



Iranian students shine at Int'l Nuclear Science Olympiad

Social Desk

Iranian students brought home a silver and three bronze medals from the first International Nuclear Science Olympiad (INSO), held in New Clark City, the Philippines. The competition, which took place from August 1 to 6, brought together 55 junior and senior high school students from 14 countries, all aged 20 and under. The participants competed as individuals but were ranked according to the points their teams obtained in the exams, IRNA wrote. Seyed Abolfazl Mahdaeï won the silver medal, while Seyed Mohammad Sajadiyan, Shayan Rezazadeh, and Ayda Bina each received bronze medals. "We are incredibly proud of our students' achievements at the first International Nuclear Science Olympiad," said a spokesperson for the Iranian team. "Their performance

showcases the talent and dedication of Iranian youth in the field of nuclear science, and we believe this competition has helped foster international collaboration and a deeper appreciation for the importance of nuclear technology in addressing global challenges." The INSO provided a platform for international nuclear education networks to showcase their programs and create potential long-term connections among scientific and trade organizations. It also aimed to enhance interest in nuclear science and technology (NST) among secondary school students and improve the teaching of NST at the secondary school level. The competition included a grueling two-day examination that tested the students' skills and knowledge in nuclear science. Participants had to demonstrate their understanding of nuclear principles, applications, and



their potential impact on various industries and global issues. "Events like the INSO are crucial for inspiring the next generation of nuclear scientists and engineers," said one of the event organizers. "By bringing together young talent from around the world, we can foster col-

laboration, innovation, and a deeper understanding of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology." The INSO also aimed to promote international cordial relations and motivate participants to pursue professions in nuclear science and technology.

57th ASEAN Day marked in Tehran

Iran-ASEAN relations: A growing partnership, a bright future

By Sadeq Dehqan & Hamideh Hosseini
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The 57th-anniversary celebration of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was held in Tehran with the participation of member countries and various ambassadors on the evening of August 8, 2024, at the Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Tehran. ASEAN is an international political, economic, and cultural organization in Southeast Asia, comprising ten countries working together for economic development and political stability within the member countries and the region. ASEAN was established on August 8, 1967, by Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Later, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Brunei joined the association. ASEAN focuses not only on political and economic growth but also on social progress, the evolution of socio-cultural relations among member countries, and strategies to address regional challenges.

High potential for economic cooperation growth between Iran, ASEAN

The Republic of the Philippines currently holds the presidency of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily reporter, Roberto G. Manalo, the ambassador of the Republic of the Phil-

ippines to Tehran, referred to the relations between Iran and ASEAN member countries. He emphasized that there are excellent opportunities for bilateral cooperation between Iran and ASEAN members, and there is room for significant progress in enhancing economic relations. He pointed out that in recent years, Iran's policies on development relations have been focused on Eastern countries. In line with this, the late president Ebrahim Raisi visited Indonesia last year and met with ASEAN leaders. The ambassador added that during this period, a number of Iranian officials, including those from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have met and held discussions with their counterparts from ASEAN member countries. This highlights the importance Iran attaches to its cooperation with ASEAN and its member states. Ambassador Manalo, referring to ASEAN's capabilities, stated that as a grouping of ten countries, ASEAN encompasses a population of over 670 million people, presenting a vast market opportunity for Iran. Similarly, ASEAN members can tap into Iran's market potential. ASEAN countries have strong purchasing power and can benefit from Iranian products. He described the annual growth of GDP in ASEAN member countries as very high, with nations like the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, and all ASEAN members experiencing rapid economic growth each year.



Ambassador Manalo mentioned that both sides could collaborate in numerous fields. He added that ASEAN members could also leverage Iran's capabilities in oil, gas, and energy resources. According to him, areas such as medical and health services, pharmaceutical production, renewable energy, and new technologies are among the issues where both sides can cooperate.

Iran, Southeast Asia: Shared interests, growing relations

Ali-Asghar Mohammadi, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director-General for Asia and Oceania at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, spoke to Iran Daily about the significance of Iran's relations with ASEAN member countries. He emphasized that the Southeast Asian and Asia-Pacific countries hold a special place for Iran and are important for its national interests.

According to Mohammadi, the demographic, racial, ethnic, and religious diversity of Southeast Asian countries, their economic advancements in recent years, and the historical ties between Iran and Southeast Asian countries over the centuries have collectively motivated the Islamic Republic of Iran to invest in developing relations with Southeast Asian countries. Referring to the mutual interest of Southeast Asian countries in cooperating with Iran, he said that Iran could assist them in developing international communications, energy security, and maritime security. Mohammadi added that the development of relations between Iran and Southeast Asian countries is also geopolitically significant. Just as the Strait of Malacca and the security of other regional waterways in East and Southeast Asia are important to Iran from a geopolitical perspective, the security of the Persian Gulf and access to energy sources

and economic markets in this region are crucial for Southeast Asian countries. Highlighting the importance of people-to-people relations between Iran and the Southeast Asian region, Mohammadi said that the people themselves play a role in shaping and valuing these connections. Currently, there is an Iranian community living in the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and especially Malaysia. Similarly, a population from Southeast Asian countries resides in the Persian Gulf region and Iran. The presence of these bilateral communities has elevated the importance of the relationship in the foreign policy priorities of both Iran and ASEAN member countries. Therefore, it is essential to establish the necessary infrastructure to foster better connections. Mohammadi highlighted another important aspect of relations with Southeast Asian countries, noting their high level of independence in foreign policy. He added that despite witnessing regional disputes and competitions between China and the US, the Southeast Asian countries have endeavored to make ASEAN a pivotal structural axis of diplomacy in the region. With finesse, they have transformed this association into a successful economic organization over the past five to six decades, shielding themselves from such conflicts and playing a central role in establishing peace and stability in the region. In his opinion, ASEAN is one of the world's most successful re-

gional structures with valuable experiences that can be leveraged in developing the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and other agreements in our region, Eurasia, and other areas where we have participation. Mohammadi described ASEAN member countries' advantages and capacities as extraordinary, highlighting their three-and-a-half-trillion-dollar GDP and status as the world's fifth-largest economy. He emphasized mutual economic needs between Iran and ASEAN, including food supply, essential goods, energy security, and access to regional markets. "Given the numerous reasons mentioned, and many more, the relationship between Iran and ASEAN member countries should be close, and we should invest the necessary time and energy into it. Fortunately, the current state of relations between the two sides is very good," he added. Mohammadi continued to say that excellent infrastructure is now in place to strengthen bilateral relations, and he hopes that with the new government in place, these ties can be further enhanced and solidified. Plus, referring to the fruits of the policy of neighborhood development and strengthening relations with friendly countries during Mr. Raisi's government, Mohammadi expressed his confidence that the administration of Pezeshkian would continue to pursue a more diverse, expansive, and robust policy in this regard.