



Iran marks national Physician's Day with tributes to Avicenna

Social Desk

Iran commemorated Physician's Day on Sunday with ceremonies honoring Avicenna, the 11th-century Iranian physician and philosopher, as newly qualified doctors gathered at his tomb in Hamadan to take their professional oath, IRNA reported.

August 22 is recognized in Iran as Avicenna's birthday and is designated as Physician's Day in the country's official calendar. At a ceremony at his tomb, doctors, academics and medical graduates gathered to pay tribute to the scholar. Newly qualified doctors pledged to "use their knowledge and abilities to serve the people and protect the health of Iranian society."

Culture Minister Abbas Salehi described Avicenna as "one of the most comprehensive and brilliant peaks of reasoning in the Iranian-Islamic tradition" and "an open horizon and a firm

logic for intellectual life."

"Avicenna should be studied in today's context, in connection with culture, within diplomacy and in response to the needs of today's world," Salehi said in a message marking the occasion. Salehi said Avicenna represented "one of the highest embodiments of the well-rounded human being", whose work brought together philosophy, medicine, logic, mathematics and literature. He said the world today needed Avicenna's broad outlook more than ever to "build bridges between disciplines, languages and human experiences and see the world in its meaningful entirety."

Avicenna, known in the West by his Latin name, was born in about 980 in Kharmathen near Bukhara, in present-day Uzbekistan, and died in Hamadan in 1037 at the age of 58.

He produced about 450 books and treatises, of which around



Medical students toss their caps up during a ceremony in Hamdan, western Iran to mark Physician's Day on August 23, 2026.

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240 survive, including works on philosophy and medicine. His 'Book of Healing' was an encyclopedia of philosophy and science, while 'The Canon of Medicine' became a major medical reference.

The Canon was translated into European languages from the 12th century onward and remained an important medical textbook in Western universities until about two centuries ago. Avicenna studied in Balkh and was taught by Abdullah Natteli. He was already regarded as highly knowledgeable in the sciences of his time by the age of 18 and began writing in his early twenties.

His later years were marked by political upheaval. After



Mas'ud of Ghazni's assault on Isfahan, Avicenna left the city

with Ala al-Dawla and traveled toward Hamadan. He fell se-

riously ill during the journey and died there.

Iranian documentary Baby Digital wins Pasolini award in Italy



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian documentary Baby Digital, which ex-

amines the effects of excessive screen use on children's development, has won the 2026

Pasolini Award at the Lucania Film Festival in Italy.

Directed by Mohammad Ahmadi, the documentary was made with the Institute for Cognitive and Brain Sciences (ICBS) at Shahid Beheshti University (SBU) and the Center for the Treatment of Autistic Disorders (CTAD), IRNA reported on Sunday.

The film looks at the effects of prolonged and early exposure to mobile phones, tablets and television on chil-

dren's neurological development, including cognitive and executive functions, communication and social skills, behavior and emotional regulation, attention and interaction with their surroundings.

A key focus is the difference between autism spectrum disorder and some developmental and behavioral problems linked to excessive exposure to digital media.

The documentary stresses that develop-

mental disorders require a specialist and comprehensive assessment and that "one cannot judge the presence or absence of a developmental disorder solely on the basis of how much a child uses a mobile phone, tablet or television".

The film also highlights the importance of a child's age, the length and pattern of digital media use, and the extent to which screen time replaces real-life interaction, play and

physical activity.

Professor Hamidreza Pouretmad, founder of ICBS and CTAD, Dr. Saeid Sadeghi, head of the Psybera Lab, and Dr. Monireh Mansouri, head of the Animal Neurodevelopmental Laboratory, were among the specialists involved in the film's scientific development, along with the CTAD team.

The project brought together scientific research, clinical experience and documentary storytelling, its makers

said.

The award marks an international success for the film and its production team and offers an opportunity to highlight Iran's scientific and clinical work on children's neurological development, autism and digital media.

Baby Digital was produced to raise awareness among Iranian families about the effects of excessive digital media use and has been made available to the public free of charge.

US-Iran deadlock...

An offensive move could also push Iran's adversary toward setting lower-level targets than it might otherwise choose based on its assessment of Iran's capabilities.

The second scenario could be for Iran to use this opportunity to shift the situation toward greater dominance of diplomatic tools and to secure concessions through diplomacy. This will depend on what capabilities Iran has, as well as the state of its vital and strategic reserves and its defensive preparedness.

Purpose of US pressure policy

The new US blockade and sanctions are not intended to achieve a complete victory for Washington. Given the volume of sanctions imposed on Iran over several decades, the Americans know that sanctions alone cannot enable the US to achieve its objectives inside Iran. Sanctions will have some effect in weakening Iran's domestic capabilities. Given their domestic and electoral circumstances, and their desire to rebuild their strength, the Americans will increase sanctions, economic pressure and the blockade as much as they can, and then, after ensuring that they have safely got through the

elections, they will assess what types of attacks Iran can withstand. Even under these circumstances, they do not necessarily seek to change Iran's behavior and force it into negotiations. On the contrary, they seek to use this period, when they need both to moderate the war and to achieve their domestic objectives, to keep pressure on Iran so that they can build on that pressure and better achieve their goals in the next war.

Therefore, for several reasons, Iran is compelled to act offensively in response to US actions in the region. One is the sharp decline in oil sales as a result of the blockade, which is placing economic pressure on Iran. Another is the US effort to get oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, while Iran seeks to establish its own particular security order for the strait. One other issue is the threat of attacks on Iran's infrastructure by the US, which Iran threatening US infrastructure in response. Yet another is the formation of alliances that can effectively be interpreted as support for US and Israeli operations. Alliances such as the one signed between Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkey are not formed against Israel because, in that case, they would have to

stand alongside Iran. They are therefore aimed merely at controlling tensions, although their effectiveness and performance remain questionable. All of these factors are effectively pushing Iran toward creating deterrence through offensive action.

How China may act

The absence of a balance of power in the Persian Gulf will cause these tensions to continue, and powerful countries with stronger infrastructure will have greater resilience in war. At the same time, moving the war away from a conventional regional conflict toward asymmetric warfare will help countries with less capacity and resilience. In this equation, countries involved elsewhere in tensions, including China, are assessing where it would make sense, in terms of costs and benefits, for them to enter the struggle of changing the regional order.

Statements by Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian show that the Chinese do not yet believe the Americans can fully establish the balance and pattern of power distribution they want. If they feel that the situation is moving in that direction, and if China is considered a rational

actor, it will most likely move in through various means: first in the diplomatic and legal arenas, then through military and security support, and, if the situation becomes more sensitive, potentially through military intervention. This is because a change in the Persian Gulf regional order would have a profound and continuous impact on West Asia and the international order. The maximum share of power will belong to whoever can control the vital flows of data, materials, energy, human resources and money and finance. The Strait of Hormuz is truly a unique global asset that affects all five of these major flows to varying degrees. For example, its share of energy flows is close to 20%, while instantaneous financial clearing is affected through the presence of cables, at a level of around 50% to 60%.

For now, however, the Chinese may step into the game in order to exercise control through mediation. As is known, Pakistan is acting as a mediator in the negotiations as China's representative. While also taking its own interests into account, the country that is supporting Pakistan's mediation efforts to scale back tensions over the Strait of Hormuz through diplomatic and political means is China.

Iran must be able to convince China, which is currently pursuing passive resistance during this transition in the international system, that the system may be moving toward the emergence of a new order and once that order becomes institutionalized, other countries will no longer be able to adopt an expansionist foreign-policy posture and will have to go back to a state of self-restraint. Otherwise, given China's interests, it is highly unlikely that Beijing would want to provide strategic assistance as one ally to another.

It is important to note that China, as a trading partner, is already providing assistance in response to the three fronts that the US has opened against Iran. For example, in response to economic blockade and sanctions pressure, China, as a country that purchases more than 80% of Iran's exported oil and has designated independent refineries and ports for this purpose, is effectively supporting Iran. Diplomatically, China is also supporting Iran through the positions it takes against condemnatory resolutions at the UN Security Council. In the military sphere, too, China has so far provided limited military support to Iran.