



Domestic drug output strong, but sanctions disrupt critical supplies: *MP*



By **Sadeq Dehqan**
Staff writer

A senior Iranian lawmaker said the country has made significant progress in pharmaceutical production and exports, with most domestic demand now met by local manufacturers, though US sanctions continue to impact access to certain critical medications.

Rouhollah Lak-Aliabadi, a member of the Iranian Parliament's Health and Treatment Commission, told Iran Daily that Iran has taken substantial steps toward self-reliance in medicine production.

"Currently, the majority of our pharmaceutical needs are being fulfilled by domestic companies," he said.

However, Aliabadi cautioned against framing pharmaceutical self-sufficiency as a national goal. "It is a mistake to declare full drug self-sufficiency as a target. There's no need to produce every pharmaceutical item locally when other countries may have comparative advantages," he explained.

He noted that Iran continues to import some medicines, especially where domestic production is not feasible or cost-effective. "Like any country, we base imports and exports on relative advantage. While we strive to produce much of our own supply, certain prod-

ucts are still sourced from abroad." Aliabadi added that Iran annually exports part of its drug output to other countries, underlining the industry's regional potential.

Despite this progress, Aliabadi said Iran's pharmaceutical sector is grappling with two primary challenges as pricing and shortages of specific medicines.

"One of the most pressing issues remains the lack of availability of certain drugs, particularly those used for rare and chronic diseases," he said.

He criticized Western governments' claims that sanctions exclude medical supplies. "Although the US and its allies often assert that pharmaceuticals are exempt from sanctions, in practice, sanctions have severely affected Iran's drug industry and patients alike," Aliabadi said.

He pointed to rising costs and difficulties in accessing raw materials as direct consequences of sanctions. "These constraints have driven up prices of some medications and led to shortages, especially for drugs needed by patients with rare or chronic conditions," he noted, adding that Parliament and the government are working to address the situation.

Some essential medications, including those for specific chronic illnesses, are still being imported and are often clas-



Rouhollah Lak-Aliabadi

sified as scarce, he said. Also, Aliabadi warned that seasonal outbreaks, such as viral infections, may temporarily strain supplies of items like antibiotics and IV fluids.

He emphasized that sanctions continue

to weigh on the pharmaceutical industry's ability to source raw materials and equipment, and expressed hope that ongoing negotiations would lead to a resolution.

"But even if talks fail, we are commit-

ted to addressing shortages," he said. "Access to medicine is directly linked to people's health and lives. This is a national priority, and we hope the government and Parliament's efforts will soon alleviate public concerns."

Iran, Croatia explore closer film cooperation in Tehran meeting



Social Desk

Former Croatian President Ivo Josipović met with Hamed Jafari, head of Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation, on Wednesday in Tehran to discuss what both sides called "expanded cooperation" between their film industries.

The talks, held at the foundation's main office, focused on joint productions, film festivals, educational workshops, and theatrical distribution, ILNA reported.

Josipović, now a senior advisor on culture and the arts, described the meeting as a "step toward strategic decisions" that could link the cinematic efforts of both nations.

The visit is part of a broader plan to launch bilateral workshops and co-productions. Officials from both sides highlighted the importance of "expert exchange" and mutual festival participation as tools to deepen cultural ties.

Representatives also reviewed plans for hosting Croatian filmmakers at Iran's Chil-

dren and Youth Film Festival and the Fajr International Film Festival, while Iranian delegates could attend major events in Croatia.

Several cultural officials, including Mohammadreza Tashakori, deputy for international affairs at Farabi, and Behzad Mohammadi from Iran's foreign ministry, were present. The two countries are aiming for what Josipović called a "practical roadmap" to support shared film projects and open doors for professionals on both ends.

Iranian short film 'Little Prince' awarded at three global festivals

Iranian short film 'Little Prince,' directed and produced by Ammar Khatti, clinched the Best Short Film award at three international festivals this spring.

According to Owj Arts and Media Organization, the film took home top honors at the Athens International Film + Video Festival in Greece, the Crown Wood International Film Festival in Kolkata, India, and the Rome Prisma Film Awards in Italy, ILNA reported.

'Little Prince' debuted at the 41st Tehran International Short Film Festival, where it won the "Book and Cinema" award. The story follows Amina,



a young Palestinian girl who gazes at the night sky through a hole in her ceiling, hoping to glimpse a shooting star. Her simple

childhood wish is fulfilled during an Iranian drone strike, portrayed in the film as a moment of hope and deliverance.

'Picasso in Tehran' extended after drawing record crowds

Arts & Culture Desk

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art has extended its 'Picasso in Tehran' exhibition through June 3 due to strong public interest, the museum's public relations office said Wednesday.

The exhibition, which opened on March 11, features 66 works by Spanish master Pablo Picasso, including his renowned La Tauromaquia series — 26 rare aquatint prints on bullfighting, previously unseen in Iran. The prints, part of a limited 261-edition portfolio, are also held by major museums like New York's MoMA, IRNA reported.

Turnout has been strong since opening day, drawing both seasoned critics and curious first-time visitors.

"This level of engagement was beyond our expectations," a museum spokesperson said. "It's a testament to Picasso's lasting impact and the public's hunger for global art."

Alongside Picasso's work, the exhibit highlights Iranian artists influenced by his legacy, such as Bahman Mohasses, Jalil Ziapour, and Parvaneh Etemadi. Select-



ed pieces from European modernists including Georges Braque, Robert Delaunay, Fernand Léger, and Joan Miró round out the display.

Critics have praised the show's thoughtful curation and cross-cultural perspective. With the extension now confirmed, the museum expects an even larger wave of visitors in the coming days.