

Iran to establish new supreme council to oversee macro policies **2**

UNESCO tag forecast to draw more foreign tourists to Yazd **10**

Iran to face Panama in friendly in Austria: report **15**

"Blockage", "After My Death" share best film award at Busan festival **16**

Iran sets \$100b non-oil export target



First Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri addresses the opening ceremony of the National Exports Day conference in Tehran on Saturday

Helga Schmid: Iran's missiles not related to nuclear deal

The technically detailed nuclear deal is working and there is no reason to change its terms, the EU official says. Helga Schmid, the secretary general of the European External Action Service, has said that the 2015 agreement on the Iranian nuclear program is working and there are no reasons to change its terms and conditions. The agreement is a very clear, tech-

nically detailed document and it is working, she said during her speech at the 2017 Moscow Nonproliferation Conference on Saturday, according to TASS. She noted that Iran's missiles are not a subject of discussions on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the formal name for the landmark nuclear agreement clinched between Iran, the European Union, Germany, → **2**

Afghanistan grieves terror victims

By staff & agencies At least 15 military cadets were killed in a suicide bombing in Afghanistan's capital Kabul on Saturday, AFP reported. The explosion took place in PD5 district of Kabul at the entrance gate of the Marshal Fahim National Defense University, according to Tolo News. At least four cadets were in-

jured, authorities said. The cadets were trainees from the Daud Khan Military Hospital. Elsewhere, two rockets have struck near the headquarters of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military mission in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, with no reports of casualties. → **3**

Iran has to pursue long term strategy towards U.S.: Adib-Moghaddam

By Javad Heirannia Professor Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, chair of the Centre for Iranian Studies at the London Middle East Institute, believes "Trump is operating on the basis of a hysterical form of politics, that is irrational and delirious." Adib-Moghaddam, who specializ-

es in global thought and comparative philosophies, also says "The Trump years will be over, sooner rather than later, and Iran has to pursue a long term strategy towards the United States that is not merely reactive in the moment, but looks beyond current predicaments." → **7**

ARTICLE
 By Shervin Abdolhamidi

The spirit of Ashura

The days of Muharram fill the air of Tehran, and Iran with a special atmosphere. The streets are covered in black flags and banners. Along the sidewalks, on the buses, on the metros, you see masses of people wearing black, honoring the Martyrs of Karbala and expressing their devotion and respect to Imam Hussein.

Throughout the months of Muharram and Safar, and especially the first ten days leading up to Ashura, a palpably forlorn vibe permeates here throughout all of Tehran and surely the rest of Iran. Every night this feeling of sadness and tragedy is signified as the air resonates with the sound of the eulogies and drums emanating all across the city, as people take to the streets to express their love for Imam Hussein (AS), and mourn and commemorate his sacrifices.

In Iran and other Shiite countries and communities the first ten days of the Islamic month of Muharram are marked with a period of mourning, where Shiites commemorate the heroic, selfless uprising and subsequent martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, who rose up against the tyrant kalifate of the time Yazid in seventh-century Karbala. In what is regarded as one of the greatest historic epics of Shiite Muslim history, Imam Hussein and 72 of his willing, loyal followers were all martyred fighting outnumbered against an overwhelming army. For Muslims Ashura and Imam Hussein's martyrdom is a lesson never to yield to a tyrant, and to stand up and resist, regardless of the repercussions.

The mourning ceremonies started as a way for Shiites to remember Imam Hussein and his lessons, which have been commemorated for centuries through mourning ceremonies and even reenactments of historical events leading to *Tasuah* the ninth day of Muharram when Imam Hussein turned off all the candles at night and permitted everyone who is not ready for martyrdom to leave in the cover of darkness, → **12**

Environment chief: 'Painful' decisions needed as Iran faces water shortage

SOCIETY Isa Kalantari, the new chief of the Environment Protection Organization, says Iran must take "tough" and "painful" decisions to save the country from the shrinking water resources.

"The county has reached a point in water resources which... must take 'tough decisions'," Kalantari told IRNA in an interview published on Saturday.

Water shortage is Kalantari's chief concern because he believes the future of Iran will be in danger if the water consumption continues with the current speed.

"If we want this land (Iran) to survive, we must speedily lower the use of water," asserted Kalantari.

"Now the country must take tough deci-

sions. We must decide whether we want to have a country or not. It is a difficult task. In general, ruling the country is a difficult task. You should decide whether you want a country in the future with the name of Iran or not.

"It is like curing a disease for which the physician reaches the conclusion that he must remove a part of the body of the patient. Now we have reached that stage. It means the country must take 'painful and great decisions'. We should know that with the current use of water there is no way to save the country."

Kalantari, who served as agriculture minister in the administrations of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami, added, "In line with sustainable

development the Environment Protection Organization is duty bound to guard the rights of future generations."

The top environmental official said it is true that the Energy Ministry is tasked with handling issues related to water in the country but his organization is "tasked to guard the country's environment".

The current approach in water consumption is "unsustainable" and the environment organization must definitely raise public awareness about the impending water crisis, he warned.

On his proposal for saving water resources, he said, "My proposal is that that the consumption of water must be reduced at any cost and the establishment and government must accept its consequences."

Academics named as energy, science ministers

POLITICS **TEHRAN** - In a letter on Saturday, President Hassan Rouhani introduced two candidates, most notable for their academic careers, for post of science and energy ministers to the parliament, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Rouhani nominated Reza Ardakanian as energy minister, after his first pick, Habibollah Bitaraf, failed to receive a vote of confidence.

Rouhani's other ministerial pick is Mansour Gholami, who has been proposed as the new science minister. The president did not introduce any candidate for the post when he introduced his cabinet members to the par-



Mansour Gholami, Reza Ardakanian

liament on August 8. Gholami was born in Hamadan in 1953. He received a BS degree in agriculture from Bu-Ali Sina University in 1976. He also has master's degree in horticultural sciences from Tarbiat Modares University. He received his

PhD in horticulture and oenology from the University of Adelaide in Australia in 1996. Currently, he is president of Bu-Ali Sina University in Hamadan.

Ardakanian was born in Yazd in 1958. He received a BS in civil engineering from Sharif University of Technology and a master's degree in water engineering. He holds a PhD degree in water resources management from Canada's McMaster University. He is the founding director of the UN University's Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (known as UNU-FLORES).



Tehran Times/Behnam Tofighi

Iran's motorcycle racing held in Tehran

The third edition of the Iran's motorcycle racing was held in Tehran's Azadi Stadium on Friday.

Motorcycle racing (also called moto racing and bike racing) is the motorcycle sport of racing motorcycles.

Major genres include motorcycle road racing and off-road racing, both either on circuits or open courses, and track racing.

Other categories include hill climbs, drag racing and land speed record trials.

ARTICLE
 Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh
 Tehran Times Journalist

Trump turns off Iran's green light to U.S. firms

Adopting a harsh new approach last week, Trump struck a blow against the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement- known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). In defiance of other world powers, he decided not to certify that Tehran is complying with the deal. The act aroused a chorus of criticisms among affiliated European leaders who unanimously stated commitment to the complete implementation of JCPOA, confirming Iran's compliance to the deal. Iranian officials were also angered by the U.S. president's move warning him of reciprocal measures.

The American President's decision about JCPOA, however, has had minor impact on European's economic attitude towards Iran. No matter what Trump's attitude towards Iran is, Europeans are determined to pave their way to do business with Iran. For instance, French businesses will meet Iranian foreign and finance ministry officials this week to get better acquainted with the possible consequences of Trump's decertification of Iran nuclear deal on doing business with Tehran, Reuters reports.

While Europeans do not seem to step back, it is worth noting that according to US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, the Trump administration isn't seeking to disrupt European business deals with Iran, Wall Street Journal reported.

In addition, as Iranian senior officials have repeatedly announced during the past few days, Iran's gateways are open not only to Europeans but also to U.S. companies who want to benefit the country's lucrative market.

"We never told Americans to stay away from Iran's market and doing business with us. It is the U.S. government who deprives them from doing trade with Iran," Iranian First Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri announced on Saturday addressing the 21st ceremony on the National Exports Day at the Tehran's Summit Conference Hall. → **4**



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Developments in N. Iraq likely to weaken Barzani's hold on power: expert

Nader Entessar, a professor of political science, says the recent developments in the Iraqi Kurdistan region may weaken Masoud Barzani's hold on power at least in the near future.

Despite all warnings from regional players, world major powers, and some political Kurdish parties, Barzani, president of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), unilaterally ordered independence referendum. The referendum was held on Sept. 25.

Now that Iraqi troops have retaken Kirkuk and Dohuk which were under the Kurdish Peshmerga forces' control, all Barzani's overt and covert dreams appear shattered.

To shed more light on the future of the Iraqi Kurdistan region's unilateral independence referendum and its effect on Barzani's political future, an interview is done with Entessar, chair of the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice at the University of South Alabama.

Here is the full text of his interview:

■ Iraqi army retook the control of Kirkuk which was very important for Barzani's independence referendum. How will this affect Barzani's political future and his independence plan from Iraq? A: Although things are still very fluid in Kirkuk, the retaking of the city is a major blow to Barzani's prestige and goals of the recent independence referendum. The two main parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)



and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) have been blaming each other for the astonishing rapid fall of Kirkuk.

Some individuals within the PUK's higher leadership, like Kosrat Rasul Ali, have blamed some member of the late PUK leader Jalal Talabani's family (such as Bafel Talabani and Lahur Talabani) of "betraying" the Kurds in Kirkuk. Masud Barzani in his recent speech has also indirectly blamed some other Kurdish leaders without naming them, for the loss of Kirkuk. Looking beyond the blame-game, what we may witness is the emergence of two fault lines. One may involve the Kirkuk-Sulaimaniyah line controlled by Iraq's central government in

cooperation of certain elements of the PUK. The other line will be drawn along the Erbil-Dohuk axis controlled by the KDP. This may weaken Barzani's hold on power, at least in the near future.

■ Ankara in Kirkuk didn't support Kurds instead supported Iraqi central government, despite its previous good relation with Barzani. Why? A: Recent high-level meetings between the Turkish officials and the Iraqi government may have convinced Ankara that Barzani's position was weakening and that Turkey's interests would be better served by establishing strong relations with Baghdad. Also, Turkey had become alarmed after Barzani ignored Ankara's

wishes not to hold the independence referendum.

■ Germany stopped the training of the Kurdish Peshmerga forces. Why? A: Germany's policy in this regard was in line with the broader EU policies on Iraq and Kurdistan. The EU had opposed holding the independence referendum. Germany, like most of the rest of major EU countries, had come to the conclusion that regional instability may follow the implementation of the referendum results.

■ Considering al-Abadi's firm stance toward Erbil, how do you see his political future in Iraq? A: Al-Abadi has strengthened his hold on power and has helped the perception of his leadership abilities among the Iraqi people, even among those segments of the population that in the past had not supported him. However, how Prime Minister al-Abadi handles the ongoing situation in Kirkuk and the surrounding areas will impact his leadership legacy and his support base.

■ Why didn't the US support Erbil? A: I don't have a definitive answer to this question. Maybe the US was also fearful of further instability in Iraq and wanted to strengthen al-Abadi's hands. The US military brass also had little interest in further involvement in what could have turned into a quagmire. But, the US policy is not cut and dry in this regard and may indeed change in the future.

Iran has to pursue long term strategy towards U.S.: Arshin Adib-Moghaddam

1 → Here is the full text of the interview

■ Despite many internal and external oppositions, Trump decertified the JCPOA. What were the reasons behind his very decision? What signal did he want to deliver both internally and externally by doing so? Re-imposing Iran's sanctions by Congress is in fact tantamount to the violation of JCPOA. Then, Trump makes Congress responsible for the scrap of the very deal. Do you believe Congress Reimpose Iran's nuclear deal waiver before?

A: This is what I call "psycho-nationalism" in my new book for the Global Middle East book series with Cambridge. Trump is operating on the basis of a hysterical form of politics, that is irrational and delirious. He is literally in a state of delirium which must be partially due to his sheltered upbringing and lack of intelligence. Hence, he doesn't pursue strategies; his decisions are tactical, short term without long term acumen. Of course, characters like him who are authoritarian in everything they do, are the masters of provocation. But it is noteworthy, as you rightly imply in your question, that no one listens to the Trump administration. In an unprecedented move, even the Conservative government in Britain endorsed the viability and effectiveness of the JCPOA. The UK used to follow the US in most foreign policy projects in West Asia and North Africa, but times have changed, not least because of the obvious weakness of US diplomacy and the diminished standing of the country which is a direct consequence of the incompetency displayed by President Trump and his team. It is a pity, because the United States has great potentials to be a force for good in world politics, but at this moment in history, under the current leadership it is the biggest threat to world peace.

I should add the obvious. There is no hostility be-



tween the people of Iran and the United States. Indeed, there are millions of reasons why they should be united in the form of Iranian-Americans who love their motherland and who are drawn to Iranian culture. In addition, we have seen that there is no god-given reason why both countries have to be eternal enemies as the Obama interlude showed. If Joseph Biden would have been President, our interview would explore questions of peace, maybe even diplomatic relations.

■ In Europe, a single voice concerning the violation of JCPOA cannot be heard. French President, Macron, had underlined before that it would be necessary to include some articles pertinent to human rights and missile issues within JCPOA. This is somehow similar to Trump's word. Do you think Europe will follow suit?

A: I have maintained for years that the EU will steadfastly support the JCPOA. THE EU as well as post-American in its world view. The US Congress is unreliable, but even if there is a concerted effort to question the JCPOA, there will be no concession by the EU. This is why I have emphasized in my previous interviews that

the EU is Iran's most reliable partner. Of course, it is even more essential than ever right now that Iran keeps its side of the bargain and keeps the communication going with the EU as much as possible. President Macron has announced he wants to visit Iran next year – This is a good step towards peace. Iran should be open to deepen the dialogue with Europe along all themes including democracy and human rights. The biggest threat to Iran's national security – after all – is not the United States, but internal instability which can only breed when there is unnecessary suppression of the people's demand.

■ Iran's FM, Zarif, has underscored so far that JCPOA is deemed a deal when all parties are committed to it. What is Iran's reaction to the US withdrawal from the deal?

A: It is absolutely necessary to keep the communication going, even if it means to use trusted intermediaries such as Oman. The two countries are too important to the stability of the international system to remain in an antagonistic mode for too long. As indicated, it is imperative that Iran gets even closer to the EU, not least to keep the communication with Washington going, and to minimize misperceptions. The Trump years will be over, sooner rather than later, and Iran has to pursue a long term strategy towards the United States that is not merely reactive in the moment, but looks beyond current predicaments. Foreign Minister Zarif understands that. The second, strategy would be to follow a cultural diplomacy. I have set this out as well in previous interviews. There is no reason why Iran should not facilitate people to people contacts in education, the arts, cinema etc. The path towards peace, after all, is always paved by civil societies, and less so by our politicians.

U.S. Congress reluctant to escalate tensions with Iran: professor

By Javad Heirannia

Professor Robert R. Bianchi from University of Chicago Law School says that "Iran's leaders understand that Trump is trying to provoke them into acting against their own interests by renouncing the JCPOA."

"I find it hard to imagine that they would allow him such an easy victory," Bianchi tells Tehran Times. He also says "Congress will be reluctant to escalate tensions with Iran when they see that European leaders reject Trump's aggressiveness and adopt independent policies that promote their national economic interests."

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ Despite many internal and external objections, Trump decertified the JCPOA. What were the reasons behind his very decision? What signal did he want to deliver both internally and externally by doing so?

A: Trump wants to pressure the supporters of the JCPOA to do something he knows to be impossible. He wants them to force Iran to accept tighter restrictions in many fields at once, including nuclear research, missile development, and alliance building throughout the Middle East. Trump wants to embarrass and divide the Democratic and European politicians who favor cooperation with Iran. However, he is



also dividing his own supporters. The generals surrounding Trump support a tougher stance against Tehran because they are still nursing grudges from Iraq where their forces sustained heavy losses to Iranian-backed fighters. But American business leaders oppose alienating Tehran because they are eager to share in the benefits of greater trade with Iran, realizing that European and Asian companies are ahead of

them in making lucrative deals.

■ Reimposing Iran's sanctions by Congress is in fact tantamount to the violation of JCPOA. Then, Trump makes Congress responsible for the scrapping of the very deal. Do you believe Congress will vote to reimpose sanctions on Iran or to renew the nuclear deal waiver on sanctions before?

A: Republicans lack the votes to satisfy Trump's demands. At most, they can adopt

Why does Trump want to change JCPOA?

By Saeed Sobhani

Finally, Donald Trump, President of the United States, refused to confirm Iran's commitment to the JCPOA, on the advice of individuals such as the United States representative in the Security Council, Nikki Haley, and urged Congress and his European companions to find a solution to the disadvantages of the nuclear deal. Subsequently, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has said the United States has not intended to change the current version and is seeking a "secondary agreement" in this regard. There are some points that need to be addressed in this regard:

1. Donald Trump, in various lobbies and negotiations with some congressional senators, European Troika and AIPAC lobbyists, has explicitly sought to change some of the provisions of the nuclear deal with Iran. These cases mainly contain:

- The International Atomic Energy Agency could have full access to military sites in Iran, on the pretext of revising Section T of the Annex 1 of the JCPOA.

The expiry date of certain nuclear restrictions on Iran's nuclear program is to be eliminated, and these are subject to permanent constraints. In this regard, it is necessary to revise and change the section called Sunset.

- The issue of Iran's missile power in the form of an addendum will be attached to the nuclear deal or arranged in such a way that Iran's missile power can be limited in parallel with the JCPOA.

2- As we can see, making changes in any of these cases will be the same as changing the nuclear deal and turning it into an agreement that has not been accepted by the Islamic Republic of Iran in the past, present and future. Meanwhile, American and European officials, instead of focusing on the nature and content of the issue, have sought to maintain a framework for the nuclear deal and, at the same time, change its content. The U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in his most recent statement has emphasized that one of America's worries is the Sunset clauses in JCPOA, and accordingly there may be a need for a second deal!

The fact is that among the U.S. game with words such as the "secondary agreement", "complementary agreement", and "addendum", our country's foreign diplomacy and foreign policy device, must emphasize one important principle: That any re-negotiation or action over JCPOA is considered our red line.

What is certain is that any action that leads to a change in the content of the JCPOA, should be identified as a real red line by the Iranian diplomacy and foreign policy system.

- The role of the United States Representative in the United Nations, Nikki Haley, has been highlighted in the recent Trump's report against the JCPOA and the announcement of our country's lack of commitment to the nuclear deal. The Politico announced in its recent report that it was Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, who, in contrast to the prudence of other members of Trump administration, paved the way for disapproval of the JCPOA.

In early July, Trump reluctantly declared Iran's commitment to the nuclear deal.

The fact is that Nikki Haley plans to draw Trump's attention to herself to appoint her in near future as the next U.S. Secretary of State (instead of Tillerson). According to the controversy between Trump and Tillerson about how to face Iran's nuclear deal, she wants to play a major role in violating or changing it.

4. Tom Cotton, the 40-year-old Senator of the State of Arkansas is also considered the main opponent of the JCPOA in the Congress. Tom Cotton is in favor of complete abolition of the nuclear deal and the resumption of sanctions against Iran.

Cotton's goal of maneuvering on this issue is not merely the cancellation of JCPOA and walking away from the nuclear deal with Iran. He is thinking of another purpose which is becoming the Director of the CIA. In one of his most recent positions, Cotton told to the opponents of the JCPOA's violation within Trump's administration to resign from their post or to follow the President of the U.S. in this way.

These statements by Cotton have raised a lot of controversy in the U.S. media. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and James Mattis, Secretary of Defense, have been the main addressees of Tom Cotton.

Tom Cotton's negative attitude has always been backed up by AIPAC lobbyists and the opponents of the nuclear deal have opened a special account on his lobbies in the Senate.

Interestingly enough, Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the UN have also stated her agreement with Tom Cotton in confrontation with some of Trump's administration members.

Ultimately, the U.S. President Donald Trump intends to use all the existing legal capabilities in the nuclear deal to change it. He speaks about adding an amendment to the JCPOA at one time and next, proceeds to reinterpret Section T of Annex 1 of the JCPOA.

At any rate Trump is looking especially at those defined sections to use the so-called "Trigger Mechanism" on them. He wants to use the same mechanism as his last resort in a possible confrontation with the Congress and the European Union.

In recent days, U.S. Congressmen have been busy with a tense rally over the approval of the Tom Cotton-Corker joint plan in opposition to Iran's nuclear program.

The purpose of the plan is to address what the White House described as "shortcomings of the JCPOA". Anyway, making any changes in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action would mean the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal with Iran.

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Iranian animated series spotlights Trump's "stupid behavior"

A R T TEHRAN — Rezwan Studio, a Tehran-based animation studio, announced on Saturday that it has recently launched a project in which it is producing a series of short movies on U.S. President Donald Trump's "stupid behavior."



The series named "Mr. Trumpet" contains 100 one-minute episodes, some of which have so far been completed. The episodes are available on Press TV, YouTube and some Persian websites. Rasul Azargun is the director of the series.

Sheed festival to present CloseUp Award in memory of Abbas Kiarostami

A R T TEHRAN — Winners at the 2nd Sheed Persian Film Festival will be presented with a CloseUp Award this year in memory of the legendary Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami. The award, which has been named after Kiarostami's 1990 masterwork "Close-Up", will be presented to the best film, best director and best actor and actress. The festival, which aims to promote and introduce Iranian cinema, will be held in Dallas, Texas from November 10 to 12.

Researchers raise doubts over cause of Chilean poet Neruda's death

SANTIAGO (Reuters) — International researchers investigating the death of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda raised doubts on Friday as to whether he died of cancer 44 years ago as previously presumed, and did not rule out full years.



Rodolfo Reyes, nephew of Chilean poet and Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda, speaks during a news conference about the probable causes of the death of the poet in Santiago, Chile October 20, 2017. (Reuters/Rodrigo Garrido)

Neruda, known for his passionate love poems and staunch communist views, died days after a coup in September 1973 that ushered in the brutal dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Neruda's chauffeur claimed Pinochet's agents took advantage of the poet's illness to inject poison into his stomach as he lay in hospital. Neruda's body was exhumed in 2013 and previous tests have found no evidence of poison but are ongoing. Spanish forensic specialist Aurelio Luna from the University of Murcia told journalists that his team discovered something that could possibly be a laboratory-cultivated bacteria. It will be analyzed, with results expected in six months to a year. Luna also said that tests indicated that death from prostate cancer was not likely at the moment when Neruda died. "From analysis of the data we cannot accept that the poet had been in an imminent situation of death at the moment of entering the hospital," he said. "We cannot confirm if the nature of Pablo Neruda's death was natural or violent," he added. Neruda's family and supporters have been divided over whether the case should be closed and his remains returned to his grave near his coastal home of Isla Negra, or whether researchers should continue carrying out tests.

"Blockage", "After My Death" share best film award at Busan festival

A R T TEHRAN — "Blockage" by Mohsen Deshkarai from Iran and "After My Death" by Kim Uiseok from South Korea shared the best film award in the New Currents category at the 22nd Busan International Film Festival in South Korea, Variety reported on Friday. "Blockage" traces the overwhelming chaos that happens to a vicious, despicable man who works as a street vendor control officer. "After My Death" tells the story of a girl who is suspected of having goaded another schoolgirl into killing herself. U.S. director Oliver Stone presided over the jury in the New Currents competition, which highlights first and second features by filmmakers from Asia. The jury also had Iranian director Bahman Ghobadi, French cinematographer Agnès Godard, Filipino director Lav Diaz and Korean filmmaker Jang Sun-woo. "Both films are tightly scripted, and display vivid detail and excellent craftsmanship," the jury said. "Iran K9" a project by Iranian director Vahid Vakilifar and producer Maryam Najafi was shown at the BIFF Asian Project Market with 27 other projects from Asian countries.



Hamed Behdad acts in a scene from "Blockage".

National University of Singapore hosts Iranian film festival

A R T TEHRAN — An Iranian film festival was held at the National University of Singapore (NUS) on Friday and Saturday. Ebrahim Hatamikia's political drama "The Bodyguard", Asghar Farhadi's Oscar-winning film "The Salesman" and Abolhassan Davudi's "Crazy Castle" were screened during the event. Engsgeng Ho, the director of the Middle East Institute of the university, and Singapore's Non-Resident ambassador to Iran Ong Keng Yong were among the guest participants of the festival. The Iranian Embassy in Singapore and the Iranian Cultural Section in Malaysia organized the festival in collaboration with the National University of Singapore.



A poster for the festival of Iranian films at the National University of Singapore.

"No Date, No Signature" wins Gold Hugo at Chicago festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Vahid Jalilvand's acclaimed drama "No Date, No Signature" won a Gold Hugo Special Jury Prize at the 53rd Chicago International Film Festival, the Chicago Tribune announced on Friday. The film received the award in the New Directors competition, which recognizes emerging filmmakers with their first or second feature films. Starring Navid Mohammadzadeh, Amir Aqai and Hedyeh Tehrani, "No Date, No Signature" tells the story of Dr. Nariman, a forensic pathologist who has a car accident with a motorcyclist and injures his 8-year-old son. He offers to take the child to a clinic nearby, but the father refuses his help and money. The next morning, in the hospital where he works, Dr. Nariman finds out that the little boy has been brought for



Amir Aqai acts in a scene from "No Date, No Signature" by Vahid Jalilvand an autopsy after a suspicious death. "A Sort of Family" by Argentinian director Diego Lerman's drama about a doctor's risky adoption, won the top prize of the festival.

Cinema Verite unveils international lineup

A R T TEHRAN — Twenty-six movies from 19 countries will compete in the various categories of the international competition of the 11th Cinema Verite, Iran's major international festival for documentary cinema, the organizers announced on Saturday. Eight documentaries have been selected for the full-length section. Among the films are "69 Minutes of 86 Days" by Egil Haaskjold Larsen from Norway, "Moo Ya" by Filippo Ticozzi from Italy, "Every Soul of My Body" by Erika Rossi from Italy and "I Want To Go Home" by Wesley Leon Aroozoo from Singapore. "The Forest Of Love" by Alejandro G. Salgado from Spain and "I Heard



A scene from "69 Minutes of 86 Days" by Egil Haaskjold Larsen from Norway

the Birch Tree Whisper in the Night" by Kenneth Harvey from Canada are among the eight films selected for the mid-length category. "Valentina" by Maximilian Feldmann from Germany and "Faber Navalís" by Maurizio Borriello from Italy will also be shown in this section. Ten documentaries, including "War and Cheese" by Ben Garfield from England, "February" by Marlana Molitor from Germany, "Collection" by Marcin Polar from Poland and "One Day in Aleppo" by Ali Alibrahim from Syria, will compete in short competition. The Experimental and Documentary Film Center is the organizer of the Cinema Verite festival, which will be held in Tehran from December 10 to 17.

Trump drawing of Empire State Building sells for \$16,000

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A sketch of the Empire State Building drawn by President Donald Trump has sold at auction for \$16,000. Julien's says the 12-inch-by-9-inch black marker depiction of the iconic New York City skyscraper was created by Trump for a charity auction in Florida during the time he opened his Mar-a-Lago estate as a private club in 1995.

Julien's says the piece signed by Trump went for less than \$100 the first time it was sold. It was estimated to go for \$8,000 to \$12,000 at the auction that took place in Los Angeles and online Thursday. The buyer has not been named. The auction house says a portion of the proceeds of the sale are going to benefit WHDD-FM, a National Public Radio station in Connecticut.

NBA: Singer takes knee during performance of national anthem at Nets game

NEW YORK (Reuters) — Singer Justine Skye dropped to a knee toward the end of her rendition of The Star-Spangled Banner prior to the Brooklyn Nets home opener against the Orlando Magic on Friday. Some NFL players have sat or taken a knee during renditions of the song the past two seasons to protest racial inequality in the United States but NBA players have

stood in accordance with league rules. The protests have raised the ire of U.S. President Donald Trump, who says the players are being disrespectful to the country and the military. In an online post, the 22-year-old Brooklyn native said she was uneasy about singing the song to begin with and said she probably would not be asked to do so again.

Norman Rockwell's 3 sons seek to halt sale of his artworks

BOSTON (AP) — Norman Rockwell's three sons were among several people who went to court on Friday seeking to halt a museum's plans to sell 40 works of art, including two by him. A complaint seeking a temporary restraining order filed in Berkshire Superior Court alleges the board of trustees at the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield contracted with Sotheby's for a public auction of the works before it announced its plans publicly, acted in breach of its fiduciary duties and trust and acted without legal authority to sell the art. The planned sale is against Massachusetts laws establishing the museum, which requires the museum to maintain any gifts it receives "for the people of Berkshire County and the general public," the complaint says. "Once sold, it is highly unlikely that any of the pieces will remain in Berkshire County or in a public institution where they can be seen and enjoyed," the complaint says. Besides Thomas, Jarvis and Peter Rockwell, the plaintiffs include two local artists and several members of the museum. They are represented by the Boston law firm Foley Hoag LLP.



In this July 12, 2017 file photo, a pedestrian walks past the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, Mass. (Ben Garver/The Berkshire Eagle via AP, File)

The museum has consistently stood by its decision to sell the art. "We believe we have strong legal grounds for our deaccessioning and we are confident in our new vision plan which will allow this important local museum to continue to contribute to the educational and cultural life of this region for another century," trustees president Elizabeth McGraw said in a statement on Friday. The museum came under intense national and local

criticism after it announced in July that it was auctioning the art. The American Alliance of Museums and the Association of Art Museum Directors said in a joint statement that the sale violated a sacred museum rule that collections are not to be sold to pay bills. The works for sale include Rockwell's "Shaftsbury Blacksmith Shop" and "Shuffleton's Barbershop," both of which the illustrator gave as gifts to the museum when he lived in nearby Stockbridge. Works by Alexander Calder, Albert Bierstadt and George Henry Durrie also are on the auction block. Museum trustees and officials say the museum is in dire financial straits and may close for good if it doesn't sell the works. They say it is hoped that the sale will raise as much as \$60 million, which will be used to boost the endowment by \$40 million, with the other \$20 million being used to renovate the museum as it changes its mission to focus more on natural history and science. The complaint says the museum's financial troubles are greatly exaggerated.