





### Iran's 'Mirzakoshon' on stage

Iran's theatrical production 'Mirzakoshon', penned by the acclaimed playwright Farhad Naqd'ali and skillfully helmed by director Ali Fat'hali, has taken center stage at the Shahrzad Theater Complex. This captivating play commenced its captivating journey on May 28 and is set to enthrall audiences until the curtain falls on June 30.

# Plastic bag predicament: A threat to our environment and the urgency of reduction

Social Desk  
**EXCLUSIVE**

Soudeh Najafi, the chairperson of the Health Committee of the Islamic Council of Tehran, underscored the importance of punctual waste collection across the city, acknowledging the persistent criticisms of the city's waste management practices. Najafi discussed the committee's recent meeting with the waste management organization, referencing the fourth plan of Tehran Municipality. This plan, a cornerstone of urban justice and a key issue in the city's sixth management period, is heavily emphasized by the city council. The degree of its implementation is a reflection of the city management's performance in the eyes of the citizens, ISNA reported. "The fourth plan for the transformation and development of Tehran, which was compiled based on the realization of urban justice, is one of the most important issues in the urban management of the sixth period," Najafi said. "The city council emphasizes its implementation and the degree of implementation of this program shows the record and performance of the city management in the eyes of the citizens."

Najafi reiterated the importance of timely waste collection, acknowledging the criticisms that have been levied against the city's waste management organization. She urged the organization to adhere to relevant plans and orders to achieve the desired outcomes. Addressing the issue of waste tanks in the city, Najafi noted that improperly placed tanks obstruct roads and contribute to traffic congestion. Additionally, waste and leachate spilling from these tanks create an unpleasant odor, posing a potential health risk to citizens. Najafi, a member of the executive board of Tehran Islamic Council, highlighted the potential for waste to serve as a source of income. She expressed hope that the waste management organization would take significant measures in collaboration with knowledge-based companies to capitalize on this potential. Najafi also touched on the issue of child labor in waste collection, particularly among foreign nationals. She condemned the exploitation of children and teenagers by illegal agents and waste collection networks, advocating for the design of waste tanks that restrict easy access to their contents. "A significant part of the amount of waste produced in Tehran is

plastic, about 10 percent of which is related to plastic bags," Najafi said. "We need to take action to recycle these products." Finally, Najafi addressed the growing vermin problem in the city, particularly the prevalence of rats in the city's streams. She expressed hope that the waste management organization, in collaboration with other institutions, particularly water and sewage, would manage and control this issue effectively. In light of the startling news, we should be mindful of the fact that in our current era where convenience often trumps conservation, the ubiquitous plastic bag has become a symbol of our throwaway culture and a major threat to our environment. This seemingly innocuous item, found in every corner store and supermarket across the globe, is contributing to an environmental crisis of epic proportions. Plastic bags, lightweight and water-resistant, are favored by retailers and consumers alike for their convenience. However, their environmental impact is anything but lightweight. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Americans alone use over 380 billion plastic bags and wraps yearly, requiring 12 million barrels of oil to manufacture.

The problem lies not only in their production but also in their disposal. Plastic bags are non-biodegradable, meaning they do not break down naturally in the environment. Instead, they slowly fragment into smaller pieces, or microplastics, which can persist for hundreds to thousands of years. These microplastics infiltrate every corner of our ecosystem, from the deepest ocean trenches to the most remote mountain peaks. Marine life is particularly vulnerable to plastic pollution. The United Nations reports that over 800 species worldwide are affected by marine debris, and as much as 80 percent of that litter is plastic. Sea creatures often mistake plastic bags for food, leading to blockages, starvation, and ultimately, death. The plastic ingested by marine life can also make its way up the food chain, posing potential health risks to humans. On land, plastic bags litter landscapes, clog waterways, and contribute to landfill overflow. They are carried by the wind, often ending up in places where they pose a threat to wildlife and natural habitats. In urban areas, discarded plastic bags can block drains, exacerbating flood risks. The plastic bag problem is not just an environmental issue;

it's an economic one too. The World Bank estimates that the global economy loses \$80 billion to \$120 billion annually due to improper plastic waste management. This includes the costs of waste collection, the economic impact of tourism loss due to litter, and the potential income lost when recyclable materials are discarded rather than recovered. So, what's the solution? Reduction is the first step. Many cities and countries have implemented plastic bag bans or fees, encouraging consumers to bring reusable bags. Businesses are also exploring alternatives to traditional plastic bags, such as those made from biodegradable materials or recycled content. However, policy and industry changes alone are not enough. Public education about the environmental impact of plastic bags and the benefits of reusable alternatives is crucial. Consumers have the power to drive change through their purchasing decisions and habits. Recycling is another part of the solution, but it's not as simple as it seems. Only a small fraction of plastic bags are recycled, often due to contamination, sorting



challenges, and a lack of recycling facilities. Innovations in recycling technology and infrastructure are needed to improve this rate. The plastic bag predicament is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach. It's a challenge that involves governments, businesses, and individuals alike.

## Yazd Water Museum offers a fascinating glimpse into hidden world of desert waterways



The city of Yazd, the capital of the central province of Yazd, is famous for its qanats (underground aqueducts), and the Yazd Water Museum, one of the best of its kind, is devoted to the brave men who built them. Located in a restored mansion with a visible qanat running underneath, the museum offers, through a series of photographs, exhibits and architectural drawings, a fascinating glimpse into the hidden world of waterways that have allowed life to flourish in the desert, lonely-planet.com reported. The uniform of the qanat builders shows an early form of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), with padded cotton hats and white clothing that was luminous in the dark and would act as a shield in the event of an accident. The museum, which charts the 2,000 years that Iran's unique irrigation system has been in operation, describes the drilling of mother wells (which can reach a depth of 300 meters, such as the qanat near Mashad) and the use of water distribution clocks. These clocks (basically, a bowl with a hole in the bottom) helped to mark the 15- or 20-minute shares of water purchasable by households or farmers. Qanats run through many of the wealthy old houses in Yazd, collecting in basement pools, known as sardob. As the coolest part of the house, these rooms were often

beautifully decorated and several fine examples exist in Yazd's old traditional hotels today. Qanats, many of which run through each town, are the reason why the wealthiest districts are always closest to the mountains - to be closest to the freshest water. There exist also old water ownership documents that imply how wealthy farmers or households would purchase water. By visiting the museum, you can fully understand how such an architectural and engineering masterpiece of the ancient world, like Nashtifan Windmills, would work. The museum has different levels, all of which are open to the public. Each level has its own characteristics. Levels are connected together through a stairway called payab. For example, one level was for storing food and fruits. One was used as a living room due to the cool and pleasant atmosphere. And one was used for saving water. In 2016, the Persian qanat was registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is a great evidence of cultural tradition and civilization in the deserts of Iran. The Yazd Water Museum opened in 2000 by the Yazd Regional Water Authority. However, as a mansion, its construction and beautification work was completed in 1887.

## Iran, Russia sign MoU for film production, joint events

Iran and Russia have recently solidified their collaboration in the realm of film production and joint events through the signing of a memorandum of understanding. The Farabi Cinema Foundation of Iran and the Union of Cinematographers of the Russian Federation came together to formalize this agreement, marking a significant milestone in their cinematic partnership. The signing ceremony took place on Tuesday at the headquarters of the Union of Cinematographers in Russia,

and it was attended by Kazem Jalali, the Iranian Ambassador to Russia, Mehr news agency wrote. During the ceremony, Nikita Mikhalkov, the head of the union, and Seyyed Mehdi Javadi, the CEO of the Farabi Cinema Foundation, affixed their signatures to the memorandum. While commenting on the agreement, Javadi revealed that it entails the development of fresh collaboration between Iran and Russia's film industries. This collaboration will encompass various aspects, such as co-production of

films, organizing events, and hosting film weeks. Javadi expressed optimism that the implementation of this agreement will foster the growth of the cinematic relationship between Iran and Russia. Furthermore, both parties have agreed to establish a working group comprised of representatives from Russia and Iran. This working group will be responsible for strategizing and executing joint cinema projects, further reinforcing the ties between the two nations in the film industry.

