

Iran's president-elect to be sworn in on July 30



No time for political revanchism



By Mehdi Ebrahim
Staff writer

Having scored a scintillating home run in the presidential election on July 5, veteran heart surgeon-cum-parliamentarian Masoud Pezeshkian was catapulted from relative obscurity to presidency, officially treading on an uncharted territory cluttered with factional rivalries and political acts of obstructionism.

In the run-up to the vote and during the televised debates and nationwide campaigns, which were dismally imbued with sloganeering, the self-acknowledged Conservative but Reformist-leaning Pezeshkian was vehemently bashed over unsubstantiated claims of having affiliation to former chief executives, Moderate Hassan Rouhani and Ultra-Reformist Mohammad Khatami.

The 69-year-old bore the brunt of running a third administration of the two ex-presidents while on numerous occasions categorically dismissed the accusations.

Piggybacking on Pezeshkian's reticence and calm disposition, his rivals labelled his supporting associates in his campaigns as "self-deprecating" and claimed that their prescribed domestic and foreign policies would be a repeat of what the Iranian public went through during more than 16 years of Rouhani's and Khatami's tenure, in which economic indicators — beset by Western sanctions — were much to be frowned upon.

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Israel Forcing **Thousands** Out of Gaza City Ahead of Heavy Offensive



People walk past rubble and damaged buildings in the Tuffah district, east of Gaza City, on July 8, 2024.
OMAR-AL-QATTAA/AFP



Uncovering layers of history in Isfahan



Underestimated Skocic out to showcase credentials on Iran return



Iran's 'The Old Bachelor' heads to Galway Film Fleadh in Ireland



Iran's maritime transit up 49% since March

The sea trade and transit of Iran have recorded 10 and 49 percent growth, respectively, since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 19, 2024), compared to the same period in the last year, according to Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO). Ali Akbar Safaei, deputy minister of Roads and Urban Development and the managing director of the PMO, stated that the country's sea trade reached 237 million tons in the aforementioned period compared to 215 million tons in 2022.



Philosophy of Hamas in writings of Yahya Sinwar

SPECIAL ISSUE



NEWS IN BRIEF

Speaker
departs for
BRICS forum

● IRNA

Economic Desk

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf left Tehran on Wednesday for Russia to participate in the 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in St. Petersburg. This is the first forum since Iran became a member state of BRICS. Before departing, Qalibaf said that bilateral meetings will also be held with other member states, referring to BRICS's separate financial mechanisms. "More than 250 meetings will be held in economic, commercial, and political fields, which is a good opportunity for Iran to improve relations with BRICS members," the speaker announced.

Iran, Russia
sign MoU
on catalysts

● SHANA

SHANA - The Iranian knowledge-based company of Pishro Catalyst Almas and the Russian company Antark signed a memorandum of understanding on technology transfer and local production of catalysts used in the oil industry. Per the MoU, the technical knowledge of four groups of catalysts including isomerization, reforming, hydro-treating, and superclass will be transferred. Currently, the production of 92 types of catalysts has been localized in Iran except for five catalysts, four of which will be produced locally in fulfillment of the MoU. The MoU was signed on Tuesday on the sidelines of the Technology Transfer and Local Production of Refining, Petrochemical, and Gas Catalysts Conference in Tehran. The Managing Director of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) Jalil Salari told the conference on Tuesday that after successfully producing a great part of oil industry catalysts at home, Iran now enjoys the potential to export the catalysts to meet the neighboring countries' needs. He added that the country is currently reliant on domestically made catalysts, noting that the country's need for catalysts is estimated at 26 thousand tons even though the need is on the rise.

Iran's current oil output
at 3.6m bpd: *Minister*

Economic Desk

Iran's Minister of Oil put the current production of oil in the country at 3.6 million barrels per day (bpd). Stating that every 100,000 barrels of oil generates \$2.8 billion in income for the country, Javad Owji noted that oil production volume has surged considerably from 2.2 million in August 2021, when the outgoing government took office, to 3.6 million barrels per day (bpd). Speaking on the sidelines of the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, he told reporters he thinks that the oil industry should not slow down if it wants to achieve its target of producing 4 million barrels of oil per day by the end of the current Iranian calendar year, which ends on March 20, 2025. Owji pointed out that the production of oil is one of Iran's strategies to prevent the budget deficit and increase government revenues. He added that relying on domestic capabilities has marked tremendous changes and successes in the oil industry during an era of harsh sanc-



● IRNA

tions.

Owji put the liquid hydrocarbon reserves of the country at

more than 153 billion barrels. Referring to the rising number of road trips in summer and

managing gasoline storage, he said that the Petroleum Ministry had taken successful non-

price initiatives, which has led to managing gasoline consumption.

Iran's maritime transit up 49%
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Economic Desk

The sea trade and transit of Iran have recorded 10 and 49 percent growth, respectively, since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 19, 2024), compared to the same period in the last year, according to Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO). Ali Akbar Safaei, deputy minister of Roads and Urban Development and the managing director of the PMO, stated that the country's sea trade reached 237 million tons in the aforementioned period compared to 215 million tons in 2022. The sea trade also saw a 10 percent growth with 60 million tons of trade within the three months period compared to the same period in 2023. Similarly, non-oil exports had 56 percent growth compared to last year. As the government is changing hands in Iran, Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Development announced these figures as part of a report on its performance in the ports and maritime since it assumed



A ship is docked at the Shahid Rajaei Port in the Iranian southern city of Bandar Abbas. The state-owned India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) company has signed a cooperation agreement with Iran to equip and operate the Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar on May 13, 2024. ● IRNA

power in August 2021 during a press conference, according to Mehr news agency. In the press conference, Safaei added the organization has a comprehensive approach towards the development of Iranian ports for balanced growth in all sectors. He reported that Iran's trade with Russia and Kazakhstan has grown by 70 percent through the northern Nowshahr Port, by 45 percent through the Amirabad Port, and by 30 percent through the Anzali Port. The main import from these two countries is grain. The promotion of trade with the neighboring countries is further indicated in the country's transit volume of 16 million tons since March 19, 2024. In attracting foreign investments, Safaei noted, the

PMO has secured contracts with five countries including India that invested \$120 million for equipping and operating the Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar. Also, the PMO has facilitated the attraction of domestic investments through the revision of rules and regulations. The PMO's plan for increasing the nominal capacity of ports included 167 projects worth over \$733 billion, which has led to a 20 million tons increase in port capacity since the last Iranian calendar year. Additionally, facilitation of the business environment has been another important initiative in the PMO mainly through the unification of software networks involving maritime, port, financial, engineering, etc. Previously, Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development set three main priorities of the Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) for 2024. Based on these missions, three strategies of "sea-based economy", "transit", and "logistics management" will be primarily followed up by the PMO this year.

Unlike Hamas, Israel resists
meeting demands of its subjects

By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has shown reasonableness in its demand for Israel to stop attacks before a cease-fire agreement can be finalized. On the other hand, while supposedly being open to discussing feasible terms, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists that any permanent cease-fire agreement should not hinder Israel's war objectives. He asserts that Israel must continue fighting until these goals are achieved. Previously, US President Joe Biden presented a plan proposing a six-week cease-fire to arrange the release of Israeli captives. Netanyahu added a condition that Tel Aviv should be able to monitor Gaza's border crossings with Egypt to prevent Hamas from acquiring weapons. Hamas has expressed willingness to negotiate the release of Israeli captives without insisting on an immediate cease-fire, aiming to create a conducive environment for a permanent cease-fire. In return, Hamas asked that humanitarian aid trucks be allowed entry into Gaza for the whole duration of the cease-fire. Netanyahu, however, emphasized that the return of living Israeli captives is the top priority in negotiations. Consulting with their allies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon,



Activists hold a protest calling for the release of captives held in Gaza, outside the Israeli Defense Ministry headquarters in Tel Aviv on July 4, 2024. ● AVSHALOM SASSONI/FLASH90

Hamas leaders agreed to continue with the negotiation. Hamas has clarified to the international community that the ball is now in Israel's court regarding the release of prisoners and reaching a cease-fire agreement. They indicated that if Israel refrains from disrupting the negotiations, the process could be completed within two to three weeks. Hamas is seemingly conceding its immediate cease-fire condition to ensure a lasting cease-fire and allow the oppressed people of Gaza to take a breather from the severe humanitarian crisis and famine that are caused by the Israeli blockade and daily bombardments. The ongoing conflict has led to a severe shortage of food and immense suffering for displaced Palestinians,

resulting in the deaths of children. Despite Israel's initial opposition to a permanent cease-fire, increasing pressure from Israeli citizens has forced the government to consider negotiations. Last Friday, Mossad chief David Barnea departed Doha after discussions with Qatari and Egyptian mediators regarding a cease-fire and prisoner release plan. Netanyahu's office confirmed that Israeli envoys would resume talks on a Gaza cease-fire next week, though differences remain. The pride of Israel, once a regional power, has been shattered by the resilient Muslim resistance forces, forcing Tel Aviv to agree to a simple prisoner release plan. A recent survey revealed that the Israeli public no longer believes in the prospects of achieving victory against Hamas, with a clear majority urging for cease-fire negotiations. Tel Aviv is most disheartened by its failure to provide security for Jews living in Israel.

Uncovering layers of history in Isfahan

Iranica Desk

Earlier this year, an archaeologist, Aqil Aqili, reported the destruction of historical layers in the project of leveling the Kamar-Zarrin passageway with Jelokhan Square in Isfahan, and announced that the laws passed by the Parliament have been violated by the city's municipality.

Fortunately, as a result of the efforts made by cultural heritage enthusiasts, this project was halted, and afterwards, the first phase of archaeological excavation operations began in the area. Aghili stated that many parts of this site have been lost, but hopefully, by preserving what is now being discovered at the passageway, some of the damages caused by negligence in the past 20 years can be compensated, ISNA wrote.

Ali Shojaei Esfahani, heading the team of archeologists working in the area, said that architectural remains and artifacts, dating back to early Islamic to Qajar and Pahlavi eras were unearthed during the excavations carried out in the region.

He said, "We have kept the site open to the public for visits since the beginning of the project to pursue two objectives: first, to raise society's awareness of the passageway, and second, to enhance people's knowledge of archaeological studies. Some individuals believe that certain archaeologists are primarily seeking to uncover treasures and buried antiquities."

He added that although it is not common in archaeological

projects, people are allowed to visit the site and take photos. Moreover, groups of school students have visited the area to familiarize themselves with archaeological studies and activities related to the cultural heritage sector.

Shojaei noted that the excavations reveal historical layers buried beneath the city of Isfahan, emphasizing the importance of preserving them for recognition and study. He mentioned that the project, known as urban archaeology, is currently ongoing in a significant part of the city in collaboration with Isfahan Municipality, the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft Organization, and the Cultural Heritage Research Centre.

He highlighted that the remaining excavations are planned to be conducted after obtaining extended permission from relevant authorities, with the expectation of establishing a museum site in the area.

He remarked that the artifacts unearthed in the area, such as raw materials, finished products, and waste materials, vividly indicate that the central district of Isfahan surrounding Jaame Mosque was bustling and densely populated. Considering Isfahan's designation as the Creative City of Handicrafts, these new discoveries hold significant importance.

Fortunately, the architectural remnants remain in their original locations, he said, adding efforts are underway to put them on public display in cooperation with Isfahan University of Art and other related organizations.



● IRIB NEWS

Influence of reproductions on art perception and scholarship

Although there is little reason to deny that true familiarity with artefacts can only be attained through examining them in their tangible reality, we also have to admit that many works of art we know through reproductions only and that reproductions remain the most effective means for spreading knowledge about them. Yet despite the decisive epistemic status of illustrations, they themselves rarely become the subject of analysis and much of the indirect information which they might convey is glossed over.

Acting as transparent windows to the originals, their intermediary existence — which has been realised, studied and exploited by modern artists for over a century — is usually denied by scholars.

This negligence characterizes authors, editors and readers of scientific publications alike. Reproductions began to appear alongside the first scientific publications on art in order to present previously unseen artefacts to the audience, or, more specifically, to underpin the written argument. Some of the authors of these early publications were very careful about the quality and supportive value of their illustrations, but even they often forgot to give due recognition to the authors of the images, like Fried-

rich Sarre (1865-1945) in the case of Antoine Sevruguin (c. 1838-1933) or Joseph Strzygowski (1862-1941) in that of Rudolf-Ernst Brunnnow (1858-1917), as mentioned elsewhere in this book. Rarer was K. A. C. Creswell (1879-1974)'s type of Islamic art historian who ensured the consonance between his texts and images by being the author of both.

An extreme case of this latter type is represented by Ernst Herzfeld

(1879-1948) who effectively forbade visitors of Persepolis to take photographs in "his" site, as if being a descendant of the Achaemenids.

It was not chiefly the ownership of photographs these scholars were wary of, but rather the risk of losing their hardly-won exclusive access to the subjects depicted in the images and the consequent loss of control over academic discussion— photographs are likely to become public,

spread, and start a life of their own.

This shows an indirect admission of the power of illustrations, namely that reproductions — and other displays, including exhibitions — are no less effective instruments in shaping public appreciation of a particular artistic heritage than texts. The latter would lose credibility and testability without images. One may not forget how much of knowledge depends on the mere availability of visual material. It may seem banal but worth noting that the initial European perception of non-European art was largely determined by the incalculable supply of artefacts on the market and in collections. It appears likewise that a great deal of early scholarship of Persian art relied on limited visual resources. Entire theories could be built on the thin basis of a single collection or publication, and these naturally led to distorted perceptions which would remain persistent despite the gradual emergence of new visual aids.

Several early publications had to do entirely without illustrations. Some of the authors, determined to promulgate Persian art, were well aware that real knowledge cannot emerge without direct contact with the sources. Some were condemning

those who ignored even the few available information supplies and created untrue impressions of non-European art as a result.

Although photography cannot be uncritically equated with scientific neutrality in the process of visual transmission, it became by far the most accepted form of pictorial reproduction of artefacts during the 20th century. This was because the insertion of etchings or lithographs in 19th-century publications doubtlessly added an extra link to the already long and subjective chain between the original artefact and the viewer, thus it hindered rather than fostered direct encounters.

As late as 1895, the first monograph about Persian art, *L'Art Persan*, by Albert Gayet (1856-1916), employed engravings side by side photographs of paintings. Some paintings are in fact Indian which Gayet could not always distinguish from their Persian counterparts.

The original paintings once again came without exception from a single collection, this time the Khedivial Library of Cairo. Considering his decades-long activity in Egypt—as opposed to his relative unfamiliarity with Persia — this choice is understandable.



The above is a lightly edited version of part of a chapter titled, 'The mediation of photography: Persian paintings in European printed books and journals', from a book titled, 'The Shaping of Persian Art: Collections and Interpretations of the Art of Islamic Iran and Central Asia,' edited by Yuka Kadoi and Iván Szántó and published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.



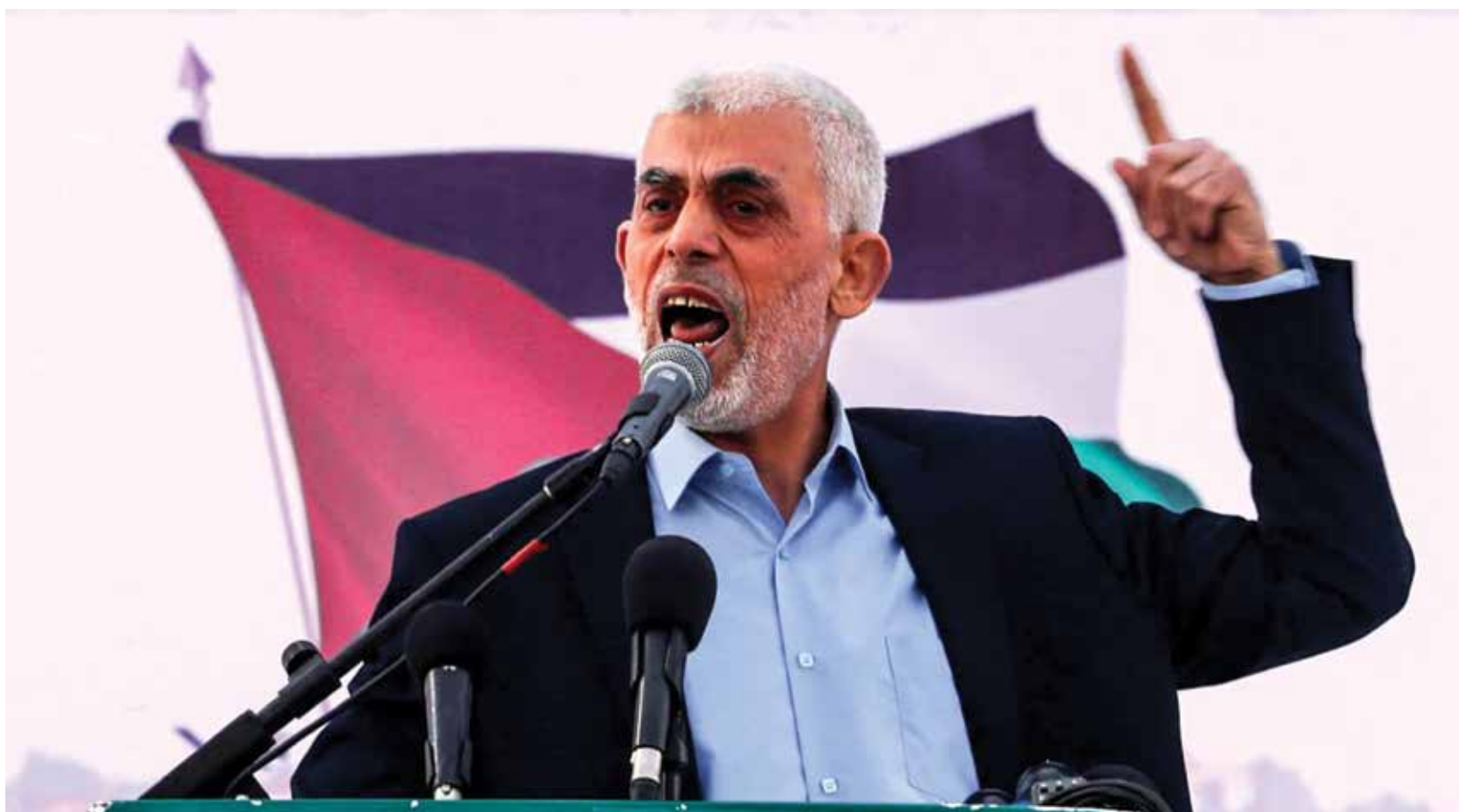
By Haneen Odetallah
Critic, author

ANALYSIS

The following was originally published in Arabic in Babelwad, titled "The Philosophy of Hamas: Politics and Existence According to Yahya Sinwar," by Haneen Odetallah. The author uses Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar's novel, "Thorns and Carnations," as a lens through which the mindset of the contemporary resistance can be analyzed, delving into themes of self-reliance, sacrifice, and security awareness. Odetallah explores how these concepts are ingrained in individuals to foster political ascendancy and collective liberation, illustrating the strategic and existential dimensions of resistance and providing a unique perspective on the ideological framework of the resistance.



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Philosophy of Hamas in writings of Yahya Sinwar

Sinwar spent 23 years of his life in prison, including four years in solitary confinement, but he did not waste any of those years. He learned Hebrew and everything he could about his enemy, even formulating and executing a long-term intelligence plan from behind bars, which at the time was far-reaching. In 2004, after a complex and pro-

tracted operation that required great effort and the recruitment of many prisoners, Yahya Sinwar, then a prisoner, published his novel, "Thorns and Carnations," as the writer intended. The novel deals with a thread from the story of the Palestinian struggle in the historical era between 1967 and the Al-Aqsa Intifada of the ear-

ly 2000s, and the emergence of the Islamic movement in the Palestinian resistance — specifically the Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas — against its social, political, and cultural background.

The novel tells a story that begins in a house in a refugee camp in Gaza that will shape the values and choices of these children, who will grow up to

become active and key figures in the Islamic Resistance Movement. The story then expands to include relatives, neighbors, the people of the camp, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the rest of the occupied lands, where each character forms a stone that builds the experience of the Islamic Resistance Movement in those years.

Historical novel as vessel for philosophy

This novel features fictional characters, but all its events are real; the fictional aspect arises from transforming these events into a work that meets the conditions of a novel, as the writer notes in the introduction. The choice of the writer, primarily a political and military figure, to document this pivotal stage in the history of armed resistance and transmit it in this creative, novelistic form indicates that it is an attempt that goes beyond merely recounting history and its events. The historical novel is not just a reflection of the events of the past; it is a deep exploration of the philosophical and moral forces that shape historical movements. The characters in historical novels embody and engage in philosophical struggles within the context of their time. In other words, it serves as a means to understand the complex relationship between personal beliefs and the broader expanse of history. As for the writer, he is one of the pioneering figures in Hamas who witnessed its inception and contributed to its formation and development from youth to the present day. His departure from the

confines of traditional historiography to address innovative dramatic struggles in history allows him to explore its philosophical dimensions; specifically, the impact of beliefs on history. In the context of the history of Hamas, this enables him to formulate a philosophy for the Islamic Resistance Movement. The story is told through the perspective of Ahmad, the son of the refugee camp who first opens his eyes to the world's harshness: the camp, the war, and the disappearance of his father, a resistance fighter, without a trace. Ahmad observes the camp environment and living conditions, witnessing the poverty, the cold, and the rain that seeps through the ceiling as they sleep and follows them to their classroom in the UNRWA school. He observes the camp's community and its culture, seeing his mother's concern for other people's honor and reputation — especially when it involves their daughters — and her strictness in this matter. Conversely, he experiences joy in accompanying his grandfather to prayer and social gatherings in the camp mosque. Ahmad observes the political transformations in the camp, in the Gaza Strip,

in the West Bank, and throughout the occupied lands; he witnesses curfews, sieges, the relentless hunt for resistance fighters, and collective punishment. He witnesses the normalization of occupation, material stability, work permits, and recreational trips into the occupied lands, through which more individuals are compelled and coerced into collaboration with the enemy. Ahmad observes the "Israeli" prisons from which he, his brothers, relatives, and acquaintances emerged, witnessing the power of determination and organization in changing reality. Most importantly, Ahmad watches how the weapons and the struggle for freedom evolve in response to these conditions, seeing men who were shaped by the resistance and who, in turn, shaped it. Ahmad traces the emergence of Hamas by following the characters who formed, developed, and embodied it, summarized in his cousin Ibrahim, the martyr's son who grew up with him in the same house with the same mother, and who grew to become a model of true leadership and political destiny-making.

The narrator plays the role of an involved observer; he doesn't just watch, but he accompanies Ibrahim in his

work, his education, and his journey of struggle. Despite joining Ibrahim in demonstrations, organizing religious and educational sit-ins in Al-Aqsa Mosque, and security work in chasing collaborators, the narrator denies joining the Movement officially until the end: "Although I did not consider myself an 'Islamic Bloc' member or a supporter, I had no choice but to elect my cousin and his list, as our shared life and my personal admiration for him did not allow me to do otherwise."

This gap between Ibrahim and the movement he represents makes Ibrahim a figure whose greatness surpasses that of the movement. Although Ibrahim does not directly clash with occupation forces and only becomes a martyr at the end of the book, he knows his fate from the beginning and pursues it, undeterred even by his attachment to his wife and children. Perhaps Ibrahim symbolizes a state of being that the narrator aspires for this political Movement to cultivate in society, or the model of the Palestinian individual that the writer hopes Hamas will create — achieving its goals of shaping self-determination and establishing a political entity for the Palestinians.

Self-made individual

Ibrahim's transcendence, as perceived by the narrator, is linked to the concept of being "self-made," which appears in two instances. In the first instance, the narrator notes that Ibrahim's self-made nature has granted him a form of sovereignty over himself and a sense of purpose. "He even became a professional builder; he learned the trade from his friend, and they became partners, employing a worker to assist them, taking on medium-sized building contracts. It became clear that Ibrahim's self-made nature was making a man out of him."

Linguistically, the concept of being self-made refers to someone who has "achieved eminence by the virtue of their own character, not by the virtue of their ancestors". The term has been commonly used to describe anyone "toiling, striving to develop them-

selves through their own efforts". Thus, to be self-made can be considered philosophically as an existential practice where an individual finds the meaning of their existence and life by adhering to firm principles such as personal responsibility, autonomy, and intellectual freedom. These principles will elevate and develop the individual in pursuit of self-sovereignty and the shaping of their desired destiny.

In the second instance, the self-made individual is associated with the true leader; thus, being self-made is the foundation for a political leader capable of confronting the circumstances of occupation. "Every day, Ibrahim grew more transcendent and respected in my eyes; he was the one who grew up an orphan after his father was martyred when he was four years old, then was abandoned by his mother while

still young, raised among us, and became a self-made man, and a true leader despite his young age and the difficult circumstances under occupation."

When Ibrahim's self-made nature merges with its political dimension, it makes him a leader; someone capable of developing not only himself but also his community and his people, elevating their collective condition. He carries them beyond, to overcome the difficult political circumstances towards freedom. For the narrator, Ibrahim embodies this model of the transcendent human being, who ascends and elevates themselves by finding the meaning of their existence in their commitment to the political role of uplifting their people. In other words, they ascend through a political practice philosophically founded on self-made principles.



Yahya Sinwar (sitting-C) takes a group photo with his prison pals including Samir Kuntar (standing-R), a member of the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF) and Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement, in an Israeli prison.

● THE JEWISH PRESS

Übermensch, self-made individual

In existential philosophy, Nietzsche introduces the idea of the "Übermensch," an individual who has transcended and ascended to achieve true freedom embodied in the ability to shape their own destiny. According to Nietzsche, the transcendent individual is one who chooses their goals and selects their values, and principles without succumbing to any societal pressures beyond their control. This concept invites individuals to embrace what he calls the "Will to

Power," an inner drive for liberation and self-sovereignty. Thus, the Übermensch forms an intellectual model of a person who overcomes societal values and standards that hinder them and creates their own values.

In contrast, Sinwar's transcendent individual is the politically self-made individual; one who chooses their goals in a way that contributes to their political liberation. Therefore, they engage in shaping their identity and defining their values within the social and political fabric that shelters them. This process is not merely a personal quest

for freedom but a political act that involves challenging and contributing to the formation of collective identity in a way that serves the freedom of the entire community.

The politically transcendent individual, through the self-made philosophy, is a model of the practical person who deals with inherited societal values—social, moral, and religious—as resources to enhance their community's drive for liberation and to achieve political ascendance. They understand that their struggle against occupation is an existential

battle and a war on the Palestinian "will to power"; that is, a war on their drive to politically self-govern. In this context, self-made philosophy transcends individual self-determination and becomes a tool to influence and shape political discourse. The hard-working individual committed to achieving their liberatory goal will harness all the efforts of others for that purpose as much as they can. As for the Islamic Resistance Movement, it seeks through Islamic values to produce this transcendent individual, or this state of being in the Pal-

estinian individual; so how do these values contribute to that?

"The house became filled with men and women, boys and girls from the same family, and memories flooded back of us as children gathered in a small room that was too big for us. Our modest family had grown into a small army over the years... I mentioned this jokingly; my mother quickly shouted, 'Send blessings upon the Prophet,' a gentle reminder to mind my words. Immediately, everyone chorused, 'O Allah, bless our master Muhammad.'"



Hamas leader in Gaza Yahya Sinwar poses defiantly for a photo in his office premises, which was bombed by Israel Defense Forces (IDF), amidst IDF's massive hunt for him in 2023.

● TASNIM

Islam, self-made individual

The novel begins in the winter of 1967, just before the Naksa, when Gaza was under the administration of Egypt. Ahmad, then five years old, recounts one of his earliest memories — his interactions with Egyptian soldiers whom he frequently visits. They would play with him and give him and his friends pistachio sweets. Then, the war breaks out, and the soldiers shout at them to go back, and they no longer get any sweets.

"The occupation forces had faced fierce resistance in one area and withdrew. Shortly after, a group of tanks and military jeeps appeared, flying Egyptian flags. The resistance fighters rejoiced, thinking help had arrived, and they emerged from their positions and trenches, firing into the air in celebration. They gathered to welcome the reinforcements, but when the convoy approached, heavy fire was opened on the fighters, killing them. Then, the Zionist flag was raised on those tanks and vehicles, instead of the Egyptian flags."

This scene signals an ideological turning point in the Palestinian struggle: the realization of the failure of Arab nationalism, or its inadequacy as a political current in inducing the necessary seriousness in individuals towards the Palestinian national cause, especially in the face of the ever-increasing voracity of the occupation.

While the philosophy of the self-made

individual encompasses a condition for elevation, which is seriousness and commitment to the pursuit, "self-made individuals look at their goals with respect and belief, and they take the matter of achieving them with utmost seriousness, without compromise. They are simply committed to what they must do to achieve that."

Here, the "extraordinary connection between religion and nationalism" achieves this seriousness through the obligation of jihad, or holy war, imbuing the national cause with sanctity and thus planting in the individual the strict seriousness necessary to achieve it, as the narrator states: "So that the battle takes its true dimension and meets the required standard."

When the politically self-made individual looks around, they find the Islamic system among the last social systems that have remained steadfast among Palestinians in the face of societal annihilation, or sociocide, committed by the occupation. They find, in the intertwining of political practice and faith, in transferring the reference of the Palestinian's existence and purpose to Allah, a principle that the enemy cannot disintegrate. The self-made individual finds in historical Islamic sites, stable political edifices against occupation's attempts to erode awareness and distort direction. Therefore, we find Ibrahim, who calls the battle "a battle of civilization,



Yahya Sinwar rides a bus on his way to Gaza after his release from prison in the Shalit deal in 2011.

● X

history, and existence," organizing a trip for the youth to learn about their concealed lands and their sacred and historical Islamic sites, the foremost being al-Aqsa Mosque. These sites are where the flourishing of Palestinian culture, self-sovereignty, and the shaping of their land destiny are embodied. Here, the architecture of al-Aqsa Mosque and the majestic Dome of the Rock stand in stark contrast to the architecture of the refugee camp, which embodies the state of confinement for Palestinians. Hence, Hamas places special emphasis on al-Aqsa for encapsulating the sacred historical meanings that immortalize the Palestinian cause, like al-Isra' wa al-Mi'raj, or the Night Journey of

Prophet Muhammad, forming a point of connection between the land of Palestine and the heavens. Perhaps this is why the battle addressing the freedom of the Palestinian prisoners is named "al-Aqsa Flood," in an attempt to magnify the cause of the prisoners, emphasizing that the freedom of Palestinians is the meaning for which their Lord created them. Although Islam links the political struggle to Allah and the meaning of human existence, this connection goes beyond merely granting the struggle lofty meanings such as the afterlife and reward from Allah. So, how do these meanings practically manifest in individuals who practice a life centered around politics?

Asceticism

The novel pays special attention to the phase of "education and preparation" in the history of Hamas's inception. One day, a Sheikh, also named Ahmad, passes by the young men and teenagers of the camp who are loitering in the streets and spending their time playing around. He warns them against useless amusement and urges them to engage in prayer, worship, and contemplation instead, "linking all of this to the future of Islam, whose banner must be raised

in the land of Palestine." The Sheikh then spends decades with them, instilling Islamic values that promote asceticism and renunciation of worldly desires in favor of the hereafter, creating a generation "capable of sacrifice and self-sacrifice".

Perhaps the novel's thesis on love, which represents the most intense connection to the self and the "mundane life" in Islamic terms, showcases how this asceticism enhances the meaning of existence in political practice. The

narrator says, "It overwhelmed me with a feeling of comfort... Is this love? (...) I was later sufficed with watching her leave for university from afar; not aspiring for more than that, not even a glance. It was enough for me to love, and it was enough that she understood that well." Thus, Ahmad is satisfied with knowing love in his world, postponing its attainment until the appropriate time when he can propose to her as he was "raised since his childhood". He does not feel the need for love just

because it is the "Love" that he has always heard about.

Ibrahim then clarifies to Ahmad that he, too, knew love, and because he considers himself part of the national struggle, he decided not to pursue it, stating that "it turns into a whip with which the occupation lashes the backs of those in love with one another. Ahmad, when this noble sacred relationship is used by collaborators as a pressure card on lovers, forcing them to abandon their first love, Al-Quds, is there still room for love and

passion in our lives?" Ibrahim explains how systematic asceticism in Islamic philosophy reflects on political life; it is an upbringing that allows an individual to renounce desires at any time if they conflict with or endanger their national endeavor. It molds the individual such that the national endeavor becomes the central meaning of his life, his foremost desire, and the foundation upon which he constructs other aspects of his life.

The full article first appeared on Mondoweiss.

Underestimated Skocic out to showcase credentials on Iran return



By Amirhadi
Arsalanpour
Staff writer

New Tractor head coach Dragan Skocic will have a point to prove once he begins his reign in the upcoming Persian Gulf Pro League season.

Tractor will be the Croatian's fourth job in the Iranian top flight over the past decade – following Malavan, Foolad Khuzestan, and San'at Naft Abadan – before his controversial appointment to the national team role in for the 2022 World Cup qualifiers.

The 55-year-old coach, who leaves his country's under-21 side for Iran, must have always felt hard done by, perhaps rightly so, since he was sacked by the Iranian Football Federation in September 2022 – fourth months before the World Cup finals in Qatar.

He took over of the Iranian bench in the most critical circumstances as back-to-back defeats against Bahrain and Iraq under Belgian Marc Wilmots had left the Asian powerhouse on the verge of a shock exit in the preliminary

round of the qualifiers.

However, Skocic steered his team to 11 wins in 12 matches and a place in Qatar with three games to spare in the final qualification group phase, with Iran's two defeats in his 18-game spell over two years coming in an away dead-rubber in South Korea and a friendly against Algeria.

Despite a low-profile career before the Iran role as well as the questions being asked of his tactical acumen and control over a star-studded dressing room, the Croatian still believed he had earned the right to sit on the bench against England, Wales, and the United States in the global showpiece.

Mahdi Taj, nonetheless, had other ideas as he axed Skocic two days after being reelected as the head of the federation to bring back fan-favorite Portuguese Carlos Queiroz, whose spot-on defensive tactics had led to some decent performances by Team Melli against international heavyweights Argentina, Spain, and Portugal in the 2014 and 2018 World Cups.

Iranians hoped their team would

achieve a first progress to the World Cup knockouts at the sixth time of asking but defeats against England and USA either side of a 2-0 victory over Wales saw Queiroz's side finish third in the group.

And now, four years after an impressive stint at minnow side San'at Naft, Skocic will be back to prove he could be the right man for every daunting task in the Iranian football as the scale of the new job is nothing like he faced in his previous Pro League roles.

Despite a massive spending spree by owner Mohammadreza Zonouzi in recent years, Tractor has failed to lift a maiden top-flight trophy and a serious title charge is the least the club's devoted fans will expect from their new man-

ager.

The Croatian is set to be blessed by a group of marquee signings during the summer transfer window, with Iranian international goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand and wizard winger Mahdi Torabi – the linchpins of Persepolis's domestic dominance over the past eight seasons – as well as the Tehran Reds' prolific fullback Danial Esmailifar all on their way to play for Tractor next season.

Still, being Tractor's 14th coach since 2018, Skocic will have to long for Zonouzi's patience and trust during his time in northwest Iran.



IRNA



Spanish teenager Yamal coy over 'dream come true' wonder strike



Spain teenager Lamine Yamal on Tuesday sought to play down excitement over his wonder goal against France, but said reaching the European Championship final was a dream come true for him – and his mother too.

Sixteen-year-old Yamal eclipsed Brazilian great Pele to become the youngest player to score in a World Cup or Euros with a stunning 21st-minute strike that sailed into the top corner, helping Spain come from a goal down to beat France 2-1.

He was asked how he felt about scoring what could be the goal of Euro 2024.

"I'm really happy for the victory and for getting to the final. I don't know if it's the best goal of the tournament but it's the most special for me because getting to a final with the national team in the Euros is something super special for me," he told reporters.

With his creativity, pace and panache, Yamal has glittered as part of a Spain side who have won all their six matches at Euro 2024. They are now within reach of a record-breaking fourth Euros title.

His coach Luis de la Fuente described Yamal's goal as "a touch of genius".

Yamal was asked if he was aware he had become an icon of the tournament and said it did not matter what people thought of his individual contribution.

"I try not to look at that too much. I don't know if I'm the icon or not. That doesn't really help anything on the pitch. I need to help my team, that's what I try to do and that's what I tried to do today," he said.

"I was really happy after the final whistle. It's a dream come true, reaching a final with the senior national team."

He added: "Even my mum said

it was her dream too. So I'm really happy that was my goal against France, my first goal against France, in a semi-final." Yamal's goal and defeat of France was the perfect reply to an earlier remark by French midfielder Adrien Rabiot, who had reportedly said the impressive Yamal would have to do much more against Les Bleus if he wanted to play in the final.

Yamal during the match ran to a television camera yelling "speak now, speak now". He was asked who he was talking to, but declined to say.

"The person I'm talking about, this person will know who this person is," he said.



Lamine Yamal (19) scores Spain's equalizer during a 2-1 victory over France in the Euro 2024 last four in Munich, Germany, on July 9, 2024.

● TOM WELLER/AP

Alcaraz fears Medvedev 'wall' as he targets Wimbledon final

AFP – Carlos Alcaraz described his Wimbledon semi-final opponent Daniil Medvedev as "a wall" on Tuesday as the two players talked up each other's strengths ahead of their blockbuster clash.

Friday's semi-final will be a repeat show of last year, where Alcaraz beat Russia's Medvedev in straight sets on the way to his first Wimbledon crown.

The Spanish world number three came through 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 against America's Tommy Paul in the quarter-finals on Tuesday while Medvedev outlasted top seed Jannik Sinner 6-7 (7/9), 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), 2-6, 6-3.

Alcaraz, who leads Medvedev 4-2 in head-to-heads, said it would be

tough to face the former US Open winner, picking out his ability to get the ball back in play.

"The most difficult thing about facing Daniil, or the most special thing about him, is he can reach every ball," he said.

"Well, he is like a wall. Every ball bounces back. I feel like I can hit an unbelievable shot, the ball is going to bounce back."

Medvedev, for his part, said three-time Grand Slam champion Alcaraz, 21, was a danger anywhere on the court.

Alcaraz said he was delighted that opponents feared him in such a way because it meant they had to "focus on every shot".

"You know whatever shot you hit,

he can hit a winner from there," said Medvedev. "So you try to make his life difficult. You try to hit the shot as good as you can."

"Maybe he goes for it and he cannot make it. But that's pretty special because there are not many players like this."

The 28-year-old added: "Carlos can do whatever from any position and that's not easy to play against."



Carlos Alcaraz hits a backhand shot during a win against Tommy Paul in Wimbledon in London, United Kingdom, on July 9, 2024.

● JOHN PATRICK FLETCHER/SHUTTERSTOCK



Iran's president-elect to be sworn in on July 30



Masoud Pezeshkian

International Desk

Iran's Reformist President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian will take the oath of office in Parliament on July 30, a member of the legislature's presiding board, Mojtaba Yousefi, said on Wednesday.

The ceremony will be held after the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has endorsed Pezeshkian's presidential mandate in a separate ceremony. A number of heads of state, foreign ministers, parliament

speakers and representatives of different countries have been invited to the swearing-in ceremony. Pezeshkian won the runoff vote against Conservative Saeed Jalili on Friday. The 69-year-old Reformist garnered around 54 percent of

the 30 million votes cast. The election was called early after the death of president Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash in May. Raisi's first Vice-President and the current interim president Mohammad Mokhber has called on the ministers to fully cooperate with the president-elect until he takes office. Since his election as Iran's 14th president, many messages of congratulation have been sent by the world's leaders. Meanwhile, many leaders have called him to facilitate his victory and to express their readiness to continue their relations with Iran under the new government. Venezuela's Foreign Minister Yván Gil said in a bilingual post on his X social media account on Tuesday that Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro had in a phone conversation congratulated Pezeshkian on his election victory. Pezeshkian and Maduro affirmed their countries' resolve to enhance their strategic partnership as they underscore close ties be-

tween Tehran and Caracas. "Both presidents expressed their desire to continue cooperation in order to promote long-term strategic relations and pledged to hold a high-level meeting in the near future in a bid to proceed with joint cooperation and development plans," Gil said in his post. Pezeshkian also held a phone conversation with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Iran's president-elect told the Syrian president that his administration will spare no opportunity to further strengthen the strategic relationship with Damascus. Pezeshkian said the Iran-Syria relations are built on a solid foundation, and that the development of cooperation is a strategic policy of the Islamic Republic. "Our entire effort is to continue this strategy with strength and to further solidify the relationship between the two sides." Assad congratulated Pezeshkian on his win in the presidential election and wished him success in undertaking this significant national re-

sponsibility. Pezeshkian also held separate phone calls with the leaders of Iran's northern neighbors, namely Armenia and Azerbaijan – the two countries that recently reached an agreement to settle their territorial disputes which have caused several wars between the two countries. Iran's president-elect and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan agreed to hold talks in the near future. Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev congratulated Pezeshkian on his victory in the elections and wished him a successful tenure. During a phone conversation with Sri Lanka's President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Pezeshkian said that his government will focus its efforts on the implementation of the agreements reached between the two countries during a visit by Iran's late president Raisi to Sri Lanka. Back in April, Raisi took part in the opening ceremony of a mega multi-purpose project built by Iranian contractors in Sri Lanka.

France's leftist coalition demands right to form gov't

The leftist coalition that won the most seats in France's National Assembly in surprise results demanded the immediate right to form a government, even though no grouping won a majority of seats. Sunday's vote raised the risk of paralysis for the European Union's second-largest economy. The legislature is split between the New Popular Front leftist coalition, President Emmanuel Macron's centrist allies and the far-right National Rally, AP reported. Macron on Monday asked his prime minister, Gabriel Attal, to continue handling day-to-day affairs, despite Attal's offer of resignation, less than three weeks before the start of the Paris Olympics. Macron left Wednesday for a NATO summit in Washington. The leftist coalition's three main parties — the hard-left France Unbowed, the Socialists and the Greens — began negotiations to find a candidate for prime minister. The coalition in a statement called on Macron to "immediately turn to the New Popular Front" and allow it to form a government.

Israel forcing thousands out of Gaza City ahead of heavy offensive

The Israeli army dropped thousands of leaflets over Gaza City on Wednesday urging all residents to flee a heavy offensive a day after at least 29 people were killed and 53 injured in an attack on a school housing displaced civilians in Khan Yunis. The leaflets, addressed to "everyone in Gaza City", set out designated escape routes to the south and warned that the urban area, previously home to more than half a million people, would "remain a dangerous combat zone", AFP reported. The warning follows three partial evacuation orders and came as Israeli troops, backed by tanks and aircraft, have fought Hamas and Islamic Jihad fighters in the heaviest combat operations the city has seen in months. Elsewhere across Gaza, deadly strikes have hit four schools used as shelters in four days, sparking international outrage. The latest fighting in Gaza has newly

displaced 350,000 civilians, said UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini, who spoke before the latest leaflet drop and said "there is absolutely no safe space in Gaza". One woman carrying her scant belongings through the bombed-out wasteland, Nimr al-Jamal, told AFP on Tuesday that "this is the 12th time" her family has had to flee. "How many times can we endure this? A thousand times? Where will we end up?" The Israeli army said it was reviewing an attack on Tuesday in which hospital sources said at least 29 people were killed in a school used as a shelter in the southern Khan Yunis area.

'Unacceptable' tactics

Germany said the strike was "unacceptable" and called for a rapid investigation into the incident. France also on Wednesday condemned the air strikes on schools, declaring such tactics "unacceptable".



AFP

Gaza's government said a "majority" of the dead were women and children. The Israeli military claimed that the strike had killed a Hamas member who had taken part in the October 7 attack and that it was "looking into the reports that civilians were harmed, adjacent to the Al Awda school", which it acknowledged was "near the location of the strike".

Iraq court sentences a widow of Daesh leader to death

An Iraqi court has sentenced a widow of late Daesh leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to death for her role in the terrorist group and for detaining Yazidi women, the judiciary announced. The court in west Baghdad handed down the sentence to the woman, who is in custody, under Iraq's anti-terrorism law, according to a statement on Wednesday from Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council. She was accused of collaborating with Daesh and using her home in Mosul to hold kidnapped Yazidi women who were later taken captive by Daesh terrorists in Sinjar in northern Iraq, Al Jazeera reported. The court did not name the accused woman, but a judicial official cited by the AFP

news agency identified her as Asma Mohamed. She was sentenced to "death by hanging", a court official told the Reuters news agency, adding that the ruling must be ratified by an Iraqi appeals court to become final and applicable. The charges against Al-Baghdadi's wife come nearly five years after United States special forces killed the Daesh leader, who had built a self-declared "caliphate" across vast swaths of Iraq and Syria. Yazidis suffered persecution during Al-Baghdadi's lightning advance through northern Iraq in 2014. Daesh terrorists systematically killed thousands of their men and forced Yazidi women into sexual slavery. More than 10 years on,

members of the minority group are still struggling to recover from Daesh's onslaught with more than 200,000 of them displaced, according to a report by Refugees International and Voice of Ezidis. Few have received reparations or compensation. Since Daesh was driven out of all the territory it controlled in Iraq in 2017, Iraqi courts have handed down hundreds of death sentences and life prison terms to those convicted of membership in "a terrorist group". They include more than 500 foreign men and women found guilty of joining Daesh. In February, Iraq announced it had secured the repatriation of some members of Al-Baghdadi's family, who had been detained in Turkey.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



No time for ...

In his closing remarks in the final televised debate, Pezeshkian emphasized that he was not a member of any party and became the deputy minister of health in Khatami's government owing to his professional qualifications. "I am neither illiterate nor affiliated with any party, nor did I separate myself from the people. I was from within the people and for the people," he said, stressing that his rivals "falsely" accuse him of being part of a certain government.

Pezeshkian said he plans to enhance national welfare by curbing wasteful spending and enforcing strict adherence to the rule of law to combat corruption effectively. The politician underscored the need to reform Iran's international relations as a crucial step towards achieving economic growth and stressed the importance of fostering unity and bridging the gap between the nation and the government. Expressing confidence in the solvability of the country's issues, he emphasized

the importance of consensus-building and unity in tackling economic woes, positioning his government as one that listens to the voices of the people and prioritizes cooperation over discord. After the debates wrapped up, most political commentators and economic analysts in unison with the public maintained that what they had gathered from Pezeshkian's statements was that his administration would not be a third government of any former president but a first one of his own.

In a nutshell, with the new Iranian chief executive's inauguration being less than 20 days away, just as the whole nation form various social strata braved financial, economic and societal calamities, and took to the polls to cast their ballots in the hope of "change", so those presidential hopefuls once vying to serve the country should now be acting as "helpful" to pave the way for the enhancement of national unity, prosperity and welfare, what Iran and Iranians rightly deserve.



Iran's 'The Old Bachelor' heads to Galway Film Fleadh in Ireland



Arts & Culture Desk

'The Old Bachelor,' an Iranian feature film directed by Oktay Baraheni and produced by Babak Hamidian and Hanif Sarvari, continues its international journey with its third stop at the 36th Galway Film Fleadh in Ireland. The film will compete in

the festival's main competition, which is also an Academy Awards-qualifying event. The Galway Film Fleadh, one of Ireland's leading film festivals, will take place in the city of Galway from July 9 to July 14. 'The Old Bachelor,' Baraheni's second feature, stars well-known Iranian ac-

tors Hamed Behdad, Leila Hatami, and Mohammad Valizadegan, with veteran actor Hasan Pourshirazi in a supporting role. The movie has already garnered acclaim on the international festival circuit. It won the Grand Prix at the 53rd International Film Festival Rotterdam and was praised for its perfor-

mances at the 23rd Transilvania International Film Festival in Romania. Pourshirazi also took home the award for Best Actor at the Romanian festival for his role in the film. 'The Old Bachelor' is being internationally distributed by Haft Cheshmeh Distribution Company, managed by Milad Khosravi.



Iran launches National AI Organization

Iran unveiled a new national initiative to develop and promote artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, with a focus on infrastructure, private sector collaboration, and data readiness. The National AI Organization was inaugurated on Tuesday by caretaker President Mohammad Mokhber. The organization is tasked with implementing a national AI strategy, which was first proposed by the late president Ebrahim Raisi in December 2023, IRNA reported. Mokhber emphasized

the importance of establishing the organization, highlighting the potential benefits of AI for Iran's economic and technological advancement. "We aim to provide sufficient resources, with support from the National Development Fund, to create the necessary infrastructure," said Mokhber, adding that they will also support private companies in developing advanced AI models and algorithms. The initiative also emphasizes coordination between the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and

the National AI Organization to ensure data readiness. The National AI Organization is expected to operate under the presidency, with a budget of around \$5 billion, and will work closely with the private sector to drive innovation and development in the field of AI. This development follows president Raisi's earlier efforts to establish a National AI Steering Council and a National AI Center, demonstrating Iran's commitment to embracing AI technology and its potential applications.

'Water in Iran' photography contest announced winners

Arts & Culture Desk

The winners of the photography competition 'Water in Iran' (L'eau en Iran) were announced, showcasing the beauty and significance of water in the country. The contest, organized by the Iran-France Center, the Ithaque Photography Institute and Gallery, and Moj-e-no Institute, with the support of the National Iranian Photographers' Society, attracted 205 talented

Iranian photographers, ISNA wrote. Romin Mohtasham emerged as the winner, chosen by a majority vote of the jury, which included both Iranian and French judges. In addition to the winner, 40 images from 23 photographers will be exhibited in Paris across two exhibitions. The selected artists whose works will be on display include Bahador Bahadoran, Dorsa Basij, Mohammad Ahangar and Majid Hoojati.



The exhibitions will be held at the Ithaque Gallery from September 12 to October 3, 2024, followed by another showcase at the Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences from October 7 to 18, 2024. The public is invited to attend the opening ceremony at Ithaque on September 12, 2024. Ithaque, founded in October 2020 and currently directed by Alexandre Armengaud, has a strong connection to Iran. Armengaud has visited the country three times between 2017 and 2022, and his artistic credentials include being a finalist for the Prix du Tirage in 2021 and the youngest nominee for the Prix Niépce in 2018. His

works are also part of the collection of the French National Library, and his Iranian portraits were recently exhibited at the French National Assembly. The photography competition focused on various aspects of water, including freshwater and saltwater, terrestrial and oceanic environments, human activities related to water, and technological advancements in different regions of Iran. This competition highlights the importance of water-related issues and showcases the artistic talent of Iranian photographers, providing a unique perspective on the interplay between humans and one of nature's most vital elements.

Tehran's Children's Medical Center to receives UNICEF backing

Social Desk

Robin Nandy, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Iran, recently toured the stem cell transplant ward of Tehran's Children's Medical Center (CMC). Nandy praised the dedication and expertise of the medical staff and highlighted the advanced services provided to children with cancer and other serious illnesses.

During the visit, Nandy expressed UNICEF's readiness to support the CMC in several key areas. These include staff empowerment to enhance service quality, technical and equipment support, and providing essential items that have become inaccessible due to sanctions, IRNA wrote. He also suggested exchanging experiences and conducting joint research with other countries. Amir-Ali Hamidieh, head of the

stem cell transplant ward, emphasized the impact of sanctions on Iran's health sector, particularly on children's access to healthcare. He welcomed UNICEF's support, stating that the visit was planned to address the challenges faced by children seeking treatment at the CMC. He underscored the need to keep pace with global advancements in cell and gene therapy technologies and equipment.

Isfahan to host International Physics Olympiad

The International Physics Olympiad will kick off in Isfahan on July 21, with the participation of 190 students from 45 countries, announced the head of the Young Researchers Club (YRC), Seyyed Reza Hosseini. During a press conference on Wednesday, Hosseini stated that the organization operates with an independent structure and budget allocation. Currently, the national teams are being dispatched

to their respective international Olympiads. The biology team is in Kazakhstan, and the mathematics team will depart for the UK tomorrow, he added. When asked about the organization's budget, Hosseini explained that while they had received an independent budget allocation for the first time this year, they had not yet been able to access any funds, IRNA wrote. Hosseini also stated that out of the

allocated \$1.724 million budget last year, only \$603,000 were realized. Currently, they need at least 50% of the Young Researchers and Elite Club Organization's budget to be released, as promised, by the end of the current month. He acknowledged the support of the Ministry of Education and the Organization for Development, Renovation and Equipping of Schools (DRES) in establishing the Young Researchers Club.