before Sardar Azmoun's composed finish made it 4-2 as Iran remained top of Group E – equal on 13 points with Uzbekistan, which will visit Tehran to take on Qalenoey's side on the final day of the preliminary-round fixtures on Tuesday.

"We had two opponents tonight. One was a decent Hong Kong team and the other was the high humidity, which made it very challenging for us," Qalenoey said after the game.

The Iranian coach, who has embarked on a rejuvenation project within his aged squad after February's AFC Asian Cup, fielded new faces in young defender Mohammad-Amin Hazbavi as well as Sepahan duo Arya Yousefi and Mohammad Qorbani, while Esteghlal Khuzestan striker Javad Aqaepour was rewarded with a first international cap as a late substitute after a stellar campaign in the newly-finished Persian Gulf Pro League season.

"We scored four goals and had other chances to score more but in general, given the presence of a number of young players who have recently joined the na-



Iranian players celebrate a goal during a 4-2 victory over Hong Kong in Hong Kong, China, on June 6, 2024. AFC

tional team, I am pretty satisfied with the performance and quality of the game, not to mention the result," added the Iranian coach.

This was a second meeting between the two sides in six months following Iran's 1-0 victory in Asian Cup group stage.

"Football in Asia has become closer and the

results recorded in the Asian Cup prove this. It showed that every game can be difficult for all teams in the continent," said Qalenoey, while he was full of praise for his talisman Taremi, who is now the joint-third all-time top scorer – alongside legendary midfielder Karim Baqeri – for the national team with 50 goals, following Ali Daei and Azmoun.

The milestone night also saw Taremi register his fourth international hat-trick, second highest after Daei, who has eight under his belt.

"The strategy of the national team is to attack and create chances. With all due respect to Hong Kong, which caused us problems in some spells, Iran controlled

the game today and had many opportunities in front of the goal. I believe Hong Kong's football philosophy has changed a lot and, as the manager said, they be a tough opponent for other Asian teams in the future," said Taremi, who is to be unveiled as a new signing for Serie A champion Inter on July 1.

Celtics dominate Mavericks in NBA Finals opener



Celtics' Jaylen Brown (7) dunks the ball during a victory over the Mavericks in Game 1 of the NBA Finals in Boston, MA, US, on June 6, 2024. MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

BBC – Jaylen Brown starred as the Boston Celtics put on a dominant display to beat the Dallas Mavericks 107-89 in game one of the NBA Finals.

The 27-year-old top scored with 22 points, while five of his team-mates also recorded double figures for the Celtics who are aiming to win a record 18th title.

But the Celtics' defensive display was just as good, helping them to a 29-point lead in the first half at the TD Garden in Massachusetts.

Mavericks star Luka Doncic, who scored 30 points and 10 rebounds, helped his side to close the deficit to eight points in the third quarter but the

home side pulled away again in the fourth quarter.

"When they cut it to eight, that's when the game started," said Brown.

"I liked how our team responded. We stayed composed. Offensively, we got to our spacing and was able to push that lead back out and make some plays."

Kristaps Porzingis made his return from injury for the Celtics after missing 10 games with a calf injury during the play-offs.

The Latvian, playing against his former side, scored 20 points including 11 from rebounds.

On a disappointing night for the Mavericks, the Texan side

will be looking to take hope from their performance in the third quarter.

"I think in those moments we were playing our basketball," said Doncic.

"We were getting stops. We didn't allow them to offensive rebound. We were having fun out there in those moments, and that's what we've got to do more."

Boston host game two of the best-of-seven series on Sunday. They are aiming to move clear of the Los Angeles Lakers, who also have 17 NBA Championship titles, and will know that 70% of NBA Finals have been won by the team that was victorious in game one.

Polyák Imre & Varga János Memorial: Iranians grab double silvers on Day 1

Sports Desk

The first day of the Polyák Imre & Varga János Memorial tournament in Budapest – the final UWW Ranking Series event before the Paris Olympics – saw Iranian wrestlers collect three medals, including a couple of silvers, in the freestyle contests.

Representing the country in the 65kg contests, Abbas Ebrahimzadeh came out 6-0 winner against Azerbaijan's Haji Aliiev – a three-time world champion and silver medalist in Tokyo Olympics – for a place in the final showpiece, but settled for the silver after a 12-8 loss to Japanese Kotaro Kiyooka.

Adel Panahian grabbed a second silver for the country when he fell to a 6-5 defeat against Georgian wrestler Otari Bagauri in the 79kg final.

Shahdad Khosravi, meanwhile, added a bronze to Iran's medal count in the Hungarian capital as he bounced back from a last-four 7-3 defeat against Armenian Arsen Harutyunyan – a winner of three successive world bronzes – to outmuscle Giorgi Goniashvili of Georgia 8-0 and share the

61kg third podium with American Nahshon Garrett.

Ali Mo'meni (57kg), Mohammadali Amouzad (70kg), and Abolfazl Babalou (97kg) were also in action on the first day of the competitions but finished their campaigns empty-handed.

Iranian Abbas Ebrahimzadeh won a freestyle 65kg silver medal at the Polyák Imre & Varga János Memorial tournament in Budapest, Hungary. MOJTABA SHOURMEYI



Iran: IAEA resolution 'politically-motivated, unconstructive'

International Desk

An anti-Iran resolution recently passed by the United Nations nuclear agency has met with strong condemnation from Tehran, which says such moves would not deter the Islamic Republic's peaceful nuclear program and are in line with the previously failed policies of some Western countries. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s Board of Governors passed a resolution on Wednesday calling on Iran to step up cooperation with the watchdog and reverse what it claimed to be Tehran's barring of inspectors. The motion proposed by Britain, France and Germany – but opposed by China and Russia – at the IAEA board is the first of its kind since November 2022. The European troika – also known as the E3 – wrote to the UN Security Council detailing what they labeled as Iran's violations of the 2015 nuclear deal, a step diplomats said aimed to pressure Tehran to resolve the issue diplomatically and to avoid reimposing



UN sanctions. Hours after the approval of the IAEA resolution, Iran's Foreign Ministry condemned the action in the strongest terms and called the move political. In a late-night statement, the ministry said the passage of the resolution will have no effect on Iran's resolve to continue its peaceful application of the nuclear energy. "The Islamic Republic of Iran views the proposal and approval

of this resolution as a political-motivated and unconstructive move and the continuation of previously failed policies of some Western governments as well as a bid to politically abuse international mechanisms against independent nations," the statement read. Stressing that Iran is committed to continuing its technical cooperation with the IAEA, the statement said, "The issuance of the resolu-

tion will have no effect on the Islamic Republic of Iran's resolve to press ahead with its peaceful nuclear program and to implement its nuclear development plans in line with its rights under related international treaties." Meanwhile, Iran's permanent ambassador to the UN also reacted to the IAEA's resolution. In a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the rotating president of the UN Security Coun-

Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi (c) attends the IAEA's Board of Governors meeting at the agency's headquarters in Vienna, Austria on June 3, 2024. AFP

cil Joonkook Hwang on Thursday, Amir Saeed Iravani said Tehran's decision to take remedial measures is in full compliance with its inherent right under Iran's 2015 nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The Iranian diplomat also lambasted the three European countries for spearheading the anti-Iran resolution. Tehran, he said, "rejects all the allegations" in the E3's letter and "reiterates its position concerning its peaceful nuclear program and the JCPOA." Iravani also said the E3 continues to level unfounded allegations against Iran for non-compliance with JCPOA commitments. "Iran's decision to take remedial measures was in full accordance with its inherent right under para-

graphs 26 and 36 of the JCPOA, in reaction to the United States' unlawful unilateral withdrawal from the agreement on 8 May 2018, and the subsequent failure of the E3 to uphold their commitments. The objective behind Iran's decision, which was made a full year after the US's unlawful withdrawal and the E3/EU's failure to fulfill their sanctions-lifting obligations, was crystal clear: to restore a balance in reciprocal commitments and benefits under the JCPOA," Iran's ambassador to the UN said. Iravani said the claim that the E3 has consistently upheld its JCPOA commitments is simply untrue. Iran and world powers reached the landmark nuclear agreement in 2015, under which Tehran curbed parts of its nuclear program in exchange for the removal of sanctions imposed on the Iranian economy. Tehran started to suspend some of its obligations under the agreement in 2019, a year after the US government unilaterally abandoned the deal and reinstated sanctions on Iran.

Hezbollah hits Israel's Iron Dome with guided missile

UN to blacklist Israel for harming children



and it is no longer possible to influence him." "The meaning of Israel's inclusion in the blacklist is very problematic and may cause countries in the world to impose an arms embargo on Israel," the sources said.

According to the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education and Higher Education, more than 15,000 children have been killed since the start of the Israeli onslaught on the Gaza Strip. It noted that the majority of those killed by Israel are school and kindergarten students. Moreover, 64 students from schools in the West Bank, including Al-Quds, have also been killed in the past eight months.

On Friday, Israeli forces bombarded a Gaza refugee camp after a deadly strike on a UN-run school there. Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza, said at least 37 people were killed in Thursday's Israeli strike on the UN-run school in Nuseirat camp. The United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said hundreds of displaced Gazans were sheltering at the school, which was "hit without prior warning". UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the strike as "horrific", while Egypt's Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Abu Zeid condemned what he called the "deliberate bombing of an UNRWA school". "Israeli violations of Palestinian rights continue day after day, in full view of the civilized world," Zeid said on X.

International Desk

An image emerged Thursday on social media showing the damaged launcher, confirming it was struck. Since October, Hezbollah movement has been exchanging fire with Israeli military in support of Palestinian resistance groups in the Gaza Strip where Israeli regime has killed more than 36,700 people – mostly women and children. The United Nations has decided to add Israel as a regime that harms children in conflict zones, UN Secretary-General António Guterres told Israel's defense attaché in the US, Major General Hedy Silberman, Israeli media reported on Thursday. Despite Israel's weeks-long efforts to dissuade Guterres from taking this step, Israel is expected to be included on the list to be published next week as part of a report to the UN Security Council, according to local Channel 13 News. Last month, Ynet News reported that Israeli officials were increasingly concerned the move was imminent, with sources saying, "The current secretary-general hates Israel

Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement said it has hit an Iron Dome launcher with a guided missile in what could be the first hit on the regime's defense system. The Lebanese group released a video on Wednesday that confirms the attack. The 90-second clip, captured from the missile's onboard camera, shows it flying towards an Iron Dome launcher at a military base in the northern Israeli settlement of Ramot Naftali near Lebanon. The feed cuts out just before impact. On Thursday, the Israeli's military claimed that it was not aware of any damage to its launchers. It could be the first time that a missile launcher – one part of the Iron Dome along with radar and control centers – has been hit in an attack. "It appears Hezbollah did hit the Iron Dome launcher with a guided missile," said Joe Truzman, a senior research analyst at the US-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Second Announcement

N.I.S.O.C
NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-38-0240007

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

| Items | Material Description | Quantity |
|-------|--|----------|
| 1 | COILED TUBING REEL STRING, QT-800, SINGLE TYPE H2S SERVICE, FITTING FIG.1502 WING LONG SIZE: 15000FT OD 1.25 IN., W.T. 0.095 IN. | 6RL |
| 2 | LONG SIZE: 22000FT OD 1.5 IN., W.T. 0.125 IN. | 6RL |

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 58,783/29 EURO or 25,752,604,285 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab.

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

NOTE: Based on enactment notified by Nisoc's Tender committee, foreign companies must submit a Bid Bond Guarantee amounting to aforementioned (paragraph 2) Euro amount. Otherwise, their quotations will not be considered.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex, Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 4644
Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

PUBLIC RELATIONS
www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://lets.mporg.ir> 1724826

First Announcement

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PUBLIC RELATIONS
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Iraq welcomes launching Iranian university branches

Arts & Culture Desk

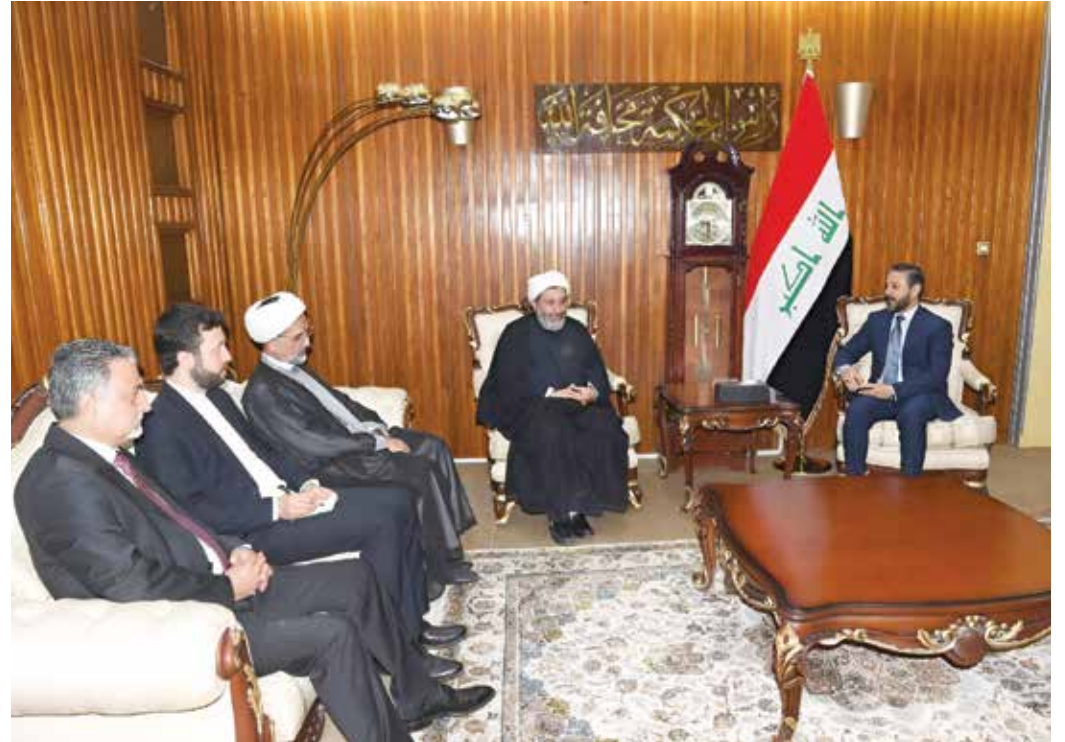
The Iraqi Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Naim Al-Aboudi, expressed his country's willingness to host branches of Iranian universities and to have Iranian students enroll in Iraqi universities. In a meeting with Head of Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), Hojjatoleslam Mehdi Imanipour, Al-Aboudi offered condolences on the passing of Iran's president Ebrahim Raisi, calling it a significant loss for the Iranian nation. Al-Aboudi acknowledged the positive collaboration with the Islamic Republic's cultural center in Baghdad to resolve challenges in the scientific and academic fields. He mentioned that Iraq was prepared to host a joint Iraq-Iran Science Week before the tragic incident that caused a delay.

The Iraqi minister welcomed the establishment of Iranian university branches in Iraq, citing the successful collaboration between the Al-Sabtain University for Medical Sciences and Tehran University of Medical Sciences as an example. Al-Aboudi further highlighted Iraq's desire to cooperate with Iran in fields such as artificial intelligence, nanoscience, and other emerging disciplines. He also supported the idea of sisterhood relationships between universities in the two countries. The head of ICRO commended the constructive collaboration between the two countries in the scientific and academic fields, particularly during Al-Aboudi's tenure. He emphasized the need to enhance cooperation daily and drew attention to the importance of facilitating Iraqi students' access to art education in Iran's fine arts faculties.



Iraqi Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Naim Al-Aboudi (R) and Head of Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization Mehdi Imanipour meet in Baghdad, Iraq on June 6, 2024.
● ICRO

Imanipour also mentioned that a few outstanding issues regarding university relations between the two countries are being addressed through necessary follow-ups. He proposed facilitating the establishment of a civilization studies program at reputable Iraqi universities, emphasizing the need to plan for the future of the world amid its historical turning point. Imanipour underscored the importance of dialogue among scientific and academic elites to build a new Islamic civilization. He suggested that joint scientific research should be facilitated to create a shared future.



Iranian animation 'Feather' awarded at Russian festival

Iranian animation 'Feather', directed by Iranian director Sadeq Javadi, was awarded at the Russian Voronezh International Animation Film Festival. Feather narrates the story of the life of a father and son who bet on a rooster. The Voronezh International Animation Festival is a review of modern professional domestic and world animation films for

children, teenagers and families. A feature of the festival is its workshop format, which will include not only screenings and discussions of animated films, but also master classes, round tables and creative meetings for a wide audience from leading specialists of the Voronezh Animation Studio and recognized professionals of the international animation industry.

The 'Feather' has been showcased at various international film festivals including the Portland Festival of Cinema, Animation & Technology in the United States, Animadeba in Spain, ANIMANIMA in Serbia, Chania Film Festival in Greece, Taichung International Animation Festival in Taiwan, and Catalina Film Festival in the United States.

World Food Safety Day

Iran takes strict measures to ensure food safety

Social Desk

The Iranian Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is taking strong action to ensure food safety and protect consumers' health.

Abdolazim Behfar, the head of the FDA's Food and Drinks Products Department, outlined recent efforts to enforce regulations and crack down on violations on the occasion of World Food Safety Day (June 7).

Food safety is a crucial element of public health and global food security. Unsafe food containing bacteria, viruses, parasites, or harmful chemicals can cause more than 250 diseases.

According to a report from the World Health Organization, it is estimated that annually 600 million people fall ill after consuming contaminated food, leading to the death of 420,000 of them.

Behfar stated that the FDA is closely monitoring food and drinks production units and imported shipments, including raw materials and final products. In the last Iranian year, the FDA addressed 4,884 complaints regarding food products. As a result of their inspections,



approximately 5,100 cases of violations were referred to the judicial authorities.

The FDA works closely with universities of medical sciences across Iran, which serve as the executive arms of the FDA. These universities have dedicated departments that inspect and supervise the distribution centers of health-oriented products, Behfar added.

When unauthorized production or importation is detected, the products are confiscated, and the owners are referred to the judicial authorities. Cases are pursued until a resolution is reached.

Behfar also addressed the increasing number of small workshops in the country, stating

that traditional workshops have a supervision ID and submit their products to FDA-approved laboratories for testing. As they operate within legal boundaries, they are monitored by the FDA and are considered trustworthy by consumers.

The FDA encourages food production units to prioritize the production of healthier food items that exceed standard criteria. This focus on consumer safety is reflected in the stringent measures taken by governments worldwide to ensure food hygiene as a critical health indicator, the health official added.

The scope of food hygiene has expanded significantly. While it was previously defined as "from farm to fork," recent scientific advancements in food hygiene have extended this scope from the genetic level and the production of plant and animal raw materials to the cellular level in consumers, covering a much broader range.

He concluded that in addition to production-level supervision, products are also monitored at the distribution level. Regular and surprise inspections are conducted at food production units nationwide.

Iranian violinist Minoo Oftadeh dies at 65



Minoo Oftadeh, a renowned Iranian violinist, and *kamancheh* (an Iranian spiked fiddle) player, died on June 6 after a prolonged illness. She was 65. Born in 1958, Oftadeh began her musical journey at the age of 10 when she enrolled in the National Music School, where she studied under the tutelage of renowned

violinist George Martirosian. During her high school years, she expanded her musical repertoire by learning to play the piano and the *tombak* (goblet drum), ISNA wrote. Oftadeh continued her musical education at the University of Tehran's Faculty of Fine Arts. At just 16 years old, she joined the

Culture and Arts Orchestra, the Women's Orchestra, and the *tombak* group under the guidance of master musician Mohammad Esmaeili. She performed extensively across Iran and began teaching violin and *kamancheh* at the Center for the Preservation and Propagation of Music.

Oftadeh remained active in the music scene, performing with various groups and contributing to audio productions. She held concerts both within Iran and internationally. In recent years, she dedicated much of her time to teaching at Tehran universities, the Rudaki Foundation, and independent classes.