

## Tribute to mine workers

# 40 days of government support for Tabas mine victims

### Social Desk

A ceremony was held on Thursday to pay tribute to the 53 miners who lost their lives in the Tabas mining accident, 40 days after the tragic incident in the eastern Iranian province of South Khorasan. The ceremony was attended by Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq-Malvajerd, Minister of Cooperatives, and Labour, and Social Welfare Ahmad Meydari, and other officials. During the ceremony, Minister Sadeq-Malvajerd expressed the government's condolences and support for the families of the victims. "Our message is that

we understand and share your grief," she said. "We have not left you alone in these 40 days, and we will continue to stand by you in the future. In fact, there was not a single cabinet meeting where the miners of Tabas were not discussed." The government has also recognized the importance of providing housing for the families. Minister Sadeq-Malvajerd announced that 53 families received new homes, with the government covering the costs of construction and providing financial assistance for mortgage payments. Minister Meydari also spoke at the ceremony, announcing that the government has allocated a budget to support miners who

are unable to work due to safety concerns. "A budget has been set aside to pay the salaries of miners who are unable to work for three months due to safety issues," he said. Mohammad Jafar Qaempanah, Vice President for Executive Affairs, emphasized the government's commitment to prioritizing human life. "In the government of national unity, human life is precious," he said. "Our country needs production, and if there is a lack of housing, we need to create wealth through production." Parliament Speaker Qalibaf also addressed the ceremony, emphasizing the importance of ensuring safety in mines. "We do not have the right to leave a worker

unemployed, and the worker does not have the right to work in unsafe conditions," he said. "Mining is one of the country's invaluable capacities, and we have cities like Tabas, which is a paradise for mines. Why should people face economic problems?" Qalibaf also stressed the need for preventive measures to avoid such incidents in the future. "We should not create an environment that puts workers' lives at risk," he said. The government's efforts to support the survivors and their families have been multifaceted. The Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade has conducted a thorough investigation into the causes of the accident and has established



Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq (c front) hands over the key of a new home to the family of a victim of the Tabas mine blast on October 31, 2024, during a ceremony held to commemorate the 40th day of the tragedy, honoring the memories of the 53 miners who tragically lost their lives in the disaster. ● MEHR

a special task force to oversee the implementation of safety measures in mines across the country. The ministry has also issued a directive to all mines to conduct regular safety inspections and implement necessary safety protocols. In addition to these measures,

the government has provided financial support to the families of the victims. The Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare has announced a one-time payment of \$3,000 to each family, as well as full insurance coverage, including medical and funeral expenses.

## Pezeshkian meets with top Shia clerics in Qom

### Political Desk

Qom, Iran's spiritual hub, is a city that punches above its weight in the Islamic Republic's religious and political landscape. With numerous religious centers and seminarians and a large population of clerics, Qom has become a hotbed of Shia scholarship and a key player in Iran's power dynamics. The presence of prominent Shia clerics has catapulted Qom's reputation beyond Iran's borders, making it the epicenter of Shia politics and spirituality worldwide. The city's clerical elite, along with some influential religious institutions based in Qom, wield considerable sway both

among the public and within Iran's theocratic government. In this context, President Masoud Pezeshkian's visit to Qom on Thursday and his separate meetings with top Shia authorities take on added significance. During such visits, Iranian government officials typically brief the clerics on the country's situation and their policy initiatives, while also seeking their guidance and counsel. As Pezeshkian said upon arrival in Qom, "We aim to pay our respects to the clerics and solicit their advice." Pezeshkian's one-day visit included meetings with Ayatollah Abdullah Javadi Amoli, Ayatollah Nasser Ma-

karem Shirazi, Ayatollah Hossein Nouri Hamedani, Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani, and Ayatollah Mousa Shobeiri Zanjani, as well as a representative of Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the prominent Shia cleric based in Iraq. As per local media, the meetings touched on a range of pressing issues such as the economic situation, people's livelihood challenges, the need to boost national unity, regional developments, Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon and the recent escalation of tensions between Iran and Israel. Javadi Amoli, in his meeting with Pezeshkian, emphasized that the Iranian people were not warmongers, but

warned, "If war is imposed on us, we will respond decisively." He also urged officials to redouble their efforts to address the country's economic woes and meet people's needs. Makarem Shirazi called on the president to take swift and firm action to tackle the housing crisis, while Nouri Hamedani commended Pezeshkian's stance on supporting the Resistance Front fighting Israel and standing up to the "child-killing Zionist regime." He emphasized, "America is our enemy, and we should not trust our enemies," he added. Sobhani expressed dismay at the failure of some Muslim countries to condemn

Israel's war crimes, saying, "The silence of so many Muslims in the face of such carnage is unprecedented in Islamic history." After hearing Pezeshkian's remarks, Shobeiri Zanjani pledged his support for the president and the government, saying, "I pray for your success." Throughout the meetings, Pezeshkian highlighted his government's efforts to address problems, alleviate discontent, and foster national unity, as well as the need for unity among Muslim nations. The fact that all the top clerics in Qom received Pezeshkian warmly suggests has a good standing among these great influential figures.

## Two Iranians awarded at Qur'an competitions in Turkey

Two young Iranians, Milad Asheghi from Tabriz and Parisa Angoshtan from Babol, earned second place in the 9th International Qur'an Competition held in Turkey. At the award ceremony on October 27, they received plaques of honor from Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan at the Presidential Palace, IRNA reported.



Milad Asheghi, a distinguished Qur'an reciter and a medical student, was one of Iran's representatives in the contest, showcasing his talent in Qur'anic memorization. Hojatolislam Seyyed Shahabeddin Hosseini, Director-General of the Endowments and Charity Affairs of East Azarbaijan, praised Asheghi's achievement, saying he has made the country proud and wished further success to all young talents in both academic and Qur'anic fields. The competition began on October 24 in Şanlıurfa, Turkey, with jury members from seven countries, including Turkey, Malaysia, Morocco, and Kuwait. This year, 47 finalists from an initial 93 countries reached the final stage after preliminary rounds in June, where submissions were evaluated by international judges.

## Iranian short film scores int'l accolade in New Zealand

Iranian short film 'Brother' won the Best International Film Award at the 19th Show Me Shorts Film Festival in New Zealand, making it eligible to compete in the Oscars. Directed by Mahdieh Qotbeddin Mohammadi, written by Yasin Pour Azizi, and produced by Mohaddese Pirhadi, 'Brother' was among 126 short films from 85 filmmakers screened at 40 cinemas in Auckland, Mehr News Agency reported. The Show Me Shorts Film Festival aims to showcase the best short films from around the world, support filmmakers, and introduce new talent to the film industry. This year's festival, which runs from October 11 to 31, has been showcasing a diverse range of films that promise to leave a lasting impact on audiences.

The festival has been a launching pad for many filmmakers in New Zealand and has played a significant role in promoting the country's short film industry. The film's international distribution is handled by Soreh Cinema Organization.



## Iranian researchers turn plastic waste into battery material

### Social Desk

A team of Iranian researchers has found a way to turn unrecyclable plastic waste into material for lithium-selenium battery cathodes, offering a new approach to managing plastic waste and protecting the environment. By using the high-capacity ele-

ment selenium, the team aims to create an efficient cathode material for rechargeable lithium batteries. However, they faced challenges due to selenium's reactivity with the battery electrolyte. Researchers, including Amir Hossein Ahmadian Hosseini and Mohammad Arjmand, addressed

these challenges by encasing selenium in a fine carbon structure derived from waste plastic. This carbon was produced using a two-step process of carbonization and activation. The resulting plastic waste carbon (PWC) acts as a host for selenium, forming a composite cathode through a melting process.

The team developed the cathode electrode with a mix of PWC/Se composite, black carbon, and sodium alginate using a slurry casting method. The process was fine-tuned by heating PWC below 800°C to create a porous structure. They found that increasing the activation temperature improved the surface area

and shifted the structure toward a more mesoporous form, ideal for battery use. The lithium-selenium "coin cell" battery built with PWC heated to 600°C (PWC600) showed excellent discharge capacity, speed capability, and cycle stability, especially at higher current densities. The porous design enables effective

selenium containment, lithium ion diffusion, and charge transfer. This study highlights the sustainable development of porous carbon from waste plastic as a suitable cathode material for lithium-selenium batteries, marking an eco-friendly step forward for energy storage and plastic waste management.