

Iran Seizes Greek Ships in Tit-For-Tat Move

► Page 3
O STAY UPDATED #VesselSeizure

Report T U.S. police under fire over school terror

The Texas police force has acknowledged it made the “wrong decision” by not confronting a gunman quickly enough as the 18-year-old spent more than half an hour massacring children whilst armed officers waited outside.

Police have been denounced for also changing the chain of events after it emerged a timeline of 78 minutes had passed from the moment the gunman entered the school compounds to the moment officers finally stormed a classroom where the shooter had locked himself inside for a reported half an hour.

The head of the Texas department of public safety, Steven McCraw, admitted “of course, it was the wrong decision” for armed police to have waited outside the classroom for an extended period where the gunman in Tuesday’s school shooting massacre murdered 19 kids and two teachers.

The updated timeline to around 78 minutes means students, were trapped inside the classroom with the gunman, had repeatedly called emergency services to rescue them, including one who pleaded, “Please send the police now”, but officers were already waiting in the hallway for more than 45 minutes.

Could the lives of more school children be saved?

At an anxiously awaited press conference in Uvalde, Texas, McCraw, broke down as he acknowledged “there’s no excuse for that” referring to the failure of trained police personnel who could have intervened much more quickly.

At least 17 others were wounded in the massacre and the victims were reportedly all inside one classroom. ► Page 5

Report T Flag march: Will the inevitable evaporation of Israeli regime be accelerated?

TEHRAN — May 29 is known as Flag March Day, a day where the settlers of the artificial regime of Israel celebrate 1967 capture of Palestine’s Old City in East Jerusalem. However, this Flag March could ignite a war that would accelerate the unavoidable doom for the Israeli regime.

The Leader of the supra-Orthodox party of the Israeli regime invited the Israeli settlers to attend the Flag March via this message: “Last year, we succeeded in liberating the West Bank and reuniting Jerusalem, the Holy City, and the capital. I do not know what happened to us this year.

Let’s get out of this situation. Jerusalem is an interconnected city. Our city is all religious, secular and supra-Orthodox. Right and left, he (Moses, apparently!) loves us, he brightens our faces. He is growing, evolving, flourishing, let’s return the love to him. Let all of you, all of us, come to Jerusalem on Sunday, we will fill all the streets and squares and rejoice.”

The person who wrote this super-insulting message may not be aware that he is pushing the Israeli regime into a full-fledged war that was bound to happen, especially after the Palestinians were provoked by the repeated assaults of the Israeli troops on worshippers in Al-Aqsa Mosque this Ramadan.

Let’s go over the 8th decade curse, which the Israelis are always afraid of. ► Page 3



© Ministry of Defence

Iranian Army reveals drone site deep under the ground

TEHRAN – The secret drone facility of the Iranian Army, built 100 meters under the ground, was unveiled on Saturday.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Major General Mohammad Bagheri and Army Commander-in-chief Major General Seyed Abdolrahim Mousavi were

present at the unveiling ceremony.

Speaking on the sidelines of the ceremony, the Army chief said boosting drone capabilities is unstoppable.

“Today, we had the opportunity to present part of the drone capability of the Iranian army,” Mousa-

vi said, adding, “All these facilities have been provided in line with the foresight of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the desired policies of the General Staff of the Armed Forces so that we can do our main task and mission, which is to defend independence of the ► Page 2

Iran ranks 19th among world’s top automakers: OICA

TEHRAN – Iran has been ranked the world’s 19th biggest automaker in 2021, according to the latest report released by the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA).

Based on the OICA data, Iranian automakers produced 894,298 vehicles in 2021 to

register a two percent increase compared to 2020, IRNA reported.

Iran’s car production in 2021 was higher than many industrialized countries such as Italy with 795,000 units, South Africa with 499,000 units, Poland with 439,000 units, Portugal with 289,000 units, Taiwan with

265,000 units, Belgium with 261,000 units, Austria with 136,000 units, Finland with 93,000 units and Egypt with 23,000 units.

China was by far the largest automaker in the world in 2021 followed by the United States. China’s car production this year was reported to be 26,082,000 units. ► Page 4

Comprehensive law to protect Iranian expats

TEHRAN – A comprehensive law is being drafted to protect Iranians living abroad, Fatah Ahmadi, deputy minister of justice for human rights and international affairs, has said.

In order to pave the way for Iranians abroad to invest in their homeland, create sustainable employment, and also to facilitate the movement of Iranians, especially the elites, in order to provide consultations and help the development of the country, it is necessary for them to travel to Iran, he explained.

“We try to address such concerns within the framework of this comprehensive law to provide opportunities for Iranian expats to stay and invest in the country,” he noted, IRIB reported on Saturday.

Referring to the estimated 4,500 Iranian prisoners abroad, Ahmadi said that “We are trying to transfer them to the country to continue their sentences and remove the burden from the families of these convicts.” ► Page 7



© IWBF/Shingo ITO

Iran runners-up at IWBF Asia Oceania Championships

TEHRAN – Iran’s men’s team lost to Australia 56-50 in the final match of the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) Asia Oceania Championships on Saturday.

The bronze medal went to Korea Republic, who bounced back from their semi-final loss to overcome hosts Thailand 68-50 in the third-place match. ► Page 3

Maranjab desert to become more tourist-friendly, official says

TEHRAN – Isfahan tourism chief has paid a visit to the Maranjab desert and its surrounding destinations, saying projects are underway to develop their tourism infrastructure.

“Maranjab desert has been an attractive tourist destination over the past couple of years, however, due to the lack of facilities, we are looking for the qualitative growth of tourism in this beautiful desert,” Alireza Izadi said.

Expansion of tourism facilities, which includes

the maintenance of the road to the Maranjab desert, is estimated to take place by the end of the [current Iranian calendar] year (March 20), Izadi added.

Popular for off-roading, Maranjab is one of the most popular deserts in Iran situated about 60 Km from Kashan in a northeast direction.

The desert is surrounded by a salt lake from the north, Band-e Rig Desert and National Park from the east, Masileh Desert, Hoz-e sultan and Moreh

Lakes from the west and eventually Aran-Bidgol from the south.

Shah Abbasi Caravanserai of Maranjab is one of the landmarks of this stunning desert. This structure was built in 1012 AH by the order of Shah Abbas, the Safavid monarch, along the Silk Road so that the passengers, most of whom traveled through deserts, would spend nights in this roadside inn. ► Page 6

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Op-ed T

America’s unending gun violence

By Professor Mahmood Monshipouri

A pervasive gun culture, deeply rooted in some parts of the United States and reinforced by culture wars and problematic gun safety measures touted by Republican Representatives and Senators, has manifested yet another horrific mass killing. The recent tragedy has cast a dark shadow over US rural and urban communities one more time as a young gunman (Salvador Rolando Ramos, 18) unleashed a rampage on an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, killing 19 children and 2 teachers. The obscene and unspeakable tragedy has again taken a backseat to the interest of a particularistic interpretation of the Second Amendment of the US Constitution, (a well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed). Treating the Second Amendment as sacrosanct and sacred, and above any rational and reasonable interpretation, has rent asunder the social fabric of American society.

Aside from police incompetence, the story of confusion and chaos resulting from such incidents—as in the other previous episodes—will be short-lived in the memory of some gun-enthusiast politicians, who are influenced by money and politics. The Gun Violence Archive, an independent data collection organization, has counted 212 mass shootings in the United States thus far in 2022. ► Page 5

Turin environmental filmfest picks Iran’s “Utopia”, “Savior”, “Earth”

TEHRAN – Iranian short movies “Utopia”, “The Savior” and “The Earth” will be screening at the CinemAmbiente – International Environmental Film Festival in Turin, Italy in June.

“Utopia” directed by Hamed Vagari and Hengameh Safaipur is about consumerism. The film shows a man wandering the supermarket aisles with his shopping cart.

A drama on man’s relationship with animals, “The Savior” will also compete in the short films section.

Directed by Soheila Purmohammadi, the film tells the story of a little kid who is traumatized following the death of her mother. After the tragic incident, the child cannot stand the death of other living creatures. Her father is a fisherman. When the man brings home the fish, he notices that his daughter takes them back to the sea. She says she needs to save them as they are dying.

“The Earth” will be screened in the Ecokids category. The animation directed by Mohamadreza Keivanfar is about a little boy who finds garbage left behind by humans on his exploratory mission to Mars. ► Page 8



Senior Israeli military official: Iran deal exit was a mistake



TEHRAN – A current senior Israeli military official reportedly said recently during a meeting with U.S. State and Defense Department officials that it was a mistake for President Trump to withdraw from the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement, Responsible Statecraft reported on Thursday.

According to Axios, retired Brig. Gen. Dror Shalom — who is head of the political-military bureau in the Israeli Ministry of Defense and previously led the country's military intelligence research and analysis division — “stressed” in the private meeting that “the withdrawal from the Iran deal was a mistake that brought Iran closer to a nuclear weapon and created a worse situation.”

Shalom's comments contradict the official Israeli government position but they also line up with a slew of senior Israeli security establishment figures who have said recently that either pulling out of the JCPOA was a mistake or the United States should negotiate re-entry.

Added to that list was former Military Intelligence Director Maj. Gen. (Res.) Tamir Hayman, who told right-wing newspaper Israel Hayom that the United States rejoining the deal would serve Israeli interests.

“[T]he situation that would have happened once the nuclear deal elapsed [in 2030] wouldn't have been as bad as the current situation, as Iran has stockpiled so much enriched material

and its abilities have advanced beyond what the deal had allowed it to pursue,” he said, adding that, “Therefore, my conclusion is that in the reality of here and now, reaching a deal is the right thing.”

Hayman also said that a renewed JCPOA “would diminish the offset the amount of enriched uranium Iran has; it would set it back and it would buy [us] a very long time because enrichment takes a long time.”

Negotiations to return to the deal between the United States, Europe, China, Russia, and Iran have entered the final stages, with the U.S. designation of Iran's Revolution Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist group — which Trump did to make it politically more difficult for any future administration to return to the JCPOA — reportedly being one of the last sticking points.

Just last week, Sen. Rand Paul — who has recently started voicing support for reentry to the deal — told a senior Biden administration official that it should seriously consider delisting the IRGC.

“I think we have to be open to it,” Paul said.

Trump quit the nuclear deal despite the fact that the agreement is confirmed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231. This happened despite the fact that the International Atomic Energy Agency, which was tasked on monitor Iran's compliance with the agreement, confirmed in its regular reports that Tehran was fully honoring its commitments.

Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

The talks, which started since April last year to revive the JCPOA, has stalemated since March as the Biden administration is refusing to delist the IRGC and give assurances that there will be no hindrance to Iran's normal trade with the outside world.

protection of civilian lives in conflict-stricken zones across the world, especially the West Asia region.

During a UN Security Council meeting, Ravanchi said, “The protection of civilians in armed conflicts is a fundamental principle of humanitarian law.”

“However, the international community is witness to the non-compliance of international humanitarian law as well as the lack of accountability for its grave violations,” he added.

“Conflicts have had devastating effects on our volatile region, the West Asia,” the official lamented, “where international humanitarian law is being flagrantly violated.”

Ravanchi pointed to the situations in Yemen, Palestine, and Syria as examples of countries where citizens and civilian infrastructure are being violated the most in the already fragile West Asia region.

Yemen, he asserted, has been suffering from “acute food insecurity” as a result of widespread strikes on schools, hospitals, telecommunications infrastructure, roads, factories, houses, and other civilian objects.

Also, as a result of the Israeli regime's decades of occupation and apartheid policies, the humanitarian situation in Palestine is deteriorating, according to the envoy.

Meanwhile, in Syria, continued occupation, terrorism, and unilateral sanctions have displaced millions of people, devastated infrastructure, limited access to essential resources, and disrupted commerce and agricultural input supplies, he lamented.

Finally, the envoy cautioned against politicization of humanitarian aid and, among other things, called for respect for international humanitarian law in crisis zones across the world.

TEHRAN — Chief of the General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces said on Saturday that “we do not assume that the enemy is asleep”.

Major General Mohammad Bagheri made the remarks while he inspected the Army's secret underground drone site, named the 313 Strategic UAV Base.

The senior commander also expressed delight over his visit to the underground drone site, saying, “Today is an extremely valuable and exceptional day for me. I saw the significant power of Iran's drones in the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran and in one of the underground and safe operational and strategic drone bases.”

He said in the contemporary battles unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs) are gaining a higher position day by day in various sections such as defensive, offensive, ground, naval, aerial, and air operations, destruction, reconnaissance, surveillance, electronic warfare, cargo transportation and dozens of other missions.

“They are among the equipment and methods of war,” Bagheri added.

Bagheri noted that what is now seen in recent years in the battles in the Caucasus, Ukraine and elsewhere, and previously experienced in the fight against terrorists in Syria and Iraq, and other battles of the last decade, shows that the importance of drones is exceptional.

The importance of drones is strongly growing, he remarked.

“The Army has entered the

Iranian military chief: We do not assume that the enemy is asleep



evolving phase for today and the future with a precise understanding of the need for future battles using new methods and equipment, and fortunately today we have seen this capability in the Army in the field of drones,” he noted.

The military chief then stated that this change can be seen in all aspects of the Army in various dimensions.

“It is indeed appropriate for me to thank Major General Mousavi, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army, and the commanders of the forces and their comrades who

made these changes. These events took place in this period, relying on God and following the orders and instructions of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution with hard work, as well as intellectual and practical efforts. Today we are witnessing part of this capability. Designing drones at this level and building them by the army is not an easy task,” he noted.

Bagheri added besides these, the defense industry is working step by step and is not only building UAVs, but all the equipment needed to build UAV and weapons. “They are being built in our country and in the military.”

Flag march: Will the inevitable evaporation of Israeli regime be accelerated?

From page 1 ► The prophecies of Israel in the Old Testament Tanakh (or the Hebrew Bible) say that the fall of the Israeli Kingdom has internal causes and is caused by conflicts between the Israeli tribes, and in the end, God will do what He did. Like King Solomon's kingdom which fell apart.

These prophecies are being examined today in the discourse of Israelis with the arrival of Israel in its 8th decade with concern about internal differences in the Israeli politics.

The majority of Israel's leaders believe in the 8th decade curse. According to scholarly reports, most of Israel's governments collapsed after Solomon during the eighth decade.

There are lessons to be learned from the fragmentation and division of the former Jewish kingdoms that began to disappear in the eighties. This is not a reading by a Jewish rabbi or even a religious person, these are the words

of the former prime minister and the most honored soldier in the fake history of Israel, Ehud Barak.

In an article in the Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper, Barak, a left-wing Zionist, fears an internal rift in the orthodox society and hatred between the right and the left, religious and secular, religious Zionists and religious Jews.

Every Israeli prime minister is eager to avoid civil war during his reign and to avoid collapse from within, as occurred in previous Jewish kingdoms, and Naftali Bennett is no exception. He has also expressed his fear of that irresistible fate.

“The focus should be on not collapsing from within,” Bennett said in statements earlier this year. The sitting prime minister added, “Because the most serious thing that Israel faces is the danger of internal disintegration and consequent extinction, as happened in previous

Iranian Army reveals drone site deep under the ground

Boosting our drone capabilities unstoppable, Army chief says



From page 1 ► Islamic Republic and the borders, as well as our country's prosperity and the establishment of the security of the great nation of Iran.”

He added that the Armed Forces are working to improve their combat capability as much as necessary.

To achieve this goal in all areas, especially in the field of drone capability through indigenous knowledge, “we have made great progress to date,” the top general remarked.

“You are seeing some of these capabilities that are equipped with all kinds of domestic Iranian warfare and equipment here. Our greatest achievement is that we are not dependent on any country and we provide everything we need to defend the country and carry out missions, and in no way the upgrade of our combat capability, including the upgrade of drone capability, is stoppable,” Mousavi noted.

The army chief stated that he thanks God that the Army can defend the strong and resilient Iranian nation.

“A variety of drones are currently conducting missions in the armed forces, including the



kingdoms.”

Setting the 8th decade curse aside, the Palestinians are like a severely wounded snake, especially after an Israeli sniper fatally shot in the head veteran Palestinian reporter Shireen Abu Akleh, who worked for Al Jazeera.

Palestinians are now the fire buried under the ashes. Triggering them can end the Israelis once and for all. Let's hope that the 8th decade curse, and the Flag March will speed up the process.

army. From the smallest drones to the largest, which is named 'Kaman 22'. Each of these drones have a variety of missions. For local, tactical and strategic missions, we need a variety of reconnaissance, combat, destroying, scramble, and other types of drones that can perform the missions,” Mousavi elaborated.

The need to strengthen long-range drones with high flight continuity and great capability to carry heavy ammunition to hit strategic targets caused Iran to put upgrading the capabilities of existing drones and equipping them with missiles and bombs with different ranges on the agenda, he stated.

“With the help of motivated, committed and professional youth, we will continue the path of self-reliance by designing and mass-producing drones,” the Army chief concluded.

Palestinian resistance groups denounce assassination of IRGC member

TEHRAN- Palestinian resistance groups have sharply decried the assassination of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) member in a terrorist attack in Tehran, comparing the action to the assassination of former Islamic Jihad movement Secretary General Fathi Shaqaqi.

The assassination of Sayyad Khodaei, according to the Islamic Jihad movement, is reminiscent of the assassination of Shaqaqi, who was fatally shot six times in front of the Diplomat Hotel in Siema, Malta's northeastern coastal town, on October 26, 1995, by a hit team comprised of two Israeli Mossad spy agents.

The Zionist regime had the illusion to silence the resistance front while the “resistance tree” is growing in size, the movement said.

Furthermore, the Palestinian Mujahideen Movement condemned the killing of IRGC member.

“We condemn the cowardly assassination of Sayyad Khodaei, an officer of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, in a terrorist operation perpetrated by the Zionist Mossad,” it said in a statement.

“We note that this illegal operation highlights the need for the Popular Resistance

Committees (PRC) to strengthen up their actions in order to oppose the continuous assault,” the movement continued.

Terrorist acts against the Muslim Ummah, according to the statement, demonstrate the Tel Aviv regime's criminal nature as the sworn and greatest enemies of Muslims.

According to Iran's official news agency, IRNA, Khodaei was assassinated in downtown Tehran at approximately 4 p.m. local time (11:30 GMT) on Sunday, as the IRGC member was dismounting his car to enter his home.

He was slain, according to reports, by two motorcycles

The Armed Forces chief stressed that in any case the military must examine the scene of a possible battle by playing a smart, accurate and neutral war.

“We won't be getting into a propaganda and biased war, and if we conclude that we need change, we must enter bravely. We must try and create this transformation to deter the enemy. These are not possible with the methods, equipment and facilities of the past, and this must happen with the new facilities and methods. So the drones we saw today could play such a role well,” Bagheri elaborated.

“In the Army, aerial defense, air force and navy, one of our concerns is how to prepare the equipment of the past and with what changes for possible future battles,” said the military chief, noting that this spirit of revolutionary work is very valuable.

“Today we saw the drones and we are thankful that a lot of work has been done in this area,” he said, thanking the Army experts.

The military chief went on to say that Iran never underestimates the threat of the enemies. “We do not assume that the enemy is asleep. Our eyes are open and we are constantly vigilant.”

He concluded his remarks by saying that he is thankful and he hopes to see more and more dimensions of the Army's strength “day by day.”

At the end of his visit, a number of UAV design and production experts in the Army were honored.

Iran demands UN to condemn assassination of IRGC colonel

TEHRAN - Iran's ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi has called on the United Nations to condemn the assassination of an Iranian IRGC colonel, saying it is part of the UN's “responsibilities to genuinely fight terrorism and in a non-discriminatory manner.”

Sayyad Khodaei, who was “cowardly” assassinated on May 23, was a member of the Iranian Armed Forces who played a key role in the struggle against terrorists, including Daesh, in the region, Ravanchi stated in his letter to the UN.

Iran's envoy went on to say that the terrorist act, based on preliminary assessments, was “committed in continuation of systematic assassinations of innocent Iranian citizens and scientists by certain regimes to advance their illegitimate foreign policy goals in the region.”

“Such criminal acts constitute a blatant violation of the UN Charter, international law principles, and fundamental human rights, posing an undeniable threat to regional and international peace and stability,” the Iranian diplomat pointed out.

He urged the international community and the United States to denounce such vicious assassinations of innocent residents of other countries carried out by well-known state terrorism of certain regimes.

“Condemning the assassination is consistent with the UN's responsibility to combat terrorism in a non-discriminatory and effective manner,” he pointed out.

Ravanchi further stated that Iran will take all necessary steps to safeguard its people and interests, as well as use all available procedures to hold the perpetrators and supporters of this terrorist atrocity responsible.

Iran urges protection of civilians in crisis zones

Elsewhere in his remarks, Iran's envoy urged

Such criminal acts constitute a blatant violation of the UN Charter, international law principles, and fundamental human rights, posing an undeniable threat to regional and international peace and stability

Iran runners-up at IWB

F Asia Oceania Championships

Frome Page 1 ▶ Iran have already booked their place at the 2022 Wheelchair Basketball World Championship as one of top four teams. The competition will be held in Dubai, the UAE from Nov. 16 to 27.

On Friday, Iran's women's team won a bronze medal in the competition above Thailand. Australia and Japan claimed gold and silver medal respectively.

Mohamadhassan Sayari's 20-point haul for Iran was not enough for gold, but did help him to earn the men's most-valuable player award for the Championships.

The 2022 IWB Asia Oceania Championships were held in Phuket, Thailand from May 20 to 28.

Malavan, Mes Kerman win promotion to IPL

TEHRAN – Malavan Bandar Anzali and Mes Kerman football teams won promotion to the Iranian Professional League (IPL) Friday night.

Malavan defeated Machine Sazi 2-0 in Tabriz while Mes were held to a goalless draw by Shahrdari Astara in First Division League.

The two teams won promotion to IPL with two matches remaining.

Fajr Sepasi were relegated from IPL Wednesday night and Shahr Khodro will likely join them on Sunday.

Malavan were relegated from IPL six years ago and Mes returned to league after eight years.

Iraq U23 victorious over Iran U23 in friendly

TEHRAN – Iraq U23 football team defeated Iran U23 3-1 in a friendly match Friday night.

In the match held in Baghdad's International Stadium, Hussein Ammar was on target just one minute into the match but Ahmad Shahriatzadeh levelled the score in the 50th minute.

Alexander Aoraha made it 2-1 for the hosts and Hassan Abdulkareem scored Iraqi team third goal.

Iran had edged Iraq 1-0 in the first friendly match on Tuesday.

Mehdi Mahdavia's team played the friendlies as part of preparation for the 2022 AFC U23 Asian Cup.

The fifth edition of the AFC U23 Asian Cup will be played in Central Asia for the first time, with Uzbekistan hosting 32 matches across the cities of Tashkent and Karshi.

Iran are pitted against hosts Uzbekistan, Qatar and newcomers Turkmenistan in Group A.

Alipour dreams of playing in UCL

TEHRAN - Iranian forward Ali Alipour wants to follow in Mehdi Taremi's footsteps in Portugal and play in UEFA Champions League.

After two seasons of visible growth at Marítimo, the forward decided to head to Gil Vicente, tempted by the European project and thinking of improving himself to win a place in the Iran squad for Qatar.

The player is aware of what he wants, full of praise for the season, and now arrives at Gil Vicente.

How do you evaluate the importance of moving from Marítimo to Gil Vicente and what expectations you have in the new club?

Iran seizes Greek ships in tit-for-tat move

TEHRAN – Iran has seized two Greek-flagged oil tankers in the Persian Gulf in a tit-for-tat move after Greece detained an Iranian-flagged oil tanker and transferred its cargo to the United States.

Nearly a month ago, Greece seized an Iranian-flagged oil tanker off its coast and then transferred its cargo to the United States. Reuters reported Thursday that the United States has confiscated Iranian oil held on a Russian-operated ship near Greece and will send the cargo to the United States aboard another vessel.

The Iranian-flagged ship, the Pegas, was among five vessels designated by Washington on Feb. 22 - two days before the start of the war in Ukraine for sanctions against Promsvyazbank, a bank viewed as critical to Russia's defense sector, according to Reuters.

The Greek move was quickly rejected by Iran and when it was announced that Iranian oil will be transferred to the U.S., Iran couldn't bear the Greek violation of international law any further.

First, Iran followed up on the issue diplomatically. The Greek chargé d'affaires was summoned



to the Iranian Foreign Ministry to protest the move strongly. Iran condemned Greece's surrender to U.S. pressure in this regard as unacceptable. The Greek diplomat was told that the confiscation of the cargo of the ship with Iran's flag was an example of international piracy for which Athens and those who seized the ship illegally will be responsible.

Iran also summoned the Swiss chargé d'affaires as protector of U.S. interests to file a strong protest against Washington. Iran stressed to the Swiss diplomat the necessity of immediately ending the confiscation of the ship and its cargo.

Then Iran moved militarily to answer the Greek move. On Friday,

the media office of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) succinctly announced that the IRGC navy forces had detained two Greek oil tankers for violation of law in the Persian Gulf.

Iranian media said the seizure took place in response to the Greek move in detaining the Iranian oil tanker. Tasnim said the IRGC also issued warnings to other Greek ships sailing in the Persian Gulf.

"There are still 17 Greek ships sailing in the Persian Gulf which will be possibly detained by the IRGC if Greece continues its mischief," Tasnim warned.

Even though it made the first move, Greece accused Iran of "piracy" following the seizure of its ships.

Iran calls on SCO to condemn assassination of IRGC colonel

TEHRAN – Iranian Ambassador to China Mohammad Keshavarzzadeh has sent a letter to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization urging the Beijing-based body to condemn the assassination of Iranian military officer Sayad Khodaei.

In a tweet on Friday, the Iranian embassy in Beijing said, "One of the objectives of the SCO is to combat terrorism and consolidate peace and stability in Eurasian and Iran has played a major role in that regard."

Khodaei, a member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), was shot point-blank in his car on May 23 in downtown Tehran.

Majid Mir-Ahmadi, secretary of the Security Council of the Country (SCC), said Israel was behind the assassination. "The assassination of Martyr Khodaei was definitely carried out by the Zionist regime, and the criminals must be prepared for a severe slap in the face from Iran," he told state news agency IRNA.

He added, "The criminals who have committed such a crime must be prepared for a severe slap in the face, because our revenge will be such that they will regret their action."

Iran has strongly condemned the assassination. "Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed

Khatibzadeh condemned the terrorist operation in Tehran on Sunday that led to the martyrdom of Sayyad Khodaei, an honored Islamic Revolution Guards Corps colonel, offering condolences and congratulations to the families of the martyr and his fellow IRGC servicemen," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement on May 23.

The spokesman said, "The sworn enemies of the holy establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran once again exposed their malevolent nature by assassinating and martyring one of the self-giving IRGC members."

Majid Takht Ravanchi, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, also sent a similar letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urging him to condemn the assassination of the IRGC officer.

"In line with its responsibilities to genuinely fight terrorism and in a non-discriminatory manner, the UN is expected to condemn this atrocious act," Takht Ravanchi said.

He added, "The investigations about this terrorist act are underway. In a meantime, we will take all necessary measures to protect our people and interests, and will use all available mechanisms to hold the perpetrators of this terrorist crime and their supporters accountable."

Iran lawmakers meet African ambassadors

TEHRAN – Members of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee held a meeting with African ambassadors to Iran.

Fifteen African ambassadors attended the meeting which was held on the occasion of Africa Day on May 25.

Abbas Golrou, chairman of the parliamentary committee, told ICANA that "in this meeting,

the obstacles of Iran-Africa cooperation, priorities from the perspective of Africans and strategies for developing cooperation were discussed."

Referring to the state of trade and economic relations between Iran and Africa, he said, "The conditions of relations between Iran and African countries are not favorable, good and acceptable. One thousand billion

dollars is the volume of African trade, while Iran's share is one thousandth, i.e., less than one billion dollars, and this is not acceptable."

He added, "We do not see Africa as a region for economic gain, but we are interested in establishing a fraternal relationship with Africa as a post-colonial country and developing our interactions in various fields."

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Raisi expressed hope that the fraternal relations between Iran and Ethiopia would develop based on mutual respect.

Ayatollah Raisi recently met in Tehran with Azerbaijani Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev and welcomed the promotion of cooperation between Tehran and Baku.

He stated that the principled position of Iran is to support the territorial integrity of all countries, including Azerbaijan, saying, "The existence of constructive relations based on mutual interests between neighboring countries, especially Iran and Azerbaijan, is the most effective factor in maintaining and strengthening security in the region."

Ayatollah Raisi said that Iran welcomes promotion of economic, political, cultural and trade cooperation with Azerbaijan.

"Full implementation of the Tehran-Baku agreements in various fields, including economic and transit, requires practical steps by Azerbaijan," Raisi added.

Referring to the historical relations between the two countries, the president said, "Apart from being neighbors, Iran and Azerbaijan share the same culture and have kinship relations. No factor should be allowed to damage the close relations between the

Takht Ravanchi noted, "According to preliminary assessments and available basic evidence, this terrorist act is committed in continuation of systematic assassinations of innocent Iranian citizens and scientists by certain regimes to advance their illegitimate foreign policy goals in the region. Such criminal acts constitute a blatant violation of the UN Charter, international law principles, and fundamental human rights, posing an undeniable threat to regional and international peace and stability, with their perpetrators and supporters bearing the brunt of the consequences. The continuation of such acts of state terrorism has vividly challenged the rule of law, creating great and ever-increasing concerns for the international community."

The Iranian diplomat said, "Given the dire implications of this terrorist and criminal act on international peace and security, inaction and silence in the face of such a provocative and norm-breaking act will only encourage and embolden its perpetrators and their accomplices to continue their disgraceful and wrongful acts. Bearing in mind the dangerous consequences of such terrorist acts on international peace and security, the international community should strongly condemn such brutal assassinations targeting innocent citizens of other countries by well-known state terrorism of certain regimes."

The MP said, "All the ambassadors welcomed the development of Africa's economic relations with Iran and stressed the need for it, and expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of sufficient knowledge of each other's markets. They emphasized that the most important factor in the low level of communication is the lack of knowledge we have about each other."

two countries."

Raisi stated that the United States and the Zionist regime do not care about the countries of the world and the region, adding, "The existence of constructive relations based on mutual interests between neighboring countries, especially Iran and Azerbaijan, is the most effective factor in maintaining and strengthening regional security."

Referring to the meeting between the presidents of Iran and Azerbaijan in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, Shahin Mustafayev said, "Your meeting with Mr. Aliyev in Ashgabat is historic and has opened new pages in the history of relations between the two countries."

Emphasizing that the Republic of Azerbaijan is persistently pursuing the implementation of agreements between the two countries, Mustafayev announced plans to establish new projects and agreements in the fields of rail, road and transit to develop relations between the two countries.

Emphasizing the importance and appreciation of Iran's efforts to implement gas swaps between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, he said, "Azerbaijan seeks to increase the capacity of gas swaps with the cooperation of Iran and at the same time wants to implement electricity swaps project from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan through the Islamic Republic of Iran".

I achieved my goals in Marítimo, I had to take a step forward to get stronger. On this road I've traced, I decided that it was important to reach a better-ranked team, playing in Europe. I want to prove my conditions and my potential, and help Gil Vicente and bring distinctions to the club in Europe. I try to succeed, reach higher levels, cherishing playing in the Champions League.

With appeals from other parts, does Portugal has the conditions to help give greater dimension to the career?

Portuguese football has a very high level and is very recognized in the world. I have very defined goals, I want to walk slowly but directly. I don't think so much about money. It's a bit like Taremi. Seeking recognition, playing in the Champions League, trying out Spain or England. That's my bar and what I dream about. When I came to Marítimo, I lost money, because I had very good offers from China. But playing in the Portuguese league was important for the showcase it is, for the good football that you breathe, for being even close to Iran in terms of culture and climate.

Do you recognize the important role of coach Ricardo Soares in your hiring? Have you ever talked about what you expect from you?

I have great respect for all coaches and Portugal and some of them are the best in the world. All good players look for good coaches, so they can complement each other. I watched Gil Vicente's games and, as I said, I felt how the coach controlled the team in a positive way and communicated with the players. Whenever I watched the games, the team looked fresh, energetic, and played with strategy. That comes from the coach. But we didn't speak directly. I am simply honored to be part of your team and your ideas. He's a great trainer!

What is your plans in the future?

The main objective is to play and win the UEFA Champions League. I don't know how many years it can take. If I can have that chance at a club in Portugal, being part of a team that competes in this competition and that makes me believe in the realization of my dream, I can stay here for many years.

Iranian women bag seven medals at Azerbaijan contest

TEHRAN – Iranian women have won seven colorful medals at track and field athletics competitions held in Azerbaijan.

Parichehr Shahi wins two gold medals in 1,500 and 3,000 meters in 04:34:19 and 09:54:11.

In 3,000 meters, Shahi could also break the national record after 12 years; the record which belonged to Leila Ebrahimi with 10:06:01.



Kazhan Rostami was another female Iranian athlete who won a gold and a silver medals in 400 and 200 meters in 57:97 and 25:06 seconds.

Also, Sanaz Amiripour registered 12:31 and 25:56 seconds in 100 and 200 meters and gained silver and bronze medals respectively.

When Sarina Saedi, another Iranian athlete, stood at the second place and won a silver medal in women's long jump marking 12.38 meters, the number of the medals reached seven.

Iran ranks 19th among world's top automakers: OICA



From page 1 ► China's car production grew by about three percent in 2021. China produces almost three times as many cars as the United States.

The United States was in second place with 9.167 million units and Japan stood in third place with 7.846 million units. India with a production of 4.399 million units, South Korea with 3.462 million, Germany with 3.308 million units, Mexico with 3.145 million units, and Brazil with 2.248 million were the world's largest automakers, respectively.

Iran plans to reform its auto industry in order to increase both the production and quality of its products.

Back in January, Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin said the country's automotive industry was going to undergo a complete reform after the implementation of his ministry's two-year evolution program.

Stating that nine transformation projects have been prepared for the automobile industry, Fatemi-Amin said: "The general plan is that in [the Iranian calendar year] 1401 (started on March 21) the structure of the automobile industry and the relations between parts manufacturers and automakers will be reformed and the overall promised production target will be achieved in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025)."

The minister considered the current situation of the automotive industry very problematic and added: "We have done a lot of work in the automotive industry and we have had good successes and progress, but the result has not been satisfactory for the general public and the customers."

Referring to the complexities of the automotive industry, he noted: "A car has more than 2,000 parts and every day 4,000 cars are produced in the country; We do not have any other industries with such managerial, economic and technological complexities."

In late December 2021, Fatemi-Amin had announced that his ministry prepared a nine-axis program for evolution in the automotive industry which would be published soon.

The mentioned program includes all challenges and solutions in this industry, the minister said.

Domestic production of railway equipment saves Iran €5m a year

TEHRAN – The head of the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) has said domestic production of wagons and locomotive axels saves the country five million euros a year, IRNA reported.

Speaking to the press on the sidelines of a visit to the 9th International Exhibition of Rail Transportation, Related Industries and Equipment of Iran on Friday, Ali Nabavi said Esfarayen Industrial Complex which is a subsidiary of IDRO has the capacity to manufacture 7,000 axels per year which can meet part of the domestic needs.

Meanwhile, IDRO Deputy Head Farshad Moqimi also mentioned the inauguration of the country's first forged monoblock wheels factory with a production capacity of 25,000 wheels per year.

The country's annual demand for monoblock wheels is estimated at about 25,000 to 30,000 units, which would lead to more than 20 million euros of imports annually considering the global production price per wheel, according to Moqimi.

Increasing rail transportation of basic goods on the agenda

Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) Miad Salehi also paid a visit to the mentioned exhibition on Friday



during which he announced President Raisi's order to set the rail transportation of basic goods as a priority in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

"The government's view is to develop the railway fleet, especially the freight and cargo fleet because it plans to increase the current 10 percent share of the railways in transporting basic goods," Salehi said.

The President emphasizes the maximum use of the country's railway network capacities. Therefore, RAI has tried to neutralize sanctions and remove obstacles to the domestic development of rail transportation, he said.

Iran-made locomotives:

cheaper and more reliable

Elsewhere on the sidelines of the Railway Industry Exhibition, a member of the country's Rail Transport Companies Association said Iranian locomotives can be produced and presented to the market at a price 25 percent less than the similar foreign models.

This makes Iranian locomotives more economical considering the country's current economic situation, Ghasem Abdollahi said.

"Plans have been made for the production of locomotives inside the country. The locomotive industry is at the top of the rail transportation industry, and due to the problems related to sanctions and issues related

to supplying foreign currencies for the imports of locomotives, the production of Iranian locomotives is being seriously pursued," Abdollahi stressed.

The 9th International Exhibition of Rail Transportation, Related Industries and Equipment of Iran was held during May 24-27 at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds.

As reported by the Iran International Exhibition Company portal, over 86 companies participated in the current year's railway transportation exhibition.

After the U.S. re-imposed sanctions on the Iranian economy, a national determination was formed inside Iran for empowering its domestic production to achieve self-reliance.

Since then, the national will for independence has become stronger and the Iranian industry has invigorated production in different sectors.

The railway is one of the sectors in which such status is outstanding, as self-reliance has been achieved in some major areas of this sector.

From domestic manufacturing of parts and equipment to rail tracks, wagons, and locomotives, self-reliance is now being witnessed in the railway sector.

TEDPIX falls 11,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) dropped 11,110 points to 1.553 million on Saturday.

As reported, over 14.93 million securities worth 88.375 trillion rials (about \$341 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index fell 10,080 points, and the second market's index lost 16,358 points.

As stated by Market Analyst Ahmad Eshtiaqi, the national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year indicates that the government has a more positive view of the market for this year.

He believes that the Iranian stock exchange market can grow by 30 percent by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2023).

In an interview with IRNA on May 8, Eshtiaqi pointed to the fluctuations of the stock market index and the factors affecting it and said: "It seems that the shares of companies still have room for growth and according to the forecasts, the stock market can grow by about 30 percent



by the end of the year, but this growth will be gradual and slow."

According to Stock Market Expert Peyman Hadadi, the allocation of a separate budget for the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund shows that the government is taking the necessary measures to provide stronger support for the market and to ensure its growth in the future.

"The allocation of a budget line for the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund is considered one of the most important points of the [Iranian calendar year] 1401 budget bill," Hadadi said.

Annual exports of ceramics, glassware products reach \$1.6b

TEHRAN – The Chairman of Iran Ceramic Society (ICS) has said the country exported over \$1.6 billion worth of ceramics and glassware products in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), IRIB reported.

According to Hossein Zojaji, Iran exports about 800,000 tons of glass annually while the demand for the product in destination

markets is over 1.2 million tons.

"We are not able to export because our priority is meeting the domestic demand," Zojaji said.

"We produce 62 million tons of cement, 450 million square meters of tiles, 2.7 million tons of glass, 600,000 tons of refractories, 55,000 tons of porcelain and 150,000 tons of sanitary porcelain every year," the official added.

Armenia calls for finalizing Iran-EAEU free trade agreement

TEHRAN – Armenian Prime minister Nikol Pashinyan has said Yerevan welcomes the finalization of a free trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), IRNA reported.

Pashinyan made the remarks in the first meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council which was held in Bishkek on Friday.

"I consider it important to draw attention to Armenia's interest in concluding a full-fledged free trade agreement between Iran and the EAEU. The experience of the functioning of the interim agreement with Tehran clearly shows the attractiveness of the Iranian market and the prospects for further deepening cooperation... We also want to start negotiations on concluding an agreement between the Union and Indonesia," Pashinyan said.

The official noted that the union attaches importance to utilizing international treaties

in order to minimize challenges and menaces of unprecedented economic crises, which happened in recent months.

After several years of negotiations, Iran and EAEU finally reached a preferential trade agreement in 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items are subject to preferential tariffs. The PTA came into effect on October 27, 2019.

Iran and the EAEU have listed 862 types of commodities in their three-year provisional trade agreement. As per the deal, Iran will enjoy easier export terms and lower customs duties on 502 items and the same goes for 360 items from the EAEU member countries.

Since the preferential trade agreement is to expire in October this year, the two sides are negotiating to upgrade the preferential trade agreement to a free trade agreement by the end of 2022.

The expert also pointed to the imposition of tax on rival markets including the housing market as another important and influential change in the budget bill and said: "Taxation of luxury cars and expensive housing, along with taxation of bank deposits of legal entities, is also one of the important issues that should be appreciated about the budget bill."

He also mentioned the elimination of subsidized foreign currency allocations and noted that this would create huge changes in the market and will be the starting point for some positive progress in some industries active in the market.

The elimination of subsidies on foreign currency is not only beneficial for the country's macro-economy but also has a positive effect on the capital market transactions, the analyst said.

He further pointed to the reduction of taxes on manufacturing companies and added: "The important action of the government in reducing the tax on production units from 25 percent to 20 percent will largely offset the increase in energy costs."

Electricity consumption falls over 3 GW as govt. management programs pay off

TEHRAN – Daily electricity consumption in Iran stood at 45,333 megawatts (45,333 gigawatts) on Friday, indicating a decrease of 3,573 MW compared to the figure for the same date in the previous year, IRNA reported.

The significant decrease in the country's electricity demand shows that the government's consumption management programs which include incentive packages for low-consuming subscribers and applying penalty charges for high consumers have paid off.

Based on the Iran Grid Management Company (IGMC) data, the country's electricity consumption on the same date last year was reported to be 48,905 MW.

As reported, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian has earlier said that the government is

considering new incentives for low-consuming electricity subscribers following the implementation of the said programs in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

Over the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease in rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

In recent years, however, new deteriorating factors like severe drought and the decline in the country's water resources as well as a new wave of illegal cryptocurrency mining across the country have also worsened the situation.

Last year, amid the drastic increase in the country's electricity consumption during summer, the Energy Ministry implemented a program called "Power of Hope"

based on which low-consuming households were awarded a 100 percent discount on their electricity bills in unprivileged regions.

Based on the "power of Hope" program the electricity subscribers were categorized into three groups namely high-consuming, normal-consuming, and low-consuming, and after the implementation of this program seven million low-consuming subscribers were awarded free electricity, and the number of the high consuming subscribers was decreased by six percent.

The ministry had also applied a 33-percent increase in electricity prices for high-consuming subscribers who would not reduce their consumption.

legal cryptocurrency miners to go off in peak demand period

To manage the peak consumption



day visit to Golestan on Thursday to inspect agricultural projects in the northern province.

There are 214k farmers in Golestan, who produced 4.5 million tons of various agricultural products last year; this province accounted for five percent of the country's total agricultural products in the mentioned year.

Golestan Province with two million inhabitants has an agricultural-oriented economy.

The northern province is surrounded by Turkmenistan in the north, Semnan Province in the south, North Khorasan Province in the east, and Mazandaran Province in the west borders.

period in the current year; Energy Minister plans to cut off the electricity supply to the country's legally operational cryptocurrency mining units if necessary.

According to IGMC Head Mostafa Rajabi-Mashhadi, currently, there are 118,000 cryptocurrency mining units active across the country, which consume 200 MW of electricity.

"With the peak electricity consumption period approaching, in case of a significant increase in electricity demand, the power to these centers will be cut off to maintain the stability of the electricity network," Rajabi-Mashhadi said.

He noted that, so far, numerous illegal cryptocurrency mining units have been detected across the country and cut off from the power grid. These units were consuming 974 million kilowatt-hours of electricity.

Ministry is collaborating with IFO for providing working capital at a rate of 10 to 12 percent to the country's livestock, poultry, and aquaculture production units.

The IFO head has held several meetings with the representatives of the Agriculture Ministry after which primary agreements have been reached for the allocation of the mentioned resources.

Iranian calendar year 1404 (begins on March 21, 2025), IRIB reported.

Hosseini said the country's fishery production in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) stood at 1,268,000 tons, and according to the IFO's new reform plan, fishery production is set to increase to 2,600,000 tons by the year 1404.

According to the official, Iran

exported 160,000 tons of fishery products worth \$556 million last year.

Following the IFO's reform plan, the organization is implementing a program to provide the country's fisheries with low-interest bank loans since subsidized input is no longer provided for them.

According to Director-General of IFO's Planning and Budget Office Rajab-Ali Qorbanzadeh, Agriculture

Iran targets \$1b of fishery exports for 2025

TEHRAN – Head of Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) Hossein Hosseini has said the country is aiming to increase the exports of fishery products to one billion dollars by the

U.S. police under fire over school terror

From page 1 ► Speaking at a separate press conference Texas governor, Greg Abbott, displayed absolutely no sympathy for the controversy police in Ulvade, Texas are facing, saying the local police officials had “misled” him about the speed of the officer’s response to the mass shooting.

Abbot says “I am livid, my expectation is that the law enforcement leaders... leading the investigation... get to the bottom of every fact with absolute certainty.”

“The families whose lives have been destroyed... need answers that are accurate,” he added.

Uvalde town’s mayor, Don McLaughlin, has also hit out saying he was confused over the new revelations of the police’s response saying his office will make any “change” needed if deemed necessary after an investigation is concluded into the police’s action.

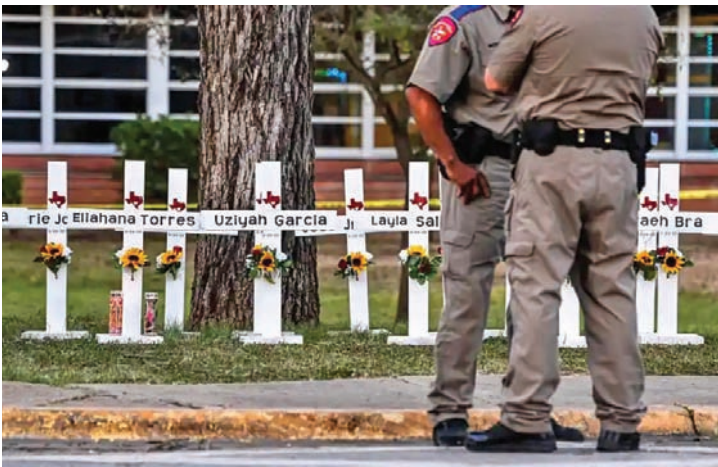
As different officials spoke out, questions and anger mounted in the community over the information void and the contradictory answers that have been provided to questions repeatedly asked by parents and journalists about what happened, as well as the silence on other matters such as why more deaths could not have been prevented?

The gunman, who had recently turned 18, arrived to Robb elementary school, heavily armed. He was ultimately shot dead at the school by a federal agent.

After the attacker entered the vicinity, frantic calls were made from teachers trapped inside the school to emergency services (with the gunman barricaded in a classroom), while supposedly highly trained armed police officers were standing just outside the door for about an hour as the gunman continued shooting.

A specialist Swat team, for which the officers had apparently been waiting for, eventually stormed the classroom and shot the killer dead.

After several days of contradictory responses by other officials, McCraw cited the person in charge of the special police department assigned



to the school, who was leading the response but at the same time holding the officers back. The “commander” has not been named.

“The on-scene commander at the time believed it had transitioned from an active shooter [situation] to a barricaded subject,” he said, adding the commander thought that at that point there remained “no children at risk”.

“based upon the information we [now] have, there were children in that classroom at risk,” he said.

The official held back tears about the disastrous chain of events when he was asked about the people inside who were continuously calling emergency services throughout the massacre and informing them there were children still stuck inside and the frantic parents outside the school pleading with other officers to move in and end the massacre.

Asked about a “40-minute gap” in which emergency operators were aware children were alive, but officers still did not go in, he added “the decision as made that this was a barricaded subject, there was time to retrieve the keys [to the classroom] and wait for a tactical team... that was the decision, that was the thought process.”

“It was the wrong decision. Period. There’s no excuse for that,” he added.

One female, has been cited by American media as whispering to emergency services on the phone “multiple dead”. The person is reported to have made the call from inside the classroom and said there

were eight to nine students still alive at that stage.

Earlier, demands for answers multiplied as it emerged that the state had spent extra funds that went toward school security and police training for mass shootings. But critics say the funding had gone in vain as it did nothing to prevent the massacre.

On Thursday, the south Texas regional director, Victor Escalon, gave incomplete answers to questions from reporters at a press conference about what had happened, including how an armed officer tried to stop the shooter as he approached the school.

She then went on to say the opposite; that in fact there had not been anyone to intercept the shooter beforehand.

McCraw also addressed the subject of earlier statements about social media posts noting “I want to correct something that was said earlier on the investigation, that [the killer] posted on Facebook publicly that he was going to kill his grandmother and secondly he was going to shoot up a school.”

“That didn’t happen,” McCraw said, adding that it was on a message to someone else.

Amid the anger, powerful pro-gun lobby group, The National Rifle Association (NRA) held its annual convention in Houston, as protesters amassed outside the venue.

The event took place under a cloud of controversy and put on full public display, the country’s wide divisions

on gun control.

As demonstrations expanded in Houston, one protester asked a journalist “how many more [shootings] need to happen? All I want is reasonable gun control.”

Prominent Republicans who attended the NRA event included former President Donald Trump and Texas Senator Ted Cruz.

Trump gave a keynote speech before he praised the “wonderful NRA” and criticized those who have been calling for stricter gun laws.

The ex-President denounced the “now familiar parade of cynical politicians seeking to exploit the tears of sobbing families to increase their own power and take away our constitutional rights” and the “grotesque effort by some in our society to use the suffering of others to advance their own extreme political agenda”.

He described their “rush to shift blame away from the villains who commit acts of mass violence” and “to place that blame onto the shoulders of millions of peaceful law-abiding citizens who belong to organizations such as our wonderful NRA.”

Senator Ted Cruz, a popular recipient of donations from gun lobby groups, has maintained a high profile since the shooting, at one point even angrily clashing with a journalist who asked him about gun reforms.

The Uvalde shooting has certainly re-focused national debate on the never-ending and costly failure to pass meaningful gun reform legislation in Congress.

President Joe Biden, who has condemned the lack of action, is visiting Texas.

Despite all the protests, grief, and desperation of loved ones lost to gun violence, gun reform advocates are expecting very little to happen on this polarizing issue in a nation that has more firearms in people’s possession than the American population itself.

1,657 rounds and 60 magazines had been found at the school after the atrocity.

America’s unending gun violence

From page 1 ► The recent shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, marked the 27th school shooting this year in the United States. The bipartisan gun reform push in the US Congress has failed and continues to fail to counteract the influence of the National Rifle Association (NRA) lobby as so many Republicans and some few Democrats remain beholden to this powerful lobby.



laws. Similarly, Australian lawmakers chose to follow suit after a 1996 shooting. The US lawmakers, by contrast, have decided that relatively unregulated gun ownership should take precedence over its possible social cost. There is currently a bill before the

US Senate that requires bipartisan support. Yet there is no political will to stop reaping profits over the death of innocent American citizens.

The young men who wreaked havoc at the Sandy Hook Massacre (2012) and now at Robb Elementary School, may or may not have been mentally deranged, but clearly their easy access to guns has rendered such tragedies possible. Some commentators, long before recent events, have reminded us that gun violence must be treated as a national security emergency, upon which the future peace and prosperity of Americans depends.

Finding meaningful solutions to these tragic events is imperative (John R. Allen, Brookings, August 25, 2019). US foreign policy-makers’ obsession with foreign roots of terrorism and violence have blinded them to domestic terrorism and its causes. It is high time to turn to curbing internal sources of violence before it spins totally out of control. It is vital then to take a hard look at the accessibility of assault weapons, while establishing more accountability and sustainable gun control regulations.

Mahmood Monshipouri, PhD, teaching international relations at San Francisco State University.

The bipartisan gun reform push in Congress has failed and continues to fail to counteract the influence of the National Rifle Association lobby as so many Republicans and some few Democrats remain beholden to this powerful lobby.

The same study concludes that the main reason why American regulation of gun ownership remains so weak is because of the trade-offs between the right to possess guns and its costly consequences. After Great Britain had a mass shooting in 1987, the country installed stringent gun control

Putin says ready to deliver gas, discuss prisoner swap: Austria

Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer said Russian President Vladimir Putin told him on Friday that Moscow would meet its natural gas delivery commitments to Austria and was ready to discuss a prisoner swap with Ukraine, Reuters reported.

Nehammer made the comments to reporters after the two leaders held a 45-minute telephone call that Nehammer described as a chance to confront Putin with the realities of the war in Ukraine and discuss prospects for humanitarian solutions.

Asked what Putin had told him about gas deliveries, the Austrian conservative said: “He also raised the subject (and said) that all deliveries would be completed in full.”

In a separate statement, the Kremlin said Russia had reaffirmed its commitment to supply natural gas to Austria, which gets 80% of its gas from Russia.

Nehammer, who visited Russia last month for talks with Putin, said the Russian leader had expressed readiness to discuss a prisoner swap with Ukraine.

“Whether he is really ready to negotiate is a complex question,” he added.

Russia describes the three-month-old incursion as a special military operation to disarm its neighbor and remove dangerous nationalists from power. The Kyiv and its allies in the West say the charge is bogus and says the invasion of Ukraine is an unprovoked attack.

Nehammer said Putin had repeatedly defended Moscow’s actions and blamed Western sanctions for economic disruptions that ensued. He said he



thought Putin was creating facts on the group to take into negotiations.

Putin was “entirely aware” of the issue of food security, Nehammer said of the conversation, adding Putin “gave signals” that he was ready to allow exports over seaports but had linked progress to the lifting of Western sanctions.

The Kremlin statement said Putin had discussed work to ensure the safety of navigation in the Azov and Black Seas, saying Ukraine should clear ports of mines to allow the free passage of blocked ships.

The United States and others accuse Russia of blockading Ukraine’s ports.

Influential think-tank backs Finland’s, Sweden’s NATO bid

One of the least appreciated yet most important functions of Washington’s bipartisan foreign-policy “Blob” is the role it plays in making the unreasonable sound reasonable, and the new and potentially dangerous sound utterly benign and mundane.

In presenting changes in policies that have been in place for several generations, the Blob will wink and, with an assuring smile, tell us: Not to worry, there is no real change here.

That, in effect, was the message attendees received this week at a Brookings Institution panel event regarding what is looking very much like yet another round of NATO expansion.

Ambassadors from the likely 31st and 32nd members, Sweden and Finland, made their case to a friendly audience with the help of a pair of Brookings interlocutors Constanze Stelzenmuller and Michael O’Hanlon.

Thomas Wright, now a member of US President Joe Biden’s National Security Council, but for years prior had served as the director of Brookings’ Center for the United States and Europe, was once quoted in The New York Times as saying the Blob is but a myth in the minds of credulous outsiders who have never had the good fortune to be admitted into the club.

“My impression is that people who talk about the Blob,” Wright said in September 2021, “have not read or inquired into what the people in the think-tanks have actually said about the topic. They don’t know what they’re talking about.” In other words, who are you going to believe, me or your lying eyes?

This week’s event, featuring the Finnish ambassador to the US, Mikko Hautala, and the Swedish ambassador to the US, Karin Olofsdotter, comes only a week after the two Nordic countries officially submitted their respective bids for membership at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

The move has gained wide and enthusiastic support in Washington policy circles, not least at Brookings, where the pair of ambassadors were given a warm welcome by retired four-star



Marine General John Allen, who now serves as Brookings’ president.

In her introduction, Stelzenmuller was up front as to the purpose of the event, which was mainly to promote Finland’s and Sweden’s accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization rather than debate the policy on its merits.

The Brookings audience was assured at every available opportunity that Sweden’s and Finland’s joining the alliance would not really be much of a change at all. After all, Article 42.7 of the EU treaty already includes a pan-European defense commitment, and Sweden and Finland have been members of the European Union since 1995.

Like Stelzenmuller, Ambassador Olofsdotter was at pains to show how little was actually being changed by Sweden’s abandonment of its long-standing policy of neutrality.

Olofsdotter’s pitch revolved around just how much Sweden is already an operative part of NATO. She also took the time to thank the US government for all the intelligence it provided the Swedes in the run-up to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In doing so, her message was clear: We’re already being treated like a member, why not make it official?

Likewise, Finnish Ambassador Mikko Hautala told the audience, “We have been integrating with NATO for 30 years.” Joining NATO, he continued, is the “final step on a long path to becoming a member state.”

Message transmitted, message received: The

change we see before us is really no change at all.

Still more, the panel also took time to send some sweet talk to Turkish dictator Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who is – as of now – apparently the most formidable roadblock to Sweden’s entry to the alliance.

Olofsdotter told the audience that her prime minister spoke to Erdogan on Saturday and described him as “a strong ally” in the fight against terrorism, which, if nothing else, proves that some people will say anything when they want something badly enough.

But Brookings moderator Michael O’Hanlon, who, like the Cold War–era columnist Joe Alsop, has “never gone where blood could be spilled that he didn’t come back and say more blood,” went even further, and encouraged the Swedes to win over Erdogan by whitewashing the Turk’s blood-soaked record during the Syrian Civil War.

Where O’Hanlon gained his much touted expertise in military affairs remains opaque, yet he felt that he had the expertise enough to tell the assembled that while Erdogan’s record during the Syrian Civil War was mixed (!), we owe Erdogan a debt of gratitude for taking in millions of refugees from that war – a war, O’Hanlon failed to mention, that Turkey, because of its funding and material support of Islamic State (ISIS), did more than any other state to prolong.

That being said, Stelzenmuller at least seemed aware that, in her words, there is “an undercurrent” of opposition to the idea of yet another round of NATO expansion, noting that it can be found “on the progressive left” in places like “the Quincy Institute sort of middle and on the right of the GOP”

But for her part, Ambassador Olofsdotter said she personally had not heard such arguments.

Yet blithely abandoning a successful policy of neutrality in favor of a credulous trust in NATO’s deterrence power seems a mistake – and one that will only deepen the division of Europe for a generation.

(Source: asiatictimes.com)

Maranjab desert to become more tourist-friendly, official says



From page 1 ► A well is located five kilometers east of the caravanserai and stores fresh and drinkable water. The reason for the purity of the water is the layers of sand that absorb the salt and purifies the water.

Although it has a harsh environment, visitors may find plenty of salt-friendly plants on the margins of the tranquil desert. Besides, it is home to some of the desert birds and reptiles like eagles, snakes, and lizards.

Isfahan province is full of different natural and historical charms. A diversity of mounts, hills, lakes, and deserts. Many campers come to see these eye-opening phenomena and take amazing shots to show the feast of nature. The province offers a unique experience of visiting oasis villages with all their natural and cultural beauties. While traveling from Isfahan to Yazd, one of the best things you may do is spend a night in the central desert of Iran.

Having a very diverse natural setting, Iran offers varied excursions to nature lovers. Sightseers may live with a nomad or rural family or enjoy an independent stay. The country is home to abundant historical mansions, caravanserais, bathhouses, madrasas, and other massive monuments, which can buttress its budding tourism and hospitality sectors if managed appropriately and refurbished properly.

Ministry declares criteria to safeguard ancient Gorgan

TEHRAN – Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has established a range of criteria to step up efforts to safeguard Gorgan, which is most famous for a defensive wall from almost 1,500 years earlier.

On Saturday, the tourism ministry submitted a letter to Golestan province's Governor-General Ali-Mohammad Zanganeh in which it declared a range of criteria for safeguarding, protecting, and restoring the historical core of Gorgan, CHTN reported.

Gorgan, formerly Astarabad, is situated along a small tributary of the Qareh River, 37 kilometers from the Caspian Sea.

The ancient town for long suffered from inroads of the Turkmen tribes who occupied the plain north of the Qareh River and were subjected to incessant Qajar-Turkmen tribal conflicts in the 19th century according to the Encyclopedia

Britannica.

Its ruined defensive barrier named “ the Great Wall of Gorgan” stretch for almost 200 kilometers. It was constructed from 420s CE to 530s as a northern frontier of the then mighty Persian Empire, which was then ruled under Sassanids.

The massive barrier faced a series of wars first against the Hephthalites or White Huns and later against the Turks. Most parts of the gigantic monument are still hidden underneath the surface some segments have so far been unearthed and even restored to former glory.

The Great Wall of Gorgan is more than three times the length of the longest late Roman defensive wall built from scratch, the Anastasian Wall west of Constantinople. The combined area of the forts on the Gorgan Wall exceeds that of those on Hadrian's Wall about threefold.

Ferdows inmates to gain new skills as crafters

TEHRAN –Training courses in the fields of pottery and ceramics are currently being offered in prisons in the city of Ferdows, South Khorasan province, eastern Iran, the city's tourism chief has said.

The courses aim to allow inmates to gain employment after their release as well as generate income while they are still in prison, Ruhollah Sedaqat Talebi explained on Saturday.

The courses are also designed to promote handicrafts and to empower prisoners, the official added.

In October 2020, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts signed a memorandum of understanding with the Prisons, Security, and Corrective Measures

Organization to create jobs and make income for prisoners.

The MOU also aimed at implementing special educational and promotional programs, identifying talented prisoners, and improving their social status.

The deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian said that handicraft products made by prisoners have been displayed in various exhibitions, and the income generated from selling these products has been returned to the prisoners and their families.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

Caravansary getting prepared for modern trekkers

TEHRAN – A fresh round of restoration work has begun on a centuries-old caravansary in Mayamey, northcentral Iran, in a bid to make the mudbrick structure prepared to host modern travelers this time.

“This well-preserved Shah-Abbasi caravansary enjoys the four-iwan (portico) pattern of Persian architecture,” Mayamey's tourism chief said on Saturday.

Worn-out bricks and traditional insulation of the rooftops will be restored in this round of restoration, Seyyed Mohammad-Sadeq Razavian explained.

It is a unique Shah-Abbasi caravansary as stone-carved inscriptions at the entrance read the date of its construction and the name of the architect, the official added.

The structure is named after Shah Abbas the Great (r. 1588 – 1629), who ordered the construction of such roadside inns across the country. The mudbrick structure was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1986.

Situated in Semnan province, the caravansary has two entrances that sprawl across 8,500 square meters. The courtyard is surrounded by rooms and platforms, and behind the rooms are stables.

Unlike most caravansaries, the sanitary facilities of this one are constructed outside the main building and on the western side.

The historical scene of Mayamey



includes several caravansarais, natural sights, and historical sites such as Shah-Abbasi caravansarai, Aqaian Mosque, Aqaian Mansion, Aqaian bathhouse, and Emarat cistern.

Moreover, the restoration project is aimed to prepare the roadside inn for an assessment by experts affiliated with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

Iran has recently submitted an inclusive dossier on its caravansaris to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. The dossier comprises the obligatory data about a selection of 56 caravansaries, which are scattered across the ancient land. And the shortlist includes qualified caravanserais located in at least 24 provinces.

Caravansary is a compound word combining “caravan” with “sara”;

the former stands for a group of travelers and the latter means the building. They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

Iran's earliest caravansarais were built during the Achaemenid era (550 –330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629, he ordered the construction of a network of caravansaries across the country.

For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravansarai, can be a wide experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age.

Those arched inns were once constructed along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and

animals. The former Silk Roads may be the most famous example dotted by caravansarais.

Cozy chambers that are meticulously laid out around a vast courtyard may easily evoke spirits of the past. It's not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chewing hay! You can also conceive the idea of local architectural style and material in its heyday.

It's not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chewing hay!

Passing major roads in the country, one may see crumbling caravansarais many of which were abandoned for ages. In the Information Age, such guest houses have largely lost their actual usage.

A couple of years ago, the Iran tourism ministry introduced a scheme to keep them alive and profitable; tens of caravansarais are ceded to the private investors for better maintenance. Now, some are exclusively renovated and repurposed into boutique hotels and tourist lodgings.

Traditionally, the majority of caravansaries had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

Emerging technologies to evolve restorations in Iran, expert says

TEHRAN – In recent years, Iran has sought to improve methods of restoring historical sites by using new technologies, an official with the Research Institute for Cultural Heritage and Tourism has said.

Iran, however, lags behind other nations when it comes to using modern restoration methods, whereas these methods are used all around the world for restoring ancient monuments, ILNA quoted Shiba Khadir as saying on Saturday.

In recent years, Iranian restorers use lasers as one of the new methods for cleaning ancient stones and metal artifacts, a method used worldwide for several years, she noted.

In the case of artifacts that are fragile and cannot be repaired mechanically, or where chemical cleaning methods can be harmful, lasers are particularly effective, she added.

However, the use of lasers requires study and expertise, and restorers who work with this method must be knowledgeable about both the structure and materials of the ancient object, as well as the science of using lasers and their wavelengths, she mentioned.

As part of a restoration project, Iranian experts working alongside a group of foreign restorers in Persepolis use lasers to get to the underneath layers of rocks of the World Heritage site in order to identify those layers, Khadir added.

“This method was effective for removing surface layers and achieving the main color of the ancient

stones without harming the ancient objects.”

Due to the high price, these devices are mostly used by scientific and research centers, and government support is necessary to use them in restoration centers, she said.

Restorers have also been using the plasma method for some time now as a method of restoring historical objects, she explained.

Last September, a team of Iranian researchers and archaeologists applied a laser beam in their pilot project to clean ancient iron artifacts.

The team, affiliated with the Research Institute for Cultural Heritage and Tourism, described this clean-up as one of the most challenging measures in the restoration of historical objects, Mehr reported.

“In this field, several methods are used by cleaners in a principled and scientific way, each having its advantages, disadvantages, and limitations.”

Arrays of iron objects, excavated from the Arzan-Fud site of the archaeologically rich Hamedan province, were subject to the cleaning project, the report said.

Experts say this technology is used for imaging and documenting, detection, and cleaning in the protection and restoration of historical monuments.

“Utilization of this technology along with other common cleaning methods plays an important

role in completing and improving metal protection operations, and this method can be used in treatment to prevent further crushing due to not imposing external mechanical pressure on very brittle and modified objects.”

Laser cleaning is an eco-friendly process used to remove rust, paint, oxide, and other contaminants from metal surfaces. Because of its efficiency, it is being used in an increasing number of applications.

The UNESCO-registered Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy), was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire. It is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province.

The royal city of Persepolis, which ranks among the archaeological sites which have no equivalent, considering its unique architecture, urban planning, construction technology, and art, was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge against the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

The city's immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire's king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall (“Hundred-Column Hall”).

Iranian Elamitologist honored by UNESCO

TEHRAN –On Friday, the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO held a ceremony at the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran to commemorate veteran researcher and Elamitologist Abdolmajid Arfaei.

Entitled “Faces to the Sun”, the event was organized to honor Arfaei for his lifetime achievement in translating ancient languages, ISNA reported on Saturday.

The ceremony was attended by a number of cultural officials including the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO director Hojjatollah Ayyubi, the National Museum director Jebrael Nokandeh, scholar and expert on Shahnameh Mir Jalaeddin Kazzazi, and linguist Jaleh Amuzegar.

Having read important words from the cuneiform, Arfaei narrated a part of Iranian history, Ayyubi said in his speech during the event.

Thanks to him, we know more about our past and are better educated about it



as he gives us a deeper understanding of our history, he added.

For his part, Nokandeh said that Arfaei has played an important role in organizing the inscriptions of the National Museum and has organized more than 5,000 works.

Moreover, he contributed to the reading and translation of the Achaemenid-era clay tablets, which were on loan to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago from Iran since 1935, and was a key figure in returning more than 2,000 of them to Iran, he explained.

A graduate of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, Arfaei, is

an expert on the Avestan, Pahlavi, and Elamite languages.

Born in 1939 in Bandar Abbas, southern Iran, Arfaei studied Persian literature in Dar-ul-Fonun, an advanced school established by the Qajar king Nasser ad-Din Shah's Chancellor Mirza Taqi Farahani (Amir Kabir).

Afterward, he left Iran for the United States to resume his studies and obtained a Ph.D. from the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago in 1974.

His doctoral thesis on the topic of Fars geography was based on clay inscriptions discovered at Persepolis.

Founder of the Inscriptions Hall at the National Museum of Iran, Arfaei is the author of “The Decree of Cyrus the Great”, a book giving a unique elucidation of the Cyrus the Great Cylinder, which is inscribed with what is considered to be the world's first charter of human rights.

He has also participated in deciphering Mesopotamian legal inscriptions.



Subject : Procurement notice ITB-IRN40-2022-001
UNFPA Iran Office

Purpose: The United Nations Population Fund in Iran hereby invites qualified manufacturers/suppliers to submit their offers for supply of 8 units of **A2 Ambulances** along with all inside required medical devices

Delivery Location: Iran

Deadline: The deadline for submitting your bid proposal is 09 June 2022 (18:00p.m Tehran time)

Submission instruction: Suppliers should submit their offers by filling bid documents and submit them ONLY to UNFPA secured email address: bidtender@unfpa.org.

Bid documents: Available at

UNFPA website: <https://iran.unfpa.org/en/vacancies/procurement-notice-itb-irn40-2022-001> or

UNGm website: <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/174882>

IMPORTANT:

- Offers received after the above stipulated date and time will be rejected.
- **DO NOT** submit your bid documents to any email address and ensure to send it only to UNFPA secured email address which is provided above bidtender@unfpa.org
- An online ZOOM meeting will be held on Wednesday, 1st June 2022, 12 PM (Tehran time), to respond to suppliers' concerns and questions on how to fill the bid form and related documents. Interested applicants can receive the link by sending their participation request through the following email: dadras@unfpa.org
- “There is no application, processing or other fee at any stage of the bid process charged by UNFPA”.

Norwegian Refugee Council helps to make schools safer in Iran

TEHRAN – The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is undertaking disaster-risk reduction (DRR) activities to ensure the safety and security of children in Iranian schools.

Iran is the third most earthquake-prone country in the world and it experiences, on average, 100 earthquakes every month. While the magnitude of most is small, others have been significant. For instance, in 2018 an earthquake of magnitude 6.4 hit Kermanshah and in 2003, a 6.6 magnitude earthquake caused 34,000 deaths in Bam, Kerman province.

Schools should be safe places so that children are encouraged to learn. If they do not feel safe or comfortable, they might stop showing up to their lessons. While we cannot stop earthquakes from occurring, we can work with students and teachers so that they know how to stay safe when an earthquake hits.

Disaster-risk reduction (DRR) activities are part of a pilot project that NRC is conducting with the generous support of the European Union Humanitarian Aid. So far, 17 schools have benefitted from such



interventions. These schools are now safer places for children and their teachers. NRC looks forward to scaling up DRR interventions in the near future.

NRC has now equipped a school in Mashhad with fire alarms so that children can evacuate in case of a fire and no child would be hurt, which has the potential for disasters beyond floods and earthquakes.

Built over thirty years ago, and with no standard heating system and broken windows that could not be repaired in recent years, Shohadaye Enghelab school was not safe for its 300 Afghan and Iranian boys aged 12 to 15.

Some 527,000 foreign students are studying in Iran, the majority are Afghans and the rest are from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iraq, and other countries, Abolfazl Kamali,

the deputy minister of education for international affairs and schools abroad, stated.

Iran spends about 20 trillion rials (nearly \$77 million) every year on the education of foreign national students residing in the country, head of the international affairs department of the Ministry of Education Gholamreza Karimi said in March 2020.

Large drug trafficking gang disbanded in northwest



TEHRAN – The anti-narcotics police have dismantled the largest drug-trafficking gang in the north-western part of the country, Rahim Jahanbakhsh, West Azarbaijan province's police commander, has announced.

Over 900 kilograms of narcotics were discovered from the smugglers in Urmia, he said, IRIB reported on Saturday.

The anti-narcotics police officers traced the haul of narcotics through extensive operations, arresting members of the drug trafficking cell while traffick-

ing drugs, he explained.

In this operation, the border guards succeeded in seizing 6 vehicles and arresting 7 smugglers and discovered 902 kilograms of various drugs, including 101 kilograms of heroin and 801 kilograms of morphine.

Iran, which has a 900-kilometer border with Afghanistan, has been used as the main conduit for smuggling Afghan drugs to narcotics kingpins in Europe.

Despite high economic and human costs, Iran has been actively fighting drug trafficking over the past decades.

The country has spent more than \$700 million on sealing its borders and preventing the transit of narcotics destined for European, Arab, and Central Asian countries.

Iran seized some 1,000 tons of narcotics in the Ira-

nian calendar year 1399 (March 2020-March 2021), putting the country in the first place in the world.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The organization also officially announced that the world's first place in the discovery of opium, heroin, and morphine belongs to Iran.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020 estimates that in 2018, 91 percent of world opium, 48 percent of the world morphine, and 26 percent of the world heroin were seized by Iran.

Iran's drug control efforts led to the seizure of 266 tons of different types of drugs during the period of April-June 2020, a 20 percent increase compared to the same period in 2019.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has praised Iran's efforts to fight narcotics trafficking.

Comprehensive law to protect Iranian expats

From page 1 ► Noting that in many countries where Iranians travel, there are laws that are not clear to our people, he said that "In some countries, such as Armenia, taking some pills such as acetaminophen codeine is prohibited and has severe penalties."

"We consider it our duty to prepare documentary programs for the people going to these countries in order to prevent the occurrence of these arrests and restrictions.

We are also cooperating with some neighboring countries to deal with drug traffickers," Ahmadi concluded.

Over 4m Iranians reside abroad

The Secretariat of the High Council of Iranians Abroad announced in its 2020 report that a total of 4,037,258 Iranians reside abroad, 76 percent of whom are resident in the Americas and European countries.

The administration of President Ebrahim Raisi has placed the issue of facilitating the return of Iranians living abroad to their home country high on its agenda, with government officials constantly reiterating the need for paving the way for the expatriates to return.

About 500 Iranian researchers have returned home over the past four years to transfer their knowledge and expertise to the country's universities,



according to the vice presidency for science and technology.

With the support of the National Elites Foundation and Science and Technology Vice Presidency, universities, knowledge enterprises, technology parks, and incubators launched a plan titled 'cooperation with Iranian expatriate entrepreneurs and elites' in 2015.

The plan aims to attract Iranians

abroad to share knowledge in different forms including postdoctoral research, research opportunity, and visiting fellows, in addition to being faculty members.

The administration of President Ebrahim Raisi has placed facilitating the return of Iranians living abroad high on its agenda.

SOCIETY

MAY 29, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

Tribes in Iran

Part 14

In the Safavid period certain Kurdish tribes were forced to move to the north of Khorasan, and today there are scattered settlements of Kurds descended from them between Sarakhs in the extreme northeast and the frontier post of Chat in Gorgan.

The two principal remaining Kurdish tribes of Khorasan are the Za'faranlu, made up of numerous tayefehs such as the Kikanlu, Bicharanlu, Seyfkanlu, Ammarlu, etc., and the Shadlu comprising the Divanlu, Barzanlu, and Qara Churlu (Chullu).

A considerable number of 'Ammarlu Kurds, whose ancestors were likewise forcibly transported, live in the southeast of the Rudbar district in the ostan of Gilan (Pur-Karim, 1348/1969, pp. 23-30; Tawahhodi, 1359/1980).

(c) Turkish tribes. The Turkish-speaking tribes of Iran are scattered over many regions. Their establishment in the country began with the first incursions of Turkish-speaking peoples and continued in the periods of the Saljuq, Mongol, Timurid, and Safavid rule.

For a variety of reasons, rulers of these dynasties shifted tribes to distant parts of Iran: to employ the tribe for guarding a frontier, to fragment it, to punish it, or to reward and encourage it.

One conspicuous example is the dispersal of the Afshar tribe, sections of which are to be found in Khorasan, West Azarbaijan, Khuzestan, Fars, and Kerman.

The principal Turcophone tribe in Fars is the Qashqa'i. In the Qajar period, the tribe was administered by its il-khani and his deputy and chief executive, the il-begi, and was apparently not yet organized on the basis of tayefehs.

Today the tribe is a union of approximately 200 tirehs of Turkish, Lori, Kurdish, and Arab origin, but all speaking the same Ghozz Turkish dialect. There was formerly a large number of tayefehs, but today they have been incorporated into six main tayefehs, named Darra-Shuri, Kashkuli-e Bozorg, Kashkuli-e Kuchek, Farsimadan, Amala, and Sheshboluki. The Qashqa'i territory starts at Lar and stretches through the southern parts of Fars almost to Behbahan. In spring and early summer, the different tayefehs of the tribe traverse distances of between 400 and 500 km to reach their summer quarters.

With the exception of a small group whose summer pastures (called the Sarhadd-e Kuchek) lie in the eastern part of the Dasht-e Arjan near Kazerun, the Qashqa'i tribes-people have their main summer pastures (called the Sarhadd-e Bozorg) in the area stretching from Eqild and Abada westward to the Kuh-e Dena and northward to near Shahreza (Bahman Bigi, 1324/1945; Peyman, 1347/1968; Ajami, 1352/1973; Oberling, 1974).

Three of the tribes which belonged to the Khamsa confederacy in Fars, namely the Inanlu, Baharlu, and Nafar are Turcophone. Since the last quarter of the 19th century, they have either become fully sedentary in eastern districts of the province or have been absorbed into other tribes.

The Ilsevan (formerly Shahsevan) tribes in East Azarbaijan are another important Turcophone group, comprising the Giklu, Isalu, Quja,



Hajji Khojalu (or Hajji Khaja), Moghanlu, and others. In Safavid times they belonged to the Qizilbash. Their present territory lies in the north of the ostan between Ardabil and the Soviet frontier.

The Ilsevars (Shahsevars) around Ardabil are now wholly sedentarized, but some of the tayefehs around Meshkinshahr still move annually between the foothills of Mount Sabalan and the Moghan Plain.

Elsewhere, Ilsevan tirehs named Baghdadi and Inalu are settled around Sava, Qom, and Qazvin. The Inanlu of the Khamsa confederacy in Fars are thought to have originally been an Ilsevan tribe.

Among the other Turcophone tribes of Aerbaijan are those of the shahrestan of Arasbaran (Ahar), with winter quarters in the strip along the Aras river near Khoda-afarin and summer quarters in the Arasbaran mountains and the Ahar-Meshkinshahr highland; and those of the shahrestan of Marand, with winter quarters along the Marand-Bazargan highway and spring and summer quarters in the Meshkinshahr district (Bayburdi, 1341/1962; Karimzadeh, 1352/1973; Sazman-e Barnameh wa Budjeh, 1355/1976, III, pp. 1-27; Op't Land, 1961; Schweizer, 1970, pp. 81-148; Tapper, 1971).

The Turkmen of Iran live almost entirely in the shahrestans of Gorgan and Gonbad-e Qabus in Mazandaran and Bojnurd in Khorasan as far as Quchan. Their two big tayefehs, the Yomut and the Guklan, came to Iran long ago.

The Yomut was originally divided into two branches, the Aq Atabay, made up of the Aq, the Atabay, and the Sharif, and the Jafarbay, made up of the Yar Ali and the Nur Ali. The position today is that there are three mutually independent tayefehs, the Jafarbay, the Atabay, and the Aq Atabay. The Jafarbay live in the bakhsh of Gomishan on the Caspian coast, the Atabay in that of Aq Qala (formerly Pahlavi Dezh), and the Aq Atabay around Gonbad-e Qabus.

The Guklan likewise were originally divided into two big branches, the Bozorgtay and the Dudurgha, but today they have largely abandoned their former organization.

The territory of Guklan is a bakhsh bearing its name, lying north of Gonbad-e Qabus and stretching as far as Bojnurd. The majority of the Takka Turkmen live in Soviet Turkmenistan, but a number of them are domiciled in Iran in the bakhsh of Jargalan in the shahrestan of Bojnurd. The Qamas, originally belonging to the Guklan but now independent, are settled in the Goli-Daghi. The Nourli Turkmen live in the dehestan of the same name in Jargalan (Pur-Karim, 1341 /1962-1348 /1969; Lugashev, 1359/1970; Irons, 1974, pp. 635-37).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

A system will be launched to monitor, forecast and report the agricultural lands being hit by drought, Amir Qaderi, an official with Disaster Management Organization has announced.

Over a meeting of a special working group for addressing drought and risks threatening agricultural sector, a plan for establishing a system for monitoring and forecasting agricultural drought in the country was approved and submitted to the Disaster Management Organization for review, he explained.

"Following the study of other countries' experiences and existing global methods, the necessity of establishing a domestic system to recognize the lands prone to agricultural drought was emphasized," he noted.

سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می‌شود

معاون امور بازسازی و بازتوانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور از ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران خبر داد.

به گزارش پایگاه اطلاع رسانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور، امیر قادری روز یکشنبه با اعلام این خبر گفت: طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران طی جلسه‌ای با حضور مدیران و کارشناسان سازمان مدیریت بحران و وزارت جهاد کشاورزی بررسی شد.

وی ادامه داد: پس از بررسی تجارب داخلی و روش‌های موجود جهانی، ضرورت استقرار نمونه بومی پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی مورد تأکید قرار گرفت و با مشارکت مراکز پژوهشی سازمان هواشناسی کشور و پژوهشکده حفاظت خاک و آبخیزداری طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران پیشنهاد شد.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON MAY 28

New cases	103
New deaths	4
Total cases	7,231,387
Total deaths	141,306
New hospitalized patients	20
Patients in critical condition	573
Total recovered patients	7,044,499
Diagnostic tests conducted	52,175,630
Doses of vaccine injected	149,839,257

