

Cinemas drew in 20% more audience in spring



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian cinemas across the country attracted an estimated audience of 8.6 million in spring, indicating a 20% increase compared to the same season last year. The movie theaters had 206,590 film showings in the stated period (March 20-June 20) attracting 8,674,000 viewers, with box office earnings reaching 498 billion and 148 million tomans (\$8,302,000), IRNA reported. These figures show that cinemas had a better performance this spring, with a 20% rise in viewership and a 61% increase in sales compared to the same period last year. Last spring, the release

of the movie 'Fossil' by Karim Amini marked a milestone, making it a balanced season, a record that few expected to be broken this spring. The comedy movie attracted about 1,100,000 moviegoers in just 24 days of last March. In the first month of the Iranian calendar year (beginning on March 20), cinemas had 2,332,000 viewers, and box office earnings reached 145 billion and 812 million tomans (\$2,430,000). The statistics were achieved despite many holidays in the month due to the overlap with the holy month of Ramadan, causing cinemas to be closed for several days. The figures that came

out this spring were much bigger than last year's, which were attributed to the high number of closures this spring compared to last as fewer people expected cinemas to improve their viewership by 20% and sales by 61%, which was thought to be a magnificent event. Certainly, the reason for this achievement has been the proper organization of screenings and timely decisions on showing popular films each month. Therefore, when we look at the statistics for the spring, we see that at least six films were able to significantly contribute to the increase in sales and number of audience in the spring chart.

Asia Cooperation Dialogue ...

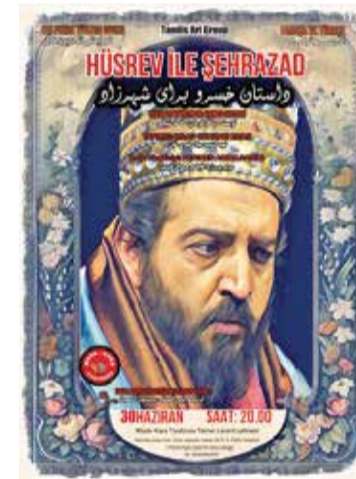
Undoubtedly, regional convergence within the framework of active membership in regional and global organizations can liberate the international community from the harms of hegemonic systems and steer it toward multilateralism as a means of achieving justice in international relations. The current Iranian government's particular focus on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the BRICS group, which started with Iran's official membership in these two international multilateral-oriented mechanisms based on multidimensional thinking and continued with its active participation, is noteworthy. In pursuing multilateralism, attention must be paid to identity and aspirations, and the ACD addresses this essential need. The presence of emerging powers in this forum will further energize it and enhance optimism for its promising future. Asia and the world continue to be in deep sorrow and shock due to the ongoing atrocities

and genocide perpetrated by the Zionist regime in the Gaza Strip. More than eight months have passed since the humanitarian catastrophe in Palestine, and the global community, hindered by the hegemonic system, remains unable to stop attacks on innocent people, especially women and children. Meanwhile, members of the ACD have individually made efforts to end these crimes, establish a ceasefire, and deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza. Collective efforts in this regard remain essential and will be emphasized during the Tehran meeting. It is also worth noting that in mid-June, during the meeting of foreign ministers of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation in Turkey, we witnessed the efforts of member states to adopt collective stances to stop the attacks and end genocide in Gaza. The ACD, established in 2002, encompasses a vast expanse of the Asian continent. The 35 member states together represent 56% of the world's population and 35% of the global GDP.

Through dialogue and partnership, these nations aim to develop relations in various fields such as transportation and communication; science, technology, and innovation; education and human resource development; food, energy, and water security; culture and tourism; and inclusive and sustainable development. The Islamic Republic of Iran joined the ACD in 2004 and is considered one of its active members. Since October 2023, the presidency of the ACD has been held by our late foreign minister. In addition to the Islamic Republic of Iran, the ACD's members include Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, Singapore, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Nepal, Russia, Turkey, Japan, China, Mongolia, South Korea, India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Oman, Palestine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. One of the ACD's aspirations is the formation of an "Asian Community." Given the rich cultural heritage and enduring values of Asia, as well as the continent's strong potential and actual eco-

nomical and technological foundations, a stronger sense of belonging to an Asian community among its peoples would undoubtedly bring significant benefits. This could also encourage Asian governments to form Asian coalitions and ultimately an "Asian Union" at an appropriate time. The ACD can play a crucial role in this direction. Moreover, the impact of people-to-people interactions and the role of the private sector in achieving these valuable goals should not be overlooked. Intra-Asian tourism, cultural exchanges, and the active participation of the private sectors of ACD member countries in intra-Asian economic and trade interactions are effective drivers in this process. During its presidency of the ACD, the Islamic Republic of Iran took good steps in both areas. The declaration of Yazd as the "ACD Tourism Capital for 2024" has provided a suitable ground for hosting various Asian cultural and tourism activities. Moreover, this year, Yazd will host the meeting of ACD tourism ministers, where they will make decisions regarding future cooperation. In May, Isfahan hosted the chambers of commerce from ACD member countries, resulting in agreements on future joint measures and the issuance of the "Isfahan Pact." Iran's foreign policy includes multilateralism, good-neighborliness, and collective development through regionalism. Thus, countering unilateralism and hegemony, and supporting regional and trans-regional multilateral mechanisms are top priorities in our diplomacy. Accordingly, we have utilized our ACD presidency to strengthen and solidify its dialogue and cooperation structures, and with the support of member states and the ACD secretariat, effective positive steps have been taken in this regard. The meeting of ACD foreign ministers in Tehran will review and make decisions on some of these measures and initiatives.

'The Story of Khosrow for Shahrzad' goes to Istanbul



Arts & Culture Desk

The play 'The Story of Khosrow for Shahrzad,' by Hamed Sheikhi, will be

staged in the Turkish city of Istanbul on June 29-30. After being performed in the Armenian capital, Yerevan, the play is scheduled to be staged at Istanbul's Mask-Kara Theater and Sanatif Yaklasimlar Theater, Mehr News Agency reported. 'The Story of Khosrow for Shahrzad' will be performed in Persian and Turkish language by the artistic group "Tandis." Hamed Sheikhi, Jila Ganjeh, Ali Pilehvar, Yasaman Fazlhashemi, Yasaman Tahbaz, Ghazal Baharestani, Bita Jabari, Maral Abolqassemi, Elnaz Reza, and Mehdi Honarsazan are the actors in the play. This is the eighteenth play directed by Sheikhi and the twenty-seventh production of the artistic group Tandis, which will also be staged in Tehran in the upcoming months.

Over 2000 centers opened for environmental awareness



Social Desk

Head of Iran's Department of Environment, Ali Salajegheh, said that over 2,000 "Houses of Environment" have been established to promote the culture of waste management among the public. During a press conference on Saturday, the deputy president stressed that one of the envi-

ronmental challenges across the country is the excessive production of waste, which requires a cultural shift to cut it down, IRNA reported. Salajegheh emphasized that more than 2,000 centers have been set up as appropriate venues to raise awareness to this end, with a focus on the department's 'Separation at Source' policy.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

