

# Iraq Clears Debts to Iran in Blow to U.S. Sanctions

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Report

## Palestinians mark 40 days after Abu Aqleh's murder

In a memorial ceremony marking 40 days since the murder of Shireen Abu Aqleh by Israeli regime forces, the Palestinian Authority has demanded the occupation forces hand over the assault rifle that killed the prominent Palestinian journalist.

High ranking Palestinian political figures attended the commemoration event, in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, including Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh who delivered a speech saying "we have refused to hand over the bullet to them, and we demand that they hand over the weapon that murdered Shireen Abu Aqleh."

Abu Aqleh was shot and killed last month while covering an Israeli military raid in the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank in what Palestinians officials described as an Israeli "war crime."

An investigation by the Palestinian Authority says that an Israeli soldier shot dead the veteran Palestinian-American Al Jazeera news channel reporter.

The Palestinian probe reflected identical results by many organizations and media outlets including CNN, Al Jazeera and several other major news organizations who conducted their own investigations.

Abu Aqleh was a household name in the Arab world, the 51-year-old covered, uncovered and exposed Israeli crimes and Palestinian suffering with on the ground TV reporting for 25 years. Page 5

## Iran: Two FM's, Borrell conveyed Iran's initiative to U.S.

TEHRAN — For the first time in the course of the Vienna talks, Iran asked two foreign ministers to convey a message to the United States, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman revealed on Monday.

Speaking at his weekly press conference, Saeed Khatibzadeh reiterated Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian's June 14 remarks in which Iran presented an initiative prior to the issuance of the anti-Iran resolution at the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors, insisting that the initiative contained substance.

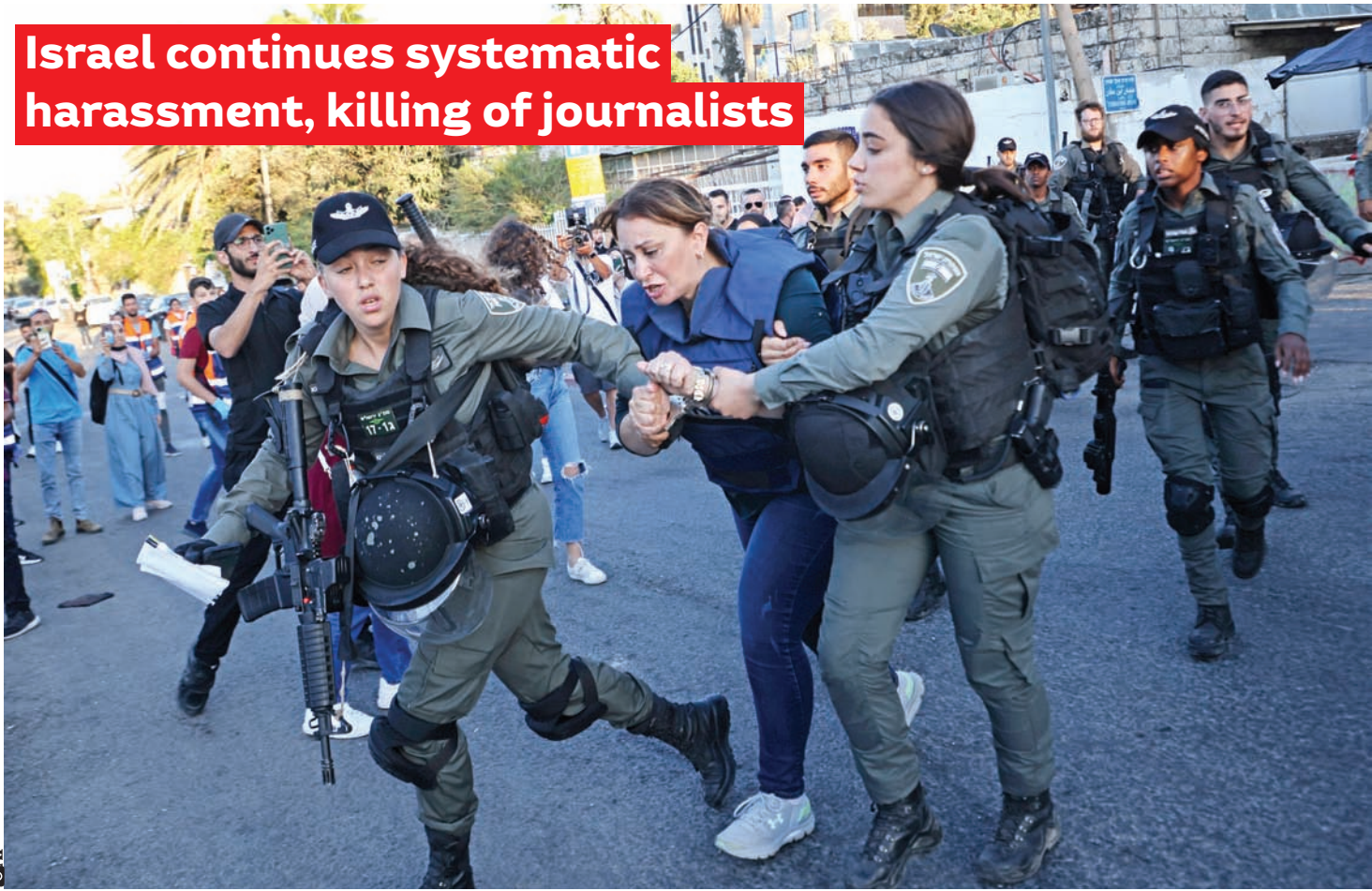
"Before the (IAEA) Board of Governors meeting and the issuance of the resolution, Iran again tried to pave the way for an agreement. All this time, it has been Iran's initiative that, despite the sabotage and the prolongation and waste of energy that the United States has committed, we have tried to move the negotiation forward."

Prior to the meeting of the 35-nation board, the initiative of Iran was conveyed to the U.S. through EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, Khatibzadeh said.

"We even conveyed this initiative and proposal of Iran through two other foreign ministers for the first time in the course of talks to make sure that the message was delivered in full detail, and a timetable was drawn up, but the United States decided again to extend and delay the agreement," Khatibzadeh said.

With this misconception and illusion that it can use the anti-Iran resolution as a leverage, the U.S. took the resolution to the Board of Governors, the spokesman added. Page 2

## Israel continues systematic harassment, killing of journalists



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TEHRAN — Continuing the trend of murdering, kidnapping, threatening and harassing journalists, last Tuesday Tasnim news agency's correspondent was kidnapped, threatened and beaten up by security forces in the West Bank. Why, you ask? Because he

was doing his job, which is reporting!

Tasnim correspondent in the West Bank, Saman Ayman Khwira, recounted his abduction and threat.

"On Tuesday evening, at around 4:30 local time, a car stopped in front of the Rafi-

da State Hospital in Nablus and threatened me with a gun, forcing me to get in the car," said Samir Khwira. "I was in the car when four people in the car severely beat me, insulted me and used obscene and foul words. They threatened me, saying, Page 2

## Iran's export to EU up 37% in 4 months on year

TEHRAN — The value of Iran's export to the European Union (EU)'s member states rose 37 percent in the first four months of 2022, as compared to the first four months of 2021, according to the data released by the European Union's statistics office Eurostat.

The Eurostat's data show that Iran has ex-

ported commodities worth €362 million to the union in the four-month period of this year, while the figure was €263 million in the same times span of the previous year.

The EU's export to Iran has also rose 10 percent to €1.31 billion from €1.187 billion.



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## Iran honors passive defense scientists

TEHRAN — The fifth Salman Farsi Festival was held on Monday at the presence of Mohammad Ali Zolfi Gol, Minister of Science; Mohammad Mehdi Tehranchi, President of the Islamic Azad University; and General Gholamreza Jalali, Passive Defense Organization chief. The festival was aimed to identify, evaluate, introduce and honor the high position of scientists, professors, researchers, inventors, and top innovators in the field of passive defense.

## Iran optimistic to win UNESCO status for geopark

TEHRAN — Iran is hoping to win a UNESCO recognition for its Aras Geopark, which covers an area of about 1670 square kilometers.

The possible registration of Aras Geopark is under study by UNESCO, and if approved by the experts of the supreme council of world geoparks, it will be Iran's second registered geopark after Qeshm Geopark.

Prof. Tran Tan Van, a senior assessor from the UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGp), has recently ap-

preciated the continuous efforts made by the Aras Free Zone Organization in the realms of studying, identifying, and preserving this geological heritage, the report said.

The expert made the remarks during a meeting with the authorities of Aras Geoparks, adding a possible registration would meet strict criteria.

An appropriate understanding of geology and how a geopark is formed is not enough to establish and enter the UNESCO Global Geoparks, the

expert said.

He went on to highlight that the ability of a geopark to develop local livelihoods, knowledge of indigenous customs, and the welfare of local communities are important factors to help achieve this privilege.

Over the past couple of years, Aras Geopark has made its best to become well qualified for the UNESCO status, the report added. Page 6

From Inside



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Opinion



## Four decades of free hosting of refugees

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — As the number one destination for Afghan refugees, Iran alone, more than any other European or Western country in times of crisis, has opened its arms to accept asylum seekers from its eastern neighbor.

World Refugee Day is an international day designated by the United Nations to honor refugees around the globe. It falls each year on June 20 and celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution.

World Refugee Day was held globally for the first time on June 20, 2001, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. It was originally known as Africa Refugee Day, before the United Nations General Assembly officially designated it as an international day in December 2000.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says Iran and Pakistan have hosted millions of Afghan refugees over the past four decades, and estimates suggest that 90 percent of Afghan refugees are residing in these two countries.

The number of Afghan immigrants living in Iran has exceeded four million. After entering Iran, Afghan immigrants had the highest presence in the provinces of Khorasan Razavi, South Khorasan, and Sistan-Baluchestan. Page 4

## Persian translations of latest children's literature ready for publication

TEHRAN — Prolific Iranian translator Sheida Ranjbar has said that her renditions of several of the latest offerings from the world literature are ready for publication.

She told the Persian service of Honaronline on Monday that her translation of American author Kim Ventrella's 2020 book "Hello, Future Me" will be published by Iranban.

The book tells the story of eleven-year-old June, a girl who tries to stop her parents' divorce using her super planning skills, magic and a little help from her future self.

"My challenge with this story was to conjure up all the raw honesty I had never processed regarding my own situation, while adding light, humor, fantasy and sparkly magic," Ventrella has previously said.

She added that the novel isn't autobiographical, but it did allow her to explore a side of her past she had previously ignored, and noted, "I wanted to be aspirational, while at the same time staying real and facing issues head-on." Page 8



## Russian foreign minister to visit Iran by weekend

TEHRAN— Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh announced on Monday that Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will travel to Iran over the weekend.

"Over the weekend, we will be hosting Mr. Lavrov so that we can expand cooperation with the Eurasian region and the Caucasus," Khatibzadeh told a news briefing.

### Iran-Turkey relations are stable

Regarding Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian's impending visit to Turkey, the spokesman said that one of the most important issues in the region is cooperation with Turkey.

"We have had one of the most stable relations with Turkey in recent years. The two sides are trying to find a proper date. This trip will take place soon," Khatibzadeh reiterated.

When asked about Turkish media allegations that Iran is supporting the PKK in northern Syria, Khatibzadeh refuted the claims, calling them "scattered and false accusations made by the media which are not worth responding to."

He went on to note that Tehran's position on the developments in Syria is crystal clear.

"Iran-Turkey relations are good, multi-layered and strategic, but we have clearly stated our position on the Syrian conflict, and it is one of the disputed cases that we, as two mature actors in the region, have tried to resolve and manage through the diplomatic process," the diplomat expressed.

He added that in the recent Astana meeting, good talks were held between the Iranian and Turkish delegations regarding the issue in Syria.

"We stated our position that war is by no means a solution and efforts should be made to preserve Syria's territorial integrity and central sovereignty. We specifically announced this principled position to our friends in Turkey," the diplomat noted.

### Israeli regime is misusing everything for its anti-peace goals

Commenting on the reports about the looming President Joe Biden's regional tour, Khatibzadeh

said, "We also heard the reports. Of course, I won't go into early judgments about what might happen, but what we are witnessing is that the usurper regime is trying to use everything for its sinister, anti-stability, anti-security and anti-peace goals and intentions."

The diplomat then cautioned officials in Washington and some countries in the region not to follow in the footsteps of the Israeli regime.

"We are currently waiting to see what will happen in the future," he added.

### Trade with Africa hit billion dollar

On the Foreign Ministry's achievements in the Ebrahim Raisi administration, the spokesman said, "Mr. Amir Abdollahian spoke many times about the priorities of the diplomatic apparatus, and the most important of all was the neighbor-oriented policy. Most of the travels and diplomatic movements with the neighbors have taken place with the neighbors."

Iran wants to cooperate with the neighbors in a more peaceful environment, and this is in conflict with the actions of some trans-regional players, he asserted.

Khatibzadeh then stated that the volume of Iran's trade relations with its neighbors in some areas has quadrupled.

"Our economic relations with Africa have reached more than \$1 billion in some areas. Of course, we did not forget the balanced policy to follow the same path with the countries of the East and the West," he explained.

### Sanctions are clear economic terrorism

Responding to a question on the unilateral sanctions against the Syrian people, Khatibzadeh said, "The fact that U.S. sanctions are a clear economic terrorism against nations is a common focal point for all those who focus on sanctions. This economic terrorism doubles up for the Syrian people. There were years when the United States and its allies in the region and outside the region, through mercenaries, tried to deploy terrorists in Syria and thereby overthrow the Syrian central government, which was defeated by the fierce resistance of the Syrian people."

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## Israel continues systematic harassment, killing of journalists

From page 1 ► 'you had no right to cover the Al-Najah University student rally, this is destroying the Fatah movement and we do not allow you to do that.' They threatened me for about 30 to 40 minutes and finally threw me out of the car in a deserted place."

He then narrated the last words of the kidnappers, saying, "This was the last time we spoke to you in human language, and next time, with a single bullet to the head, we're done."

With the rise of liberation activities and the rise of resistance in the West Bank, security forces who are working closely with the occupying Israeli regime are increasingly cracking down on Palestinian citizens.

Dealing with student rallies, threatening journalists and so on seem to be measures taken to control the tendency of the people towards the resistance at the request of the Israeli regime.

"I know one of the kidnappers very well," Khwira said of the identities of those who threatened him.

"He belonged to the Security and Prevention Organization, affiliated with the Palestinian Authority."

Referring to the insults and threats he heard, Khwira quoted the PA-affiliated organization member as saying, "Security and Prevention Organization must punish you."

Killing, kidnapping and threatening journalists and media persons is an old habit of the Israeli regime.

Since 2000, 35 journalists have been killed while working in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, says Reporters Without Borders. The Israeli army has never acknowledged any responsibility.

Photographer Mohammed Abed, who worked for Agence France-Presse (AFP) in Gaza for almost 30 years, collapsed while covering the "return marches," largely peaceful demonstrations along the fence separating Gaza from Israel asking for an end to the blockade and for Palestinian refugees to return to their

homeland. His knee was pierced by an Israeli sniper's bullet, leaving the same mark as thousands of others wounded in the enclave.

"I think journalists are targeted," said Mohammed Abed. "I was in an open area, the shooters could clearly distinguish protesters from journalists, and I was wearing a vest that said 'press'."

According to Israeli regulations, journalists have "freedom of movement, unless there is an exceptional reason to deny them access to a particular area." While being accused of shooting and wounding a Palestinian cameraman in the West Bank in 2015, the army cleared its name by responding to a Haaretz reporter, "Unfortunately, there are bad practices among reporters who know the guidelines and, in a sense, challenge the freedom of action of the 'Israeli' forces."

Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has cited some examples of the journalists killed by the Israeli regime from 1992 to 2022: Yaser Murtaga from Ain Media, Simone Camilli from The Associated Press, Shireen Abu Akleh from Al-Jazeera, Fadel Shana from Reuters, and James Miller, a freelance reporter.

Ironically, IDF launches an investigation when there is a claim of excessive force against any individual, and particularly against journalists, according to a military spokeswoman.

In the case of Shireen Abu Akleh, a veteran Al-Jazeera correspondent who was shot in the ear despite wearing a press vest, an IDF report claimed that after a preliminary investigation and analysis of the scene, the Israeli army believes that it is possible that Abu Akleh was killed unintentionally by the army forces without prior identification."

The report went on to claim that the aim of the operation was to arrest a wanted Islamic Jihad operative suspected of what it called "terrorist activity."

"According to the fighters, this is not their first operation in the refugee camp in recent times, the range of shooting at them has been very unusual even compared to previous operations," it added.

The report by the IDF claimed that the Israeli Army emphasizes that "the search for the truth in this incident is not an apology for the operational activity that will continue and does not mean that it does not support the forces that acted in the reality of professional operation!"

Similarly, the Israeli regime accused Yaser Murtaga of being a member of Islamist group Hamas, a claim denied by his family and colleagues. Even the U.S. State Department later admitted Murtaga was vetted before receiving a grant from the United States.

The army said an initial examination found "no suspicion ... which would justify the opening of a criminal investigation" in the case of Murtaga, after fooling the global community that they are launching a "thorough and transparent" investigation.

In a debate hosted by Al Jazeera in Oxford University, Mehdi Hasan - a prominent and prolific British-American political journalist and broadcaster - challenged Danny Ayalon, former Deputy Foreign Minister and a former Knesset member on the Israeli soldiers who target journalists, paramedics, and even children.

"Yaser Murtaga, 30 years old, shot in the stomach by an Israeli sniper. He was 250 meters away from the fence. Why was he shot?"

Ayalon said he came with a "harm(ful) intention." Hasan responded by saying that he was "not Hamas, he was a journalist, and you shot him in the stomach, your country shot him in the stomach, and you claim he had a hurtful intention. That's outrageous!"

A day will come when the global community breaks its silence over the atrocities of the Israeli regime force it to respect international law, yet, this is only achievable through unity.

# Iran: Two FM's, Borrell conveyed Iran's initiative to U.S.

From page 1 ► "Iran's response in this regard was decisive and proportionate," he remarked.

According to the spokesman, now the policy is the same path of diplomacy.

"For a while, they went the wrong way and had a miscalculation, and they were given an appropriate response. We are following the path of diplomacy through Mr. Borrell," the spokesman pointed out.

He added that if the United States agrees, based on its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), must drop all sanctions and not try in vain to maintain the maximum pressure components.

"We can finalize the agreement based on Iran's initiative," he maintained.

### Biden administration build on Trump's failed legacy

Elsewhere in the presser, Khatibzadeh faced a question about the recent phone call between Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and Borrell, in which the EU chief diplomat stated that reaching an agreement in Vienna is within reach.

In response, the spokesman said Washington has adopted the approach of running with the hare



and hunting with the hound and this policy is clear to all.

"When you hear the statements of some U.S. officials, on the one hand, they claim that they want to make up for the Trump administration's mistake and act responsibly in the international system and respect international law; on the other hand, we are witnessing the lawless behavior and continued failed policies of the Trump administration," Khatibzadeh noted.

He went on to caution that this behavior of the United States shows that Iran must be vigilant for "a thousand reasons, and for the thousands of reasons that are added to those reasons every day."

"The U.S. government has caused the international community to distrust this country, and for all

these reasons we must carefully protect the interests and rights of the great people of Iran," the diplomat underlined.

### "Train of diplomacy has not derailed"

Regarding the Vienna talks, Khatibzadeh said that the train of diplomacy to revive the 2015 nuclear deal has not derailed.

"This train (of diplomacy) still has not derailed despite all negligence and actions taken by the United States and continuing the same path that Trump had taken. Why are we at this current predicament? Because in 2018, the United States unilaterally and illegally withdrew from the JCPOA, and exerted maximum pressure, which later, according to them, led to a disgraceful defeat," he added.

According to the spokesman, the

current predicament is because one side did everything it could to undermine the JCPOA, which is endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2231.

The diplomat expressed hope that as Borrell, the coordinator of the JCPOA stated, the American side will return to the path of diplomacy that results in the signing of the agreement as soon as possible.

"We are ready for a good, lasting and effective agreement and we are ready to grasp all the grounds for accomplish it," the spokesman added.

On a question why Iran is giving so much opportunity to the United States, he said, "The United States has overused the tool of sanctions in the international system as much as possible, and some of its sanctions have become a joke."

Khatibzadeh added that the United States' behavior is important in returning to the JCPOA.

"The more sanctions the United States adds, the harder it (the U.S. return) gets. Agents within the United States and the White House are working to preserve Trump's legacy. They certainly cannot preserve Trump's legacy and will call for negotiations," he said, adding that what is left between Tehran and Washington is not limited to just one issue.

## Interior minister: Any movement with eye on U.S. doesn't want Iran's progress

TEHRAN— Iran's Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi told a Monday conference on Popular Governance in the Discourse of Justice and Republic that putting all eggs in the basket of Americans is a grave mistake.

At the beginning of his remarks, the minister said that discourse cannot be found in a vacuum and space, but the discourse must be based on time and location.

Vahidi added, "People are not a political slogan or anything like that for the country's officials.

What is being said to the people in the world is far from what is being said in the Islamic Republic."

The minister noted that religious democracy in the Islamic Republic is completely different from the current notion of democracy in the world, underlining, "For this reason, we need a discourse of justice and republic, one that would make a discovery of the real needs, and this requirement appears in the discourse of the Islamic Republic."

Any party or group that does not oppose the United States and the enemy does not believe

in the progress of the country, Vahidi asserted, adding, "If we want progress, we should not go under the dominance of the U.S. and globalization."

A movement that is forcing the officials to rely on the West and seeking a lenience towards the West is not after the progress of the country, the minister noted.

"Those people are clinging to a string that is rotting and ending up in bullets and mortars, as observed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Ukraine, and Palestine."

**In May 2018, the U.S. withdrew from the nuclear agreement with Iran, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. On several occasions, the U.S. officials indicated that the pain the U.S. sanctions are causing for ordinary Iranians is intentional.**

**The U.S. Treasury Department predicted that U.S. policies would lead to Iran's "mounting financial isolation and economic stagnation."**

**On February 19, 14, the U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo told CBS News, "Things are much worse for the Iranian people [with the U.S. sanctions] ..."**

**On Jun 2019, 24, U.S. former President Trump imposed additional sanctions on Iran.**

[www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)



# Iran manages to host Afghan refugees despite U.S. ruthless sanctions

TEHRAN- The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a welcoming neighbor, has been harboring millions of Afghan refugees for decades, while being subjected to years of sanctions.

The United Nations declared June 20 as World Refugee Day to remember millions of asylum seekers, including Afghans, who have been forced to flee their nation due to decades of foreign-instigated civil war, insecurity and occupation, including the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 that lasted until last year.

The day honors the strength and bravery of those who have been forced to leave violence and cruelty. The designation gives a chance to build solidarity and foster an environment in which people may comprehend the plight of migrants.

They may take an airplane, a boat, or even walk just to survive. The basic desire of all refugees is to find safety and peace.

Iran has displayed excellent neighborliness and kindness, particularly when it comes to sheltering Afghan refugees. Different conflicts and political turbulences have affected Afghans, including the Soviet Union's invasion in the 1980s, the Taliban's takeover of power in 1996, the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, and the Taliban's retake of power in 2021.

Thus, over the course of several decades, Iran has welcomed roughly three million Afghan refugees; nevertheless, it turns out that there are many more Afghan asylum seekers in the Islamic republic who have yet to be counted.

The international community and Afghan authorities have repeatedly



said that the Islamic Republic of Iran and its people have been kind in hosting refugees, despite the fact that the country has been suffering from economic hardships caused by Western pressures and sanctions.

Iran is the fourth-largest host country for asylum seekers, according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Last year's hasty departure of American soldiers from Afghanistan resurrected instability in the nation, forcing millions of Afghans to abandon their homeland once more.

Iran opened border crossings and accepted a large number of refugees, including professors from Afghanistan's institutions, who were housed in Ferdowsi University's residential units in Mashhad, Razavi Khorasan Province.

Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, stated that all Afghan refugees' children in Iran should be provided education services, demonstrating that Iranians are welcoming to asylum seekers from the eastern nation.

Refugees from Afghanistan are permitted to attend Iranian

universities. During the coronavirus epidemic, Iran vaccinated a large number of Afghan refugees, which was commended by international organizations and other governments.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted Iran as a "very significant country" among UN member states, praising the Islamic Republic for generously sheltering Afghan refugees.

**"Iran carries highest burden in area as refugee backer"**

The Iranian president's special representative for Afghanistan, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, has said Iran bears the heaviest burden of refugees among regional countries.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran bears the heaviest burden of refugees in accordance with Islamic, humane standards and by preserving interests among the countries of the region," he noted.

In a tweet on World Refugee Day, Qomi remarked, "The performance of human rights defenders in accepting Afghan, Syrian and Iraqi refugees and prioritizing Ukrainian refugees is contrary to their claims."

"Iran, without the support of international organizations, has accommodated hundreds of thousands of new refugees in the recent crisis in Afghanistan and has now covered millions of refugees with its services," the official pointed out.

**Afghanistan praises Iran for inimitable hospitality**

On World Refugee Day, Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai lauded the Islamic Republic's compassion, saying that Iranians had been hosting Afghan refugees for four decades.

Stanikzai delivered the statements during a conference titled "Future of Relations Between Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries".

According to Afghan media, this summit was held in Kabul, with Taliban officials and Ambassadors from Afghanistan's neighbors in attendance.

During the conference, Afghanistan's deputy foreign minister applauded Iran for its hospitality to Afghan refugees over the last four decades, adding that the country has fulfilled its Islamic responsibilities by sheltering millions of Afghan refugees over the past four decades.

Afghanistan, according to Stanikzai, "calls on neighboring nations to be patient and treat asylum seekers with patience until the return conditions are favorable."

He also urged neighboring countries to collaborate for a prosperous Afghanistan, adding that by banding together, "we will not allow foreigners to interfere in Afghanistan and the region, because the presence of foreigners in the region is destabilizing."

## Sardar Azmoun looks forward to 2022 World Cup

TEHRAN – Iran international forward Sardar Azmoun said they are determined to book a place in the 2022 FIFA World Cup next stage.

Team Melli – with the former Bundesliga player Vahid Hashemian as assistant coach – play the US, England and Wales in Group B.

Azmoun is the vice-captain and third highest goalscorer in the history of the national team: Sardar Azmoun is a superstar in Iran. In addition, he is the big hope for this year's World Cup. An interesting but possibly politically sensitive group.

"We respect all players wherever they come from. There are no problems between us and our primary aim is to play football. We should leave politics to the politicians," the 27-year-old dismisses that.

"We are all united by the ambition of at least going through to the next round and the dream of winning the World Cup," Azmoun said in an interview with Bayer 04 Leverkusen website.

The fact his parents came to Iran from Turkmenistan does not change his allegiance – Iran is his home country. "There are a lot of Turkmen in the north-east of Iran. There's a great relationship with each other, we are of Turkmen extraction but proud to be Iranians."

"Iranians love football and are very passionate. At every home game I see a lot of Iranian flags and am often approached in and around Leverkusen. I'm happy about that and everybody is always very friendly," he said.

## Berdyev named new Tractor manager

TEHRAN – Tractor have appointed former Rubin Kazan coach Kurban Bekiyevich Berdyev as their new manager to take over from Ertugrul Saglam, the Iranian football club said on Sunday.

The 69-year-old coach will work in the club as head coach and technical manager in all levels, the Tabriz based club said.

Tractor have not won a title in the Iran league so far.

They have hired big coaches namely, Georges Leekens, Mustafa Denizli, John Toshack and Antonio Jose Conceicao Oliveira over the past years.

Tractor came 13th in Iran Professional League in the 2021/22 season.

## Leila Heydari becomes first Iranian woman to win a medal in Asian cycling

TEHRAN – Leila Heydari Veirani from Iran claimed the very first medal for Iran in the Asian Track Cycling Championship.

She won a bronze medal in the Junior Women 500m Time Trial with a time of 38.033s.

Gold medal went to South Korean rider Chaeyeon Kim who clocked 35.740s and Sadnya Kokate from India seized the silver with 37.823s.

The 2022 Asian Track Cycling Championships are being held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi and will run till June 22.

## Iranian Para cyclists win medals in Asian championships

TEHRAN – Iran's Mahdi Mohammadi and Behrooz Farzad claimed a gold and silver medal respectively in the 2022 Asian Track Cycling Championships.

Mohammadi won the gold in the Para Men's 4km Individual Pursuit event with a time of 5:24.218s.

His countryman Farzad claimed the silver with 5:34.339s.

Arshad Sheik of India clocked 5:43.604s to finish in third place.

Farzad also clinched a gold in the Para Men 1km Time Trial event.

He finished in the first place with a time 1:16.920s, followed by Indians Basavaraj Horradi (1:24.048) and Gurlal Singh (1:30.668).

The 2022 Asian Track Cycling Championships are being held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi and will run till June 22.

## Iran's Heidarian in 2022 Men's Youth All-star Team

TEHRAN – Iranian player Ali Heidarian has been selected in the All-star Team of the 2022 IHF Men's Youth Beach Handball World Championship.

He helped Iran win first ever medal in the world championship.

Iran defeated France 2-0 to win a bronze medal, while Croatia defeated Brazil 2-1 in the gold medal match.

On the final day of the Championship, the Greece 2022 Men's Youth All-star Team was selected by the IHF Beach Handball Working Group.

The selection is based on performance throughout the tournament.

Six national teams are represented among the individual positions, plus a seventh team that has received the Fair Play Award.

- MVP: Lars Zelser, Germany
- Best goalkeeper:** Antonio Kranjcevic, Croatia
- Best left wing:** Eduardo Escobedo Romero, Spain
- Best right wing:** Luka Glavendekic, Croatia
- Best specialist:** Yalles Lara Caetano, Brazil
- Best pivot:** Ali Heidarian, Iran
- Best defender:** Adrien Oulieu, France
- Top scorer:** Lennart Liebeck, Germany – 143 points
- Fair Play Award:** Togo

## Iranian female referee gets World Fair Play Award

TEHRAN – The Vice-President of Iran's Canoeing Federation has received the World Fair Play Award.

Thanks to her accomplishments in promoting fair plays, Katayoun Ashraf has got the award.

Ashraf was nominated for the award for her success in the development of women's sailing sports with the 2017 Women's Sports Development project, elite selection, and training of teenagers and sailing coaches, holding the Asian Junior and Youth Championships, and officiating the 2019 and 2021 Slalom World Championships.

## Iran Para powerlifter Aghghaleh makes history

TEHRAN – Samaneh Hoda Aghghaleh became the first Iranian female powerlifter to compete in a World Para Powerlifting championships.

Her appearance marks an important example of the benefits of the 'She Can Lift' movement started by the World Para Powerlifting.

Aghghaleh represented Iran in women's up to 86kg weight category.

Zeynab Yaghoubi in women's up to 73kg and Fatemeh Ansari in women's up to 67kg also competed in the championships held in South Korea.

She Can Lift champions the concept that women belong in all aspects of sports. It works to encourage women that they belong in the sport of powerlifting, no matter the country they were born in. The campaign won an IPC award for its role in championing gender equality.

## Iraq clears debts to Iran in blow to U.S. sanctions

TEHRAN – Iran and Iraq both have announced that Baghdad has cleared its debts to Iran after months of talks over how to move forward with the financial issue.

The move came after intensive diplomacy between Iran and Iraq. A few weeks ago, Iranian Ambassador to Iraq Mohammad Kazem Al Sadeq met with governor of Iraq's Central Bank Mustafa Ghalib Mokhif in Baghdad to discuss ways to clear Baghdad's gas and electricity debts to Iran. During the meeting, they discussed aspects of banking and economic cooperation between the two countries, the payment of financial dues from Iraq, and overcoming the obstacles facing the work of Iranian companies in the country, according to Iraqi media.

The repayments of Iraq's debts faced two major problems. First, the Iraqi Parliament's delay in approving the country's fiscal budget. Second, U.S. unilateral sanctions on Iran.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi had sought to find a solution to both issues. He said that "one of the problems that affected the delay in the payment of dues to Iran is the absence of the budget."

It seems that this issue has been resolved in recent weeks. Al-Kadhimi said Iraq's debts date back to before 2020. Al-Kadhimi had cleared the responsibility of his government, which was formed in May 2020, from Iran's gas debt, amounting to about \$16 billion. He said, "There are no debts owed by the current government regarding Iranian gas."

## Turkmenistan renews invitation to Raisi to attend Caspian Sea summit

TEHRAN- In a phone call with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Sunday evening, Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov highlighted that his country's president has officially invited President Ebrahim Raisi to join the Caspian Sea littoral countries conference.

During the conversation, Amir Abdollahian and Meredov also agreed on the need to completely implement all agreed-upon clauses, and they

Iraq's Electricity Ministry echoed a similar thing in its statement announcing the repayment of debts. "The ministry announces the start of the payment procedures that will be completed within the next two days, bearing in mind that the issue of financial obligations towards neighboring Iran is one of the problems carried over by previous governments, and the current government has borne it, by heading towards internal borrowing to pay off debts, which were not paid due to the scarcity of financial allocations resulting from not approving the budget for that year," it said.

After much bickering, Iraq paid its debts to Iran. And Tehran confirmed that it received its money from Iraq.

Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji announced that Iran had received \$1.6 billion in arrears for gas exports to Iraq.

"In light of the active energy diplomacy, and after several months of negotiations, we received, hours ago, \$1.6 billion in arrears due from past years regarding gas exports to Iraq," Oji wrote on Twitter.

"Since the beginning of this (Iranian) year (beginning on March 21) compared to the same period last year, the country's gas exports have increased by 25%, and the receipt of hard currency earnings from it has increased by 90%," he added.

Iraq relies on Iranian gas to operate electric power plants. Earlier, the Iraqi Minister of Electricity Adel Karim announced that Iraq needs Iranian gas for 5-10

years while confirming the ministry's agreement with the Iranian side to supply the country with 50 million cubic meters of gas per day.

The repayment of Iraq's debts to Iran came at a time when U.S. unilateral sanctions against Iran are still in place. This may be the reason why some analysts underlined the need for South Korea to follow in the footsteps of Iraq. South Korea owes Iran \$7 billion in oil debts and has been reluctant to clear its debts. Iran has called on Seoul to pay its debts but the Iranian demand has fallen on deaf ears.

South Korea has linked the repayment of debts to the outcome of talks in Vienna over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh pointed to South Korea's stonewalling in his Monday presser. "A new government has come to power in [South] Korea and they have made promises that they want to pay off Iran's debt, but we have not seen any move," he said.

Khatibzadeh noted, "We are waiting to see the difference between the new government and the previous non-compliant government in terms of debt repayment."

He then appeared to compare South Korea with Iraq. "We give the new Korean government time to show in practice what it is doing to repay its debts, like the friends we had in the region," he said.

signed nine cooperation documents.

During his stay in Tehran, the Turkmen president also met with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei. At the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei called for deepening relations in the interest of both countries. "The policy of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to expand relations with neighboring countries, and this is a completely correct policy," the Leader said.

## Qalibaf meets Croatian parliamentary delegation

TEHRAN – Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf received a delegation of Croatian lawmakers in Tehran on Monday.

In the meeting, Qalibaf blamed the contradiction between Washington's words and deeds as the obstacle to progress in the Vienna talks on the revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), according to Tasnim.

He said the contradiction between the words and actions of the Americans has prevented the Vienna negotiations from bearing fruit.

"While cruel and illegal sanctions are being imposed against Iran, it matters which countries stand together in difficult circumstances," the

Iranian Parliament speaker stated.

In comments on Friday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi denounced Washington's conflicting policy of advocating negotiations and ramping up sanctions against Tehran at the same time, saying the Islamic Republic has a right to be mistrustful of the U.S.

"On the one hand, the Americans send messages that 'we are prepared for agreement and negotiations'. On the other hand, they ramp up the sanctions. The world should give us the right to distrust them (Americans). They renege on promises," the president stated.

Qalibaf also touched on the need to boost

trade ties between Iran and Croatia. He said, "Parliamentary friendship groups of the two countries can multiply the economic relations of the two countries by activating these relations more than before and facilitating trade relations."

In the meeting, Qalibaf offered congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the official establishment of relations between Iran and Croatia, and expressed hope that the parliamentary relations between the two countries would become more active.

Underlining that Iran and Croatia have recognized their friends in difficult times, Qalibaf said, "The difficult days of the Balkan War brought us together, sustained relations, and perpetuated it in the memory of states and nations."



## Monthly red meat production increases 11% yr/yr



TEHRAN- Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that production of red meat in Iran stood at 50,761 tons in the second month of the current Iranian calendar year (April 21-May 21), showing 11 percent growth compared to the same month in the past year.

The SCI's report said that beef and veal had the lion's share in the country's red meat output during the second month with 25,295

tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 21,331 tons, goat meat with 3,141 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 994 tons.

As reported, the amount of red meat supply in the official slaughterhouses of the country in the second month of this year has also risen eight percent compared to the first month.

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb being the most sought after.

However, the consumption per person is around a third of what is normally seen in countries like the U.S. and Australia, mainly due to the prohibition of pork in Islamic law.

The major part of Iran's red meat imports comes from countries like Brazil, where Iranian supervisors directly control culling methods to ensure they comply with religious rules.

## Value of Iran's export to Turkey rises 60%

TEHRAN- The value of Iran's export to Turkey rose 60 percent in the first four months of 2022, as compared to the same period of time in 2021, according to the data released by Turkish Statistical Institute.

The released data show that Iran has exported commodities worth \$1.231 billion to its neighbor in the four-month period.

Iran-Turkey four-month trade also increased 38 percent to stand at \$2.175 billion, while the figure was \$1.574 billion in the same time span of 2021.

Meanwhile, Turkey's export to Iran rose 18 percent to stand at \$944 million in the first four months of this year, while the figure was \$799 million in the same period of time in the past year.

The value of trade between the two neighbors has increased 53 percent to \$5.594 billion in 2021.

During a webinar, held in March, on trade relations between Iran and Turkey, which was held through cooperation between Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) and Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ICOC), and attended by officials from both chambers and a group of entrepreneurs, ways to develop economic relations between the two countries and some problems in this due were examined.

In this virtual conference, which was attended by more than 250 entrepreneurs from Iran and Turkey, the opportunities for cooperation between the two countries were examined and the two sides emphasized the development of cooperation.

Addressing the conference, Nihat Alayoglu, the secretary-general of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, referring to the political, economic and cultural similarities between Iran and Turkey, said: "The two countries have long-standing relations dating back more than 400 years, and more than 500 kilometers of common border, as well as several trade agreements with each other, in particular, the preferential trade agreement, which was



concluded in 2015, is very important for both countries."

He added that the value of trade between Iran and Turkey has increased from \$1.2 billion in 2001 to about \$5.6 billion in 2021. Of this amount, \$2.7 billion is allocated to Turkish exports to Iran and \$2.8 billion is related to Iran's exports to Turkey. Machinery and equipment are among the top exports of Turkey to Iran, and mainly materials such as copper and plastic are imported from Iran.

Noting that Turkey accounts for seven percent of Iran's \$39-billion imports, he added: "Our goal is to increase Turkish exports to Iran to \$10 billion, and it is obvious that the two countries' chambers of commerce have a role to play in increasing trade cooperation."

Bahman Eshqi, the secretary-general of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, for his part put emphasis on the significance of expanding economic ties between Iran and Turkey, and said, "Turkey is one of the gateways of Iran's economy to Europe, and Iran is one of the gateways connecting Turkey to the Silk Road and the lands of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) members. Iran can also be the main gateway for Turkey to join India and the subcontinent."

Emphasizing that economic cooperation between the two countries is a necessity, Eshqi continued: "Compromise between the two nations has been strong for the last three centuries, and although at times there have been competitions between the two countries, Iran-Turkey cooperation is still developing."

# Iran's export to EU up 37% in 4 months on year

From page 1 ► According to the Eurostat, the value of trade between Iran and the European Union reached €4.863 billion in 2021, registering a nine-percent growth compared to the previous year.

The trade between Iran and the European Union during 2020 stood at €4.458 billion.

Iran exported €922 million worth of commodities to the union during January-December 2021 to register a 29-percent rise year on year.

Based on the mentioned data, the exports from Europe to the Islamic Republic in the said year also increased by five percent, standing at €3.941 billion.

Iran had imported €3.745



billion worth of commodities from the European Union states in 2020, while exporting €713 million to the region.

Among European countries, Germany was Iran's top trading partner in 2021, accounting for about a third of Iran's trade with the European Union.

Germany exported €1.449 billion worth of goods to Iran while importing €274 million worth of commodities from the Islamic Republic. The country's total trade with Iran was 1.723 billion euros.

Italy was Iran's second-biggest trading partner with

€628 million euros of commodity exchanges. The country exported €450 million worth of goods to Iran while importing €178 million worth of products from the country.

The Netherlands stood in third place with a trade of €481 million. The country exported €443 million euros worth of goods to Iran and imported €38 million.

Iran mainly exports foodstuff and livestock, beverages and tobacco, raw materials, mineral fuels, and vegetable oils to the European countries, while foodstuff, beverages and tobacco, mineral fuels, vegetable oils, and chemicals are also the main products imported from the union.

## Special barter system to be set up in Iran-Oman trade

TEHRAN- A special barter system will be established in trade between Iran and Oman, the head of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce stated.

Mohsen Zarabi made the remarks pointing to the 145-percent growth in trade between the two countries in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Zarabi has also said that the trade between Iran and Oman is expected to reach \$2 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2023).

He made the remarks in the annual ordinary general assembly of the mentioned chamber held at the place of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) on Wednesday, saying, "Considering the upward trend of trade with this country [Oman], it is predicted that by the end of the year, we will record 1.2 billion exports and \$2 billion of trade."

Last year, the trade between the two countries reached \$1.336 billion, indicating a growth of 57 percent compared to the preceding year, Zarabi said.

He said that in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year, exports to Oman reached \$283 million with a growth of 28

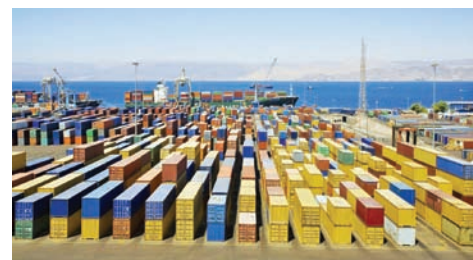
percent, noting that the figure in the import sector increased by 187 percent to \$128 million dollars.

According to Zarabi, the trade between the two countries reached \$331 million in the mentioned two months, registering a growth of 145 percent.

The official further noted that agreements have been reached to increase Iranian exports to the Arab country, saying: "One of the ways to increase trade is to introduce Iranian commodities to Omani traders and raise awareness; This is possible by sending trade delegations and holding exhibitions in this country."

In late May, Head of Iran Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak and Omani Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef met and agreed on creating a roadmap for the expansion of trade relations and also discussed the establishment of an Iranian trade center in Muscat.

Speaking in this meeting, Peyman-Pak voiced the readiness of his organization and the Iranian Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade for providing the necessary infrastructure for expanding trade exchanges between the two countries.



Referring to the recent visit of an Iranian delegation to Oman for attending a business forum hosted by the Muscat Chamber of Commerce, and also holding Iran's pavilion at Oman's International Construction Technology, Infrastructure and Building Materials Exhibition (Project Oman 2022), Peyman-Pak proposed that a joint committee would be formed at the deputy level to pursue the development of mutual economic and trade relations.

He also proposed signing a roadmap for trade cooperation between Iran and Oman, which was welcomed by the Omani minister.

Mentioning some of the challenges in the way of developing economic cooperation between Tehran and Muscat, Peyman-Pak said that talks were underway between the ministries and private institutions of the two countries to resolve the problems related to transportation and banking relations.

## About 25% of country's needed gas to be supplied from UGS by next 5 years

TEHRAN- About 25 percent of the gas needed inside the country will be supplied from the underground gas storage (UGS) facilities by the next five years, the managing director of Iran Gas Engineering and Development Company (IGEDC) stated.

As announced by Reza Noshadi, 14 gas storage facility development projects are currently underway across the country.

According to the official, in addition to the geographical distribution of the mentioned projects all around the country, they also have unique features in terms of the required technology and complexity of operations.



Storage in a salt dome and water reservoir are two of the mentioned projects which are being conducted for the first time in the country, while Ghezel Tappeh Reservoir is also one of the country's most exceptional hydrocarbon fields in terms of temperature and pressure, Noshadi said.

"The development of such fields significantly improves the skills

of Iranian engineers and leads to the integration of knowledge and technology in the country, so we need to attract experts and experienced engineers to manage and implement these strategic projects," he added.

Noshadi further stressed the importance of timely implementation of storage development projects and called for the allocation of human resources needed to fulfill commitments on time.

Following the development of the South Pars gas field and the increase in the country's gas production capacity, the construction and development of the country's natural gas storage

facilities have become a top priority.

In this regard, Oil Ministry has been following a comprehensive plan to increase the country's natural gas storage capacity to 6.5 billion cubic meters (bcm) by the Iranian calendar year 1402 (starting in March 2023). The country's current gas storage capacity stands at 3.25 bcm.

Iran currently has two major natural gas storage facilities in Sarajeh and Shourijeh, in which every year the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) stores the gas received from gas refineries all over the country to be used in the colder months of the year.

## TEDPIX gains 1,200 points on Monday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 1,286 points to 1.547 million on Monday.

As reported, over 5.837 billion securities worth 38.113 trillion rials (about \$136 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 370 points, and the second market's index gained 4,361 points.

A market analyst believes that the Iranian stock market has the potential to grow despite the distrust created in the market as a result of some bad decisions.

Emphasizing that there is potential for growth in the market, Hassan Kazemzadeh told ISNA on June 5: "Given this potential, the market will grow. Of course, there are ups and downs, but no matter how much distrust there is, the changes of major economic factors will affect the market, but this effect takes place gradually and over

time."

According to the analyst, uncertainty about monitoring policies, especially interference in valuing the shares of companies, imposition of various duties, imposing corporate expenses such as taxes and export duties, etc., has caused shareholders to be pessimistic about the market.

"Although there is a 30 to 40 percent growth potential in the market, even professionals are disappointed," he regretted.

Regarding the situation of the capital market in the second half of the year, Kazemzadeh said: "According to the fundamental analysis, many stocks that are profitable, regardless of whether their profit margins or profitability are high or low, have the potential to reach their price ceiling of the Iranian calendar year 1399 (ended on March 20, 2021). If this happens, the market



index will also pass the ceiling of that year."

Another market analyst 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, Ahmad Eshtiaqi pointed to the growth 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."

The analyst noted that the shareholders' interest in the capital market over the past few years has been due to the value of companies' stock, so when the shares still have room to grow, the market index will grow as well.

The capital market expert further mentioned another factor influencing the rise of the stock market index and continued: "World prices rose sharply after the Russia and Ukraine war and oil prices reached more than \$100, and this has affected the performance of some companies to some extent."

He stated that in addition to the crude oil prices, the prices of petrochemical products and metals like copper, zinc, and other commodities have risen.

Given that the stock market is commodity-based, therefore, the shares of the

companies and refineries also experience significant growth in value, he said.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors, the offering of the shares of major Iranian car companies namely Iran Khodro and Saipa also helped to stimulate the growth in the capital market.

Asked about his view on the trend of the market in the current year, Eshtiaqi said: "According to the forecasts, it seems that the stock market index will reach the range of 1.8 million points by the end of 1401."

According to him, most of the market growth will occur by the end of the fourth Iranian calendar month of Tir (July 22) and will experience a growth of about 20 percent by that point.

"If the nuclear deal is revived, we will see good days in the capital market and other parallel markets will not have much luck in comparison to the stock market," he added.



# Palestinians mark 40 days after Abu Aqleh’s murder

From page 1 ▶ The cold-blooded murder appears to be part of the Israeli campaign to silence the Palestinian voice in a similar fashion to it’s designation of six Palestinian civil society groups as terrorist organizations. These were groups that provided evidence to the ICC investigating Israeli war crimes, as well as information to the outside world about Palestinian suffering.

By silencing the Palestinians, Israel believed it can carry on with its task of ethnically cleansing the Palestinians. Lately the regime has been killing Palestinians on a regular basis.

According to the CNN probe Abu Aqleh was actively targeted when she was shot dead.

Shtayyeh said that “Shireen’s case has become a witness in the International Criminal Court to the crimes of the occupation,” he warned that not punishing Israel would make [the regime] kill more “that is why Israel must be punished,”

The commemoration event, which was organized by the Palestinian Ministry of Women’s Affairs also held a special photo exhibition for the slain veteran journalist, who was wearing a helmet and blue protective vest marked “Press” (used by all journalists in the occupied Palestinian territories) when she was shot dead.

The Minister for Women’s Affairs, Amal Hamad said, during her speech, that “Shireen represents the suffering of Palestinian women, as well as the martyrdom of the [female] journalists Ghufraan and Rasna, as well as female prisoners and detainees in the occupation prisons.”

Speaking at the ceremony on behalf of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, the deputy head of the Fatah movement, Mahmoud al-Aloul, said the Palestinian criminal investigation was “transparent, professional and carried out by the Public Prosecution and the Palestinian security services, it revealed the truth, and the investigation’s results are available to all international bodies, and a copy of it was handed over to the Abu



Aqleh’s family and Al Jazeera.”

Al Jazeera has confirmed it has obtained an image of the bullet that was used to kill it’s veteran journalist.

The news channel announced that ballistic and forensic experts who viewed the image said it was a “green-tipped bullet” which was “designed to pierce armor and is used in an M4 rifle.”

The round was extracted from the reporter’s head and analyzed by Al Jazeera using 3D models; which experts told the news station was a “5.56mm caliber – the same used by Israeli forces” and that “the round was designed and manufactured in the United States”

A military expert told the news network the weapon and round used are regularly carried by Israeli troops “This M4 and this munition is used by the Israeli army. It is available and used by the units. I cannot say the whole unit, or most of the soldiers, but they use it,” the military expert said.

“When any soldier uses it, he uses it for a definite target – he wants to hunt, he wants to kill ... There is no way to use it for another thing,” he added.

The Palestinian Authority has pledged to retain possession of the bullet, refusing to hand it over to the Israeli military saying it does not trust the regime.

Palestinians have instead referred the case to the international criminal court in The Hague, which is investigating Israeli war crimes.

The Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Riyad Al-

Maliki, said in his speech that “the assassination of Shireen Abu Aqleh is a war crime that is added to the list of systematic crimes, and that the occupation is committing its crimes against the Palestinian people in perpetuating the apartheid regime, and in violation of the provisions of international law.”

Al-Maliki also said that “despite the international condemnation of the crime of killing Abu Aqleh, Israel did not heed these convictions, and attacked her body, suppressed her funeral, attacked her home and prevented mourners from reaching it”

He pointed out that “the policy of impunity that Israel has entrenched has allowed it to repeat these crimes against journalists.”

The Palestinian foreign minister concluded that, “[The PA] has submitted a report to the International Criminal Office about the crime of assassinating Abu Aqleh, and on the ninth of this month, we handed over the prosecutor to the court, Karim Khan, the investigation file related to her martyrdom, and that the State of Palestine will not accept that Israel investigate this crime.”

Israel has given mixed accounts of the murder case, initially claiming Palestinian gunfire left the journalist dead. The regime’s narrative later changed after footage of the shooting contradicted Israeli claims. Under mounting pressure, the regime quickly acknowledged that one of it’s troops may have been responsible.

Among the regime’s latest

statement is that is cannot conduct a probe without undergoing ballistic testing into the lethal bullet.

Palestinians doubt any Israeli investigation will lead to accountability. Other Palestinian journalists who also wore a vest with “Press” clearly labeled on it have been shot dead by Israeli snipers.

The regime regularly claims to be conducting an investigation after killing journalists but nothing ever emerges from the alleged probe. The case of Yasser Murtaja is one of the more notable recent murders by Israeli regime snipers. After Murtaja was shot dead in 2018 in the besieged Gaza Strip, Israel only claimed to have launched an investigation into his murder after international outcry but later closed the case.

The Israeli army’s so-called top lawyer has already said any criminal charges in Abu Aqleh’s murder would be unlikely because the circumstances surrounding her killing “amounted to active combat.”

Israel has already closed the case it was supposedly investigating into the regime’s military viciously attacking mourners carrying Abu Aqleh coffin during the funeral possession, causing the casket to fall. The attack on the funeral caused global outrage which even embarrassed the regime’s staunchest ally the United States.

In essence all the evidence points to a targeted killing of the Al Jazeera journalist during a time of heightened tensions in occupied Palestinian territories.

During the ceremony, the head of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, Nasser Abu Bakr, said “the day will come when the killers will be held accountable for their crime, and that the killing of Shireen comes in the context of a systematic policy.”

Shireen’s brother, Antoine Abu Aqleh, also spoke at the event demanding justice for his sister so that “her memory remains eternal.”

He also expressed his gratitude to everyone who have stood up for his sister over the past 40 days.

## Canadian lawyer: Officials denounce Foodbenders to receive political support from Zionists

Stephen Ellis, a barrister and solicitor based in Toronto, has told Fars News Agency that the Israel lobby put “pressure on the City of Toronto to prosecute Foodbenders for alleged discrimination against two Jewish customers.”

Ellis who represented Kimberly Hawkins, the owner of Foodbenders, in the court, says, “It was clear that this was a political prosecution from the start” intended to “punish Foodbenders for speaking out in support of Palestine.”

Foodbenders was in the news for displaying pro-Palestinian signage critical of Israel. It was confronted by the Israel lobby which waged an all-out campaign to silence the pro-Palestinian catering. Also, the city of Toronto laid charges against Hawkins for discrimination; the charges were officially dismissed by a provincial court later.

Below is the full text of the interview with Ellis:

**Did you fear to lose the case in the court against major Zionist groups and officials of the city, province and the state?**

[Barbara] Bank is the name of the complainant in a human rights case against Foodbenders. She is a leader with the Council for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), one of the more aggressive Israel lobby organizations in the country. She has never set foot in Foodbenders but claims discrimination because she is a Zionist.

The Israel lobby also put pressure on the City of Toronto to prosecute Foodbenders for alleged discrimination against two Jewish customers. As it turned out, and as we knew all along, there was no actual discrimination, and the charges were ultimately dismissed on November 15, 2021.

As you may recall, this all stems from a #zionistsnotwelcome hashtag that was found on a Foodbenders Instagram post. The Israel lobby took this opportunity to engage in a shameless and protracted publicity stunt, alleging that the restaurant had it in for Jews, which was complete nonsense. But as they say, do not let the facts get in the way of a good story.

In the case involving the City charges, it was clear that this was a political prosecution from the start. We were confident that this case would fade



away at Trial, which is what happened.

**For what reason do you think the city of Toronto went political in its case against Foodbenders?**

There was absolutely no merit to this case. It was all bark and no bite. The Israel lobby, including members of the provincial legislature were putting very public and serious pressure to bring charges against Foodbenders. Normally, the prosecution will not bring a matter to Trial if there is no real prospect of a conviction. This time, it did not seem to matter. This was going to Trial come hell or high water and the fact that it had no merit whatsoever did not seem to bother them. I think the whole point of the charges was to punish Foodbenders for speaking out in support of Palestine, not bring about justice.

**What was the significance of the Canadian officials denouncing Foodbenders?**

In early July 2020, the Mayor of Toronto, John Tory, the Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford and the Prime Minister of Canada, Justine Trudeau, all shamefully denounced Foodbenders without giving a single thought to the facts. They were cynically playing to a Zionist constituency in the search for political support. None of these individuals have any reputation for integrity in their respective spheres. Since the foundation of the State of Israel, it should also be said that Canada has consistently shown itself to be a steadfast ally to Israeli apartheid. Recently, politicians have also gone the extra mile to try and criminalize free speech on Israel/Palestine with the denunciation of the BDS movement and the imposition of the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism. This is the immediate context of the attack on Foodbenders.

## Washington, allies plan for a long war against Russia in Ukraine

*Kiev worries support from its partners could fade as the costs increase*

The Washington Post reports the White House is planning for an extended conflict in Ukraine. Leaders in NATO, the UK and Germany have joined the US in support of a long war. However, there is anxiety among some in the Western alliance that war fatigue will set in and support for Kiev will dry up.

The Post reported an unnamed senior State Department official said, “Biden administration Officials had discussed the possibility of a protracted conflict with global spill-over effects even before February, as U.S. intelligence suggested Putin was preparing to invade.”

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said, “We’re here to dig in our spurs.” Austin made the comment during a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group. At the conference, the defense secretary announced Germany was sending long-range rockets to Kiev, and Slovakia was sending Mi-series helicopters.

The White House followed the conference by announcing a \$1 billion weapons transfer to Ukraine. The package includes Harpoon anti-ship missiles and 155MM howitzers. On Friday, Ukrainian officials claimed a Harpoon missile was used to sink a Russian tug boat in the Black Sea. In a now-deleted tweet, a Ukrainian official said that Western countries were planning to arm Ukraine with the anti-ship missiles to sink Russian ships in the Black Sea.

On Sunday, NATO Secretary-General Jen Stoltenberg said, “We must prepare for the fact that it could take years. We must not let up in supporting Ukraine.” He added, “Even if the costs are high, not only for military support, also because of rising energy and food prices.”

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson made his second trip to Kiev since Russia invaded on February 24. While meeting with President Volodymyr Zelensky, Johnson pledged the UK would train 10,000 Ukrainian troops every 120 days. “The UK is with you, and we will be with you until you ultimately prevail,” Johnson said.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz indicated Ukraine should expect more support from the West. He said at an upcoming Group of Seven summit the attendees will make clear Kiev can expect to receive the support it needs “for as long as necessary.”

## Sanctions on Syria are hurting Syrians

*Piling on sanctions and blocking other countries’ reconstruction efforts will only punish the Syrian people*



While rising oil prices have blunted U.S. sanctions targeting Russia, which saw its oil revenue generate 93 billion euros, no lifeline has spared Syria—specifically the Syrian people—from the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act.

Today marks two years since the Caesar Act came into effect. The act expanded upon past U.S. sanctions, targeting “anyone providing support to the Syrian government and senior political figures, supporting the Syrian oil and gas industry, providing military aircraft or parts, and providing construction or engineering services directly or indirectly to the Syrian government”—opening the door for the U.S. to sanction not only Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s allies within the country’s borders but also any foreign entities willing to help him.

This strategy of maximum pressure sanctions has not worked. So far, it has garnered few concessions and extracted no meaningful change. Though it is successfully delivering punitive justice, the U.S. sanctions strategy in Syria does not punish Assad—it punishes Syrians, whether they support the regime or not. Currently, nine in 10 Syrians live in poverty, and more than six in 10 face the risk of going hungry. U.S. sanctions exacerbate Syria’s immiserated economic condition by blocking prospective economic cooperation from willing regional or international partners.

The U.S. sanctions campaign in Syria intended

to cause enough economic harm to pressure the government to such a point that it would “crack,” making it impossible for Assad to remain in power or forcing concessions regarding human rights and availability of aid. Despite Washington’s best efforts over the last decade, the pain the U.S. has inflicted upon Syria and its people has not translated into a change in regime or behavior, branding the current sanctions and any future sanctions the United States may levy as impotent and futile.

These sanctions have failed for two reasons: the U.S. is asking for unattainable ends that Assad views as detrimental to his security and power, and Assad is able to weather the sanctions with Russian and Iranian support. There is no strategic or moral case for sanctions if, while noble in theory, they prove to be a devastating means with no achievable or productive end.

Syria’s neighbors have started to recognize the reality Washington refuses to admit—Assad is not going anywhere and neither is Syria’s Russian and Iranian backing. Beginning in December 2018, Arab countries began to reopen their embassies in Damascus—the United Arab Emirates (UAE) being the first to do so. Today, 13 Arab League countries have reengaged with Assad, and all but two countries – Kuwait and Qatar – appear supportive of reengagement with Syria.

Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed even criticized the Caesar Act; the UAE is willing to help Syria, but the cost of prospective sanctions “makes this path very difficult, not only

for us as a nation, but also for the private sector.” Still, the U.S. refuses to deviate from its policy of regime isolation. The U.S. should encourage potential support from regional partners—those with a greater stake in Syria’s future stability than the United States. It is in our interest to shift the cost of reconstruction onto regional partners, such as the UAE, which has the means, willingness, and compelling interest to bear this burden instead of repelling potential foreign investment. The last thing the U.S. should want is to shoulder the estimated \$250 billion to \$400 billion reconstruction bill for Syria’s reconstruction alone.

It is prudent to disperse the cost of Syria’s recovery to others who are willing and able. If not, it will only be more likely that the U.S. will foot the bill once it grows weary of its own obstinacy. By continuing this pattern, the Syrian people will be forced to pay the price in the meantime.

Piling on sanctions and blocking other countries’ reconstruction efforts will punish the Syrian people, but it will not change Assad’s position, liberalize his regime, or promote greater regional stability. The strategic and moral imperative is for the Biden administration to abandon a harsh, failed, sanctions-based policy for one based on diplomacy and buck-passing. Such a policy would benefit the United States and spare the Syrian people needless hardship after 11 years of civil war.

(Source: reason.com)

(Source: antiwar.com)



## Kazakhstan to give visa-free 14-day entry to Iranian citizens

TEHRAN – Kazakhstan will exempt Iranian nationals from needing an entry visa for a stay of up to 14 days, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has said, in a move to support trade and tourism.

“We are introducing a visa-free regime for Iranian citizens for a period of 14 days,” Kazinform quoted Tokayev as saying on Sunday.

Tokayev made the remarks in a press conference after a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran.

This measure is aimed at further expansion of cooperation in various areas, including boosting contacts among the representatives of the business community, and attracting more tourists, Tokayev stated.

The president of Kazakhstan arrived in Tehran for a one-day official visit on



Sunday and co-chaired the joint meeting of high-ranking delegations with his Iranian counterpart.

The two presidents signed a joint statement in the meeting, after which ministers, provincial governors, and authorities from the two sides signed nine cooperation documents and memoranda of understanding.

## Bangladeshi ambassador visits Mofakham complex



TEHRAN –On Sunday, Dhaka's ambassador to Tehran Gousal Azam Sarker toured the Mofakham complex in northeast Iran.

Several Iranian cultural officials and local tourism officials accompanied the envoy during his visit, North Khorasan province's tourism chief said on Monday.

As part of the ambassador's visit, pieces of folk music were performed in the historical structure, Ali Mostofian added.

The Qajar-era (1789–1925) Mofakham

historical-cultural complex was built in 1921 by Mohammad Khan Shadloo, also known as Sardar Mofakham, to live in along with his family.

The complex has different sections including the mirror house, the mansion, the pavilion, and the Hoz-Khaneh, all of which are located in Mofakham Garden with an area of several hectares.

The complex, which was restored and turned into an anthropology museum in 1991, has been inscribed on the National Heritage list.

Though North Khorasan may not be the first choice of travelers, its tourism is getting momentum.

According to the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, 1200 historical structures have been identified, of which 655 properties have been inscribed on the National Heritage list so far.

## Ritual of rolling babies in flowers revived in southern Iran

TEHRAN – Gol Ghaltan ceremony (literally meaning rolling in flowers) has been revived in Khafr county of the southern Fars province, CHTN reported on Monday.

Recently, with the aim of reviving the 100-year-old ceremony that hasn't been performed for a long time, the ritual has been inscribed on the national heritage list, the report added.

Gol Ghaltan is performed in several parts of the country in spring, but in Khafr it is performed with daffodils instead of roses, which are native to this region.

Furthermore, the ceremony is held in winter instead of spring due to the time of daffodil growth.

Gol Ghaltan has roots in an old Iranian myth called 'The Smiling Flower', in which pure and holy humans promised the birth of a child.

People in this region believe that rolling babies among the flowers gives them joy and



refreshment while keeping them untainted and free from diseases.

Infants under one year of age are rolled in the petals of daffodils, which are collected by their mothers or grandmothers and poured into a light, white cloth.

A day before the ceremony, one of the grandmothers takes the baby to the bath. Baby's hands are sometimes painted with henna in some regions.

On the day of the ceremony,

the baby is placed among the flowers on the cloth, and petals are poured on the babies, wishing them health and long life.

Women thereafter take four sides of the sheet and roll the baby among the petals while reciting religious songs and verses of the Quran, and waving the sheet back and forth, believing the soul will be cleansed and the child will be kept healthy and fresh.

Guests place their gifts near the cloth after the baby

was placed on the floor. As the ceremony concludes, sweets and tea are served.

When the ceremony is over, mothers dry the petals by placing them in shade to keep them for the future, placing the dried petals in their future prayer rugs.

The ancient region of Fars also spelled Pars, or Persis was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking to this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.



TEHRAN – The third edition of the national photo festival of Meiqan Wetland will be held in the city of Arak, the central province of Markazi in mid-July, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A key theme of the festival is promoting the wetland ecosystem, protecting the region's environment and wildlife, preserving its natural resources, and introducing and promoting the unique

natural and tourism capacities of the wetland, Mostafa Marzban said on Monday.

The province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department has plans to promote the wetland as the world's best desert ecological area, the official added.

Covering an area of about 25,000 hectares, which includes a lake with three

# Iran optimistic to win UNESCO status for geopark

From page 1 ► Situated in East Azarbaijan province, Aras Geopark covers an area of about 1670 square kilometers, sprawling across the whole Jolfa county. The topography is generally extremely steep and forms astonishing landscapes so the highest point in the Jolfa region is the Kiyamaki mount with 3347 meters and the lowest points include the northern boundary and the Aras River valley with 720 to 390 meters.

The property has an appropriate geo-tourism attraction, because of its mountainous landscapes, an outcropping of different sedimentary and igneous rocks, diversity in tectonic structures,



semi-cold and semi-arid climate, and diverse flora and fauna.

The UNESCO-designated

Qeshm Geopark in the Persian Gulf embraces a wide range of ecotourism attractions such as

the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines. Qeshm Island has an abundance of wildlife, including birds, reptiles, dolphins, and turtles as well.

A UNESCO definition of the global geopark is a unified area with a geological heritage of international significance.

Experts say geoparks usually promote awareness of geological hazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis and many help prepare disaster mitigation strategies with local communities. Moreover, they yield records of past climate changes and are indicators of current climate changes as well.

## Tehran's City Theater demarcated to receive better care

TEHRAN – New boundaries have been defined for Tehran's City Theater to help provide further safeguard for the historical-cultural complex.

Limits of the complex, which is widely considered the sole professional center of theater in Iran, were determined with a collaborative effort made by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the Ministry of Culture, and Islamic Guidance, and the Islamic City Council of Tehran.

The demarcation project is aimed to pave the way for better conservation, and landscaping projects of the monument, which is a national cultural heritage site, Mehr reported.

Locally called Te'atr-e Shahr, the complex contains several performance spaces including the halls of Cheharsou, Qashqai,

Sayeh, the performance studio, and the main hall.

The theater complex has no fences or walls, close to Valiasr intersection Daneshjoo Park (Student Park). It is divided into five halls, four of which are located on the ground floor and the basement.

The complex was designed by architect Ali Sardar Afkhami in the 1960s and opened to the public in 1972. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has overseen its operation.

Experts believe most architectural elements of the City Theater are borrowed from the 12th-century Tughrul Tower, which stands tall in Rey, southern Tehran.

Standing tall in the city of Rey, Tughrul



Tower is the tomb of Seljuk ruler Tughrul Beg, who died in Rey in 1063. Originally, like other monuments of its time, it was capped by a conical dome which would have added to its height. The monument enjoys a cylinder-shaped structure and is surrounded by columns similar to the Persepolis columns which made the structure like a tent.

## Jameh Mosque of Qazvin undergoes minor restoration

TEHRAN – Jameh Mosque of Qazvin, which is one of the oldest Islamic structures in Iran, has undergone a new round of restoration, a local tourism official said on Monday.

The project is aimed to renovate and reinforce the Shabestan of the mosque, CHTN reported.

Shabestan is an underground space that can be usually found

in Iran's traditional mosques, houses, and schools.

Better known as the Masjid-e-Jameh Atiq, the mosque is originally built on the site of a Sassanid fire temple, it was subsequently developed and expanded over several different periods.

Construction of the mosque was first ordered in 807 CE (192 AH) by the Abbasid Caliph Harun



Al-Rashid. Under the Seljuk leaders (1038-1194), two iwans were added to its north.

## Governor pledges to construct top hydrotherapy complex in northwest Iran



TEHRAN – The governor of Nir has pledged to construct a top hydrotherapy complex, which according to the official would be “the most well-equipped” one in northwest Iran.

“Because of its pleasant weather and hot mineral springs, Ardabil province is one of the country's tourism hubs, and Nir has good capabilities in this area,” IRNA quoted Shahram Mohammadi as saying on Monday.

Therefore, construction and equipping such modern hydrotherapy facilities can lead to increased tourism and wealth creation, the official added.

With public and private guesthouses, and separate swimming pools for men and women, the complex, called “The Pearl of Freedom”, will become the most modern hydrotherapy complex

in the northwest of the country when it opens, he explained.

There are also programs in place to attract private investors to other tourism-related projects in the city, some of which still need to be completed and are in the early stages, he noted.

Last September, local officials announced that a total of four tourism-related projects worth 3.3 trillion rials (\$11 million) are underway in Nir in close collaboration with the private sector.

Back in January, the officials announced that more than 150 tourism-related projects are underway across the northwestern province. The mentioned projects will prepare the province's tourism sector for the post-coronavirus era when the number of tourists and travelers is expected to rise magnificently.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardabil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is very cold in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardabil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

## Wetland picked theme of national photo festival

TEHRAN – The third edition of the national photo festival of Meiqan Wetland will be held in the city of Arak, the central province of Markazi in mid-July, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A key theme of the festival is promoting the wetland ecosystem, protecting the region's environment and wildlife, preserving its natural resources, and introducing and promoting the unique

natural and tourism capacities of the wetland, Mostafa Marzban said on Monday.

The province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department has plans to promote the wetland as the world's best desert ecological area, the official added.

Covering an area of about 25,000 hectares, which includes a lake with three

islands in the middle and the surrounding plains, archaeologically, the wetland's formation dates back to the Paleocene, which was due to the movement of the surrounding tectonic plates of the earth.

As part of its ecological features, the Meiqan Wetland hosts many migratory birds each year, among them some rare and protected species. Due to the high population of Gruidae (Grus), this

wetland is one of the most important habitats in the country.

There is more saline vegetation in the region, which makes the wetland an important source of halophytes for the country.

The wetland and its surroundings are also home to mammal species, brine shrimp, and saltwater algae in addition to birds.



From page 1 ▶ Afghanistan General Consul Resident in Mashhad, Abdul Jaber Ansar, said that sanctions against Iran target the economic spheres and from a perspective, three million Afghan refugees bear the negative effects. In fact, anti-human-rights sanctions have also affected the livelihood of Afghan refugees.

“For example, as mentioned, the UNHCR spends about \$200,000 annually for a small group of vulnerable immigrants in Khorasan Razavi. However, we believe that the number of people in need is more than the current figures,” he added.

President Ebrahim Raisi also said that despite the fact that the Europeans have made many claims about supporting the Afghans, but have not provided them with any assistance, contrary to their comments, today more than four million Afghans are guests of the Islamic Republic.

The education, life, and employment of these citizens are important to us and should be followed, so we predicted that a central mechanism would be formed as an immigrant organization, he added.

The special representative of the president for Afghanistan, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, on the occasion of World Refugee Day twitted that Iran bears the most burden of refugees among the countries in the region.

“The performance of human rights defenders in accepting Afghan, Syrian, and Iraqi refugees and prioritizing Ukrainian refugees is contrary to their claims.



Iran, without the support of international organizations, has accommodated hundreds of thousands of new refugees in the recent crisis in Afghanistan and now has millions of refugees covered by its services,” he wrote.

Refugees' condition

Based on the latest statistics, over 3 million Afghans are living in Iran – some 780,000 Afghan refugees, over 2 million undocumented Afghans, and another 600,000 Afghan passport-holders with Iranian visas.

However, in light of the pandemic, all refugees, even those undocumented, benefited from access to free primary health services and free COVID-19-related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like Iranian nationals.

The same happened for the vaccination when the country has generously considered refugees for vaccination against coronavirus.

The recent fast-paced turn of events in Afghanistan has the potential to create additional population movements; displacing families internally and potentially driving them to seek refuge in neighboring countries.

It is estimated that up to 300,000 Afghan asylum-seekers have fled to Iran this year alone in search of safety, while UNHCR has only been able to screen some 24,000 newly arrived Afghans for protection needs.

António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has praised Iran's generosity which – for decades – has hosted millions of Afghans in need.

“At this moment, we need the global community to put their hands on the wheel of progress, provide resources, and prevent Afghanistan from spiraling any further.

I will never forget the generosity of countries like Pakistan and Iran,

which – for decades – have hosted millions of Afghans in need,” Guterres said in a statement released on January 26 to the Security Council on Afghanistan.

Iran, without the support of international organizations, has accommodated hundreds of thousands of new refugees in the recent crisis in Afghanistan and now has millions of refugees covered by its services.

Tehran to host intl. conference on energy saving, efficiency

TEHRAN – An international exhibition and conference on energy saving and efficiency (Iran Energy Saving Conference 2022) will be held from August 20 to 21, Mehr reported.

This international conference, with the maximum participation of policymakers, executive and industrial activists, knowledge-based companies, academics, and scientific researchers, can be the largest gathering in this important field to think together and provide a solution for developing energy efficiency in the country.

Held with the support of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the event aims to respond to the technical, economic, social, political, security, and cultural complexities of energy efficiency in the country.

Moreover, it will investigate energy efficiency in an integrated manner throughout the energy chain, including production, transmission, distribution, consumption, and storage of electricity, heat, fuel, and food, creating coordination of different sectors of oil, power, industry, roads and urban planning, environment, science, and technology; to provide policy solutions.



ferent sectors of oil, power, industry, roads and urban planning, environment, science, and technology; to provide policy solutions.

UNDP partnership

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Iran is among the 10 largest emitters of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) in the world, and the residential and commercial building sectors are the main contributors to this challenge. Increasing energy efficiency in existing and new buildings contributes significantly to reducing emissions and addressing climate change.

To overcome this challenge, UNDP has partnered with the Government and Tehran Municipality to improve the energy efficiency by 25% for existing buildings and by 60% for new buildings.

The initiative consists of 190 pilot projects in residential, public, and office buildings. Energy use audits and digital information system and a market-based financial instrument are three

key components and incentives to engage the public and expand the initiative.

Smart control and monitoring systems are being installed in buildings paving the way for smart buildings. Smart building solutions improve sustainability and energy efficiency and through gathered data from smart sensors and meters, building management systems provide efficiency through improvements in lighting, fire, and security systems. These buildings also enhance personal safety, comfort, and security.

To promote a cleaner environment, issuing a tradable “white certificate” is also among the goals of this project. White certificates are issued for achieving a minimum of energy savings.

Energy Services Companies (ESCOs) implement energy efficiency retrofit projects in residential or public buildings through guaranteed or shared-based savings contracts.

Energy Monitoring and Information System (EMIS) will capture the amount of saved energy and consequently, the output from energy efficiency projects will be linked to the Iranian energy efficiency and environment market (E3M) through the white certificates that can be traded in the stock market and the high tariff energy consumer will be able to buy the demanded energy from energy sellers i.e. the building owners. This way, a cycle of green financing is shaped in energy efficiency while the amount of CO2 emission will be decreased simultaneously through applying energy-efficient solutions.

300,000 ha undergoes desertification control annually

TEHRAN – Plans to combat desertification is being implemented on 300,000 hectares of land annually, the director of the desert office of the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, has announced.

Desertification plans include planting seedlings, managing runoff, and constructing windbreaks around farms and sand dunes, IRIB quoted Vahid Jafarian as saying on Monday.

Some 100,000 hectares of desert areas will be rehabilitated this year by creating the right conditions through the role of the private sector and the effective participation of local communities, he highlighted.

Drought is one of the consequences of climate change and has devastating effects on various areas that can be managed and overcome.

Referring to the sand and dust storms as the main consequence of drought inside and outside the country, he said that mismanagement in one country accelerates soil erosion conditions in another, and storms form that can sweep across several countries, while dust control solutions require a comprehensive regional plan.

Utilizing the capacity of the Convention to Combat Desertification as the most important international legal body to address land management is a good tool to help in the field of dust management diplomacy and address a comprehensive program with related countries, he explained.

Implementation of innovative projects such as checkerboard windbreaks in sand dunes, and the use of gravel mulch has started for the first time in Semnan province, and we are trying to develop these projects in other parts of the country, he said.

70-year history of dealing with desertification

Iran has a 70-year history of dealing with desertification and dust control, with about 5

million hectares of planted forests in sand and dust storm hotspots, especially in areas with less than 50 mm of rainfall, Ali Mohammad Tahmasebi, head of the national working group for mitigating SDSs, has said.

Studies by international organizations show that the Islamic Republic has recorded the highest number of reforested desert areas after China, he added.

Parviz Garshasbi, deputy head of the Forests, Rangelands, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO), has said that according to the Sixth National Development Plan, desert greening measures were to be carried out in 1,140,000 hectares of the country's deserts, but so far, the operations have been conducted in only 350,000 hectares of deserts.

An estimated 2 billion tons of soil is lost due to erosion in Iran annually, it takes an average of 400 years to form a centimeter of soil on the planet, he said, adding, in Iran's climate, this time is between 700 and 1000 years.

Wind erosion brings an annual economic and environmental damage of 30 trillion rials (nearly \$714 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to the country, according to the latest studies in 2019.

“Over 88 percent of the country can be affected by desertification. According to the 2018 survey, 37 million hectares of the country are exposed to land degradation and 23 percent of the total area is subject to severe degradation in terms of reduction of vegetation and soil fertility.

Also, 22 provinces of the country with an area of 29.5 million hectares in 187 regions are affected by wind erosion and there are 237 crisis centers with an area of 13.9 million hectares due to the influx of annual quicksand to the railway infrastructure, roads, agriculture, and other parts are damaged,” he explained.

Birds In Iran

Part 5

During the spring and autumn migration seasons, large numbers of shorebirds pass through the south Caspian on their way between breeding grounds in the Arctic and wintering grounds in the Persian Gulf and East and South Africa, and in summer the marshes teem with breeding cormorants Phalacrocorax carbo, herons, egrets, gallinules including purple gallinule Porphyrio porphyrio, and whiskered terns Chlidonias hybrida.

The other major wetland areas in Iran are hardly any less spectacular. The wetlands of the Urmia basin in Azarbaijan, centered on the very large and highly saline Lake Urmia, support large breeding colonies of waterfowl, notably greater flamingo (20,000 to 25,000 pairs), white pelican Pelecanus onocrotalus (1,000 to 1,600 pairs), spoonbill Platalea leucorodia, glossy ibis Plegadis falcinellus, white stork Ciconia ciconia, shelduck and ruddy shelduck Tadorna tadorna and T. ferruginea, avocet Recurvirostra avosetta, black-winged stilt Himantopus himantopus, and herring and slender-billed gulls Larus argentatus and L. genei.

The wetlands are extremely important for pas-

sage shorebirds and in mild winters can hold over 50,000 wintering ducks and geese.

The flood plains of the Dez, Karun, and Karkheh rivers in Khuzestan, the complex of fresh, brackish, and saline lakes at the inland delta of the Helmand river in Sistan, on the Afghan border, and the network of fresh and saline lakes in central Fars, particularly Lake Bakhtegan, Lake Tashk, Lake Maharlu, Lake Parishan, and the Dasht-e Arjan marshes all provide habitat for many hundreds of thousands of wintering waterfowl.

In addition to a wide range of ducks, geese, and shorebirds, these wetlands are particularly important for wintering white pelican (Fars and Sistan), sacred ibis Threskiornis aethiopicus (Khuzestan), white stork (Khuzestan and Fars), greater flamingo (Fars), and common crane Grus grus (all three areas).

In years of good rainfall, wetlands in all three regions can be of great importance for breeding waterfowl, particularly herons, egrets, spoonbill, glossy ibis, red-wattled lapwing Vanellus indicus, white-tailed plover Vanellus leucurus, and collared pratincole Glareola pratincola.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JUNE 20

New cases	231
New deaths	3
Total cases	7,234,988
Total deaths	141,366
New hospitalized patients	43
Patients in critical condition	278
Total recovered patients	7,060,622
Diagnostic tests conducted	52,519,301
Doses of vaccine injected	150,241,358

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

5,000 clunker garbage trucks move in Tehran at night

Some 5,000 clunker trucks, aged over 40 years, move across the city of Tehran during the night to collect wastes, Tehran Governor Isa Farhadi has announced.

The renovation of the garbage collection fleet requires high amount of budget; this is while the Municipality of Tehran cannot afford the cost and the issue needs urgent measures, he stated.

He went on to say that the vehicles are extremely old resulting in huge amount of emission and contributing to air pollution.

“We tried to replace the clunker trucks with new ones, however, there is a large number of trucks that replacing the whole fleet is not nearly possible for Tehran traffic and transport affairs directorate,” he added.

Clunker garbage trucks aged 40 years or above which travel through the capital at night amounts to 5,000, he concluded.

۵۰۰۰ کامیون زباله کش قدیمی شبها در تهران تردد دارند

فرماندار تهران از وجود ۵۰۰۰ کامیون زباله کش که شبها در تهران تردد دارند و عمرشان بیش از ۴۰ سال است، خبر داد.

به گزارش خبرنگار اجتماعی خبرگزاری فارس، عیسی فرهادی گفت: نوسازی این ناوگان هزینه بسیاری دارد که از توان ما و سازمان شهرداری خارج است و باید فکری برای آن اندیشیده شود.

اکنون میانگین سن این خودروها بالا رفته است و به تبع آن آلودگی‌های ایجادشده نیز افزایش خواهد یافت.

فرماندار تهران افزود: ۵ هزار کامیون زباله کش شبها در تهران تردد دارند که سن آنان بالای ۳۵ تا ۴۰ سال است. در جلسات گذشته تلاش شد که راهکاری اندیشیده شود تا این خودروها جایگزین شوند، ولی متأسفانه خودروهای سنگین تعدد بسیاری دارند که انجام این کار از توان ما و معاونت حمل و نقل ترافیک شهرداری تهران خارج است.



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JUNE 21, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Failures are often the results of timidity and fears; disappointments are the results of bashfulness; hours of leisure pass away like summer-clouds, therefore, do not waste opportunity of doing good.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:13:06    Evening: 20:45    Dawn: 4:02 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 5:49 (tomorrow)

## Jamshid in Persian literature

Part 4

He was there until he had dealt with the problem, then came back and restored order, upon which he appeared as the sun, and people thought they saw two suns in the sky. He also told people to destroy the idols (botha) on that day.

A story that may be related to this is told in Mah i frawardin roz i xordad. It was on this day that Jam brought the paymanag “right measure” out of Hell, so that it became visible in the world and which, according to the Denkard, was needed to make the creation immortal, etc.

Yima as culture hero: In the Pahlavi and later literature, all the early heroes are credited with certain inventions promoting civilization. The only one mentioned in the Avesta is that Ahura Mazda, in addition to telling him how to build the vara, taught Yima how to make and use brick from mud, a task that, in the later Persian tradition, King Jamshid is said to have assigned to the divs, who then made all kinds of constructions with brick.

The later tradition, however, ascribes to the rule of Jam most aspects of civilization. For instance, Ebn al-Nadim quotes a source according to which the time of Jam was a time of general civilizing of the world that continued until the reign of Zahhak. Mirkhand even places Pythagoras (Fisaghuras) in attendance on Jamshid at this time.

Among religious practices that Jam(shed) taught men was the wearing of the kusti. This tradition is reported in the Dadestan i denig, in the Persian Rivayats, and in the prose Sad dar-e nasr, where the hamazor is also ascribed to him. In addition, the metrical Sad dar-e nazm attributes to him the institution of the seasonal gahanbar festivals, to which Mah i frawardin ro i xordad and the Persian Rivayats add the use of ossuaries or daxmas.

Masudi also refers to a tradition according to which Jam established the fire cult and taught that the fire was the image of the light of the sun and the stars.

This may well be an old tradition, since fires feature prominently among the inhabitants of Yima’s realm (small and large animals and men, dogs, and birds, and red burning fires), which also brings to mind Vivasvant as the one who sent the sacrificial fire to mankind, while Viuuanhan was the first to perform a haoma sacrifice, as Haoma tells Zarathustra while he is preparing the sacrificial fire. Bal’ami’s report that Jam, taking the advice of Eblis, threw all those who refused to adore him into the fire might, conceivably, be a version of the same story.

According to the Shahnameh, the Persian Rivayats, and the Fsr’s-nama (Ebn Balkhi, Jamshid also taught men weaving and how to make fabrics (cotton, silk, wool, linen), and clothes and how to wash them; he made weapons and other necessities of warfare, and taught people sowing; and he divided society into the four classes and defined the various tasks of each.

He also invented ships built of wood and used them to fetch pearls for jewelry. He extracted precious stones from the rocks and

gold and silver from the earth. He invented the use of furs and selected his favorite perfumes and laid out gardens and parks with trees and flowers. Finally, he taught men medicine. According to Tabari, Jamshid charged the divs with producing depilatories, perfumes, and medicines.

Biruni reports a story told by the mowbed Adurbad of Baghdad, according to which Jamshid also discovered sugar, and Mirkhand adds the discovery of wine (which in the Jewish tradition was ascribed to Noah, contemporary with Jamshid in the Muslim tradition). Ebn al-Nadim reports that Jamshid had imposed corvee on Eblis and that he ordered him to teach him how to write.

Hamza Eafahani, Mojmal al-tawarikh, and Hamdollah Mostawfi also report that Jam founded Ctesiphon and made a bridge across the Tigris that was destroyed by Alexander, but the ruins of which could still be seen. According to Mostawfi, he also finished the construction of Estakhr (begun by Kayumars and Hushang) and Hamadan, as well as the bridge over the Tigris.

Ebn Balkhi reports that he made Estakhr his capital, turned it into a metropolis, and had three fortresses, called Seh Gonbadan, built in the city, and Fakhr ad-Din Banakati says that he built Estakhr and a big palace there, which at Banakati’s time was called Chehel Menara. The Shahrestaniha i Eran-shahr has a note that “Babylon (Babel) was made during the reign of Jam” (on the story of Jamshid’s seven wonders destroyed by Alexander.

Ebn Esfandiar tells from the local history of Tabarestan that, in ancient days, the area was inhabitable and in the possession of the divs until Jamshid came, who overcame the divs and had them level the mountains and fill in the lakes, drain the fens, etc. Fakhr-e Modabber ranks Jamshid’s horse, a black one according to him, along with Rakhsh (the celebrated steed of Rustam) among the best horses of all-time.

Yima and the vara: After the third enlargement of the earth, any further expansion being apparently impossible, Ahura Mazda and Yima called a meeting of gods and men, respectively, in which it was decided that the population of the earth must be reduced. This was to be achieved by severe winters, one particularly harsh one, followed by flooding when the snow melted.

In order that living beings should not perish completely, Ahura Mazda described for Yima how to make a kind of fortress, in which to keep samples of all creatures of Ahura Mazda alive during the winter. He specified the architectural features of the building and explained how to use clay.

He also explained about the two kinds of lights in the vara: those established of themselves (xadata, probably the eternal lights), and those established for the duration of the worlds of thought and/or of living beings (stidata). Yima then brought pairs of all living things into the vara, excluding those with bodily defects, and, every forty winters, two children would be born from a human couple.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica  
To be continued

# Iranian director to reprise “Whose Life Is It Anyway?”

TEHRAN – Iranian director Saeid Heshmati will reprise “Whose Life Is It Anyway?”, British dramatist Brian Clark’s play, which he staged in Tehran in June and July 2021.

His troupe will give its first performance on Wednesday at the Shahrzad Theater Complex, which will host the group until July 1.

Nima Hashemiseresht, Hedyeh Hashemi, Kimia Khalaj, Ali Riahi and Donya Madani are the main members of the cast.

The group will perform “Whose Life Is It Anyway?” based on a Persian translation by Ahmad Kasaipour.

The play has been staged by several other Iranian directors.

Farid Adhami directed it at Tabriz Theater in the northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz in 2019.

In addition, Askan Khelnejad staged the play at Tehran’s Iranshahr Theater Complex in 2014. Ken Harrison was portrayed by Navid Mohammadzadeh, the winner of the Orizzonti Award for Best Actor for his role in “No Date, No Signature” at the 74th Venice Film Festival in 2017.

It is a play Clark adapted from his 1972 television play of the same title. The stage version premiered in 1978 at the Mermaid Theatre in London,

Members of director Saeid Heshmati’s cast perform “Whose Life Is It Anyway?” at the Shahrzad Theater Complex in Tehran on July 17, 2021. (Tehran Picture Agency/Parto Joghatai)

and subsequently opened on Broadway in 1979. The play involves a sculptor who is paralyzed.

Set in a hospital room, the action revolves around Ken Harrison, a sculptor by profession, who was paralyzed from the neck down in a car accident and is determined to be allowed to die.

Clark presents arguments both in favor of and opposing euthanasia and to what extent government should be allowed to interfere in the life of a

private citizen.

In portraying Ken as an intelligent man with a useless body, he leaves the audience with conflicting feelings about his desire to end his life.

A film adapted by Reginald Rose and directed by John Badham was released in 1981, starring Richard Dreyfuss, John Cassavetes and Christine Lahti.

Author David Benedictus adapted the play into a novel, which was also released in 1981.

Clark, best known for “Whose Life Is It Anyway?”, was born in

Bristol, United Kingdom, the son of a blacksmith.

He was educated at the University of Nottingham. He married Maggie Clark, his first wife, and raised two sons. Clark has taught in schools, colleges and universities and was a member of the Drama Department at the University of Hull from 1968 to 1972.

His credits also include other television plays including “Easy Go”, “Operation Magic Carpet”, “The Saturday Party” and “The Country Party”.

## Persian translations of latest children’s literature ready for publication

From Page 1 ► The Persian rendition of American writer Rebecca Bender’s three-volume series “Giraffe and Bird” by Ranjbar will be published by Bazi va Andisheh Publications.

“This series is about a giraffe and a bird, which always seem to be quarrelling with each other, however, they know that they need each other,” Ranjbar said.

Earlier in 2021, Bazi va Andisheh Publications published her translation of Hrefna Bragadottir’s novel “Baxters Book” about self-confidence.

Ranjbar is also the translator of “I Love You, Michael Collins” by Lauren Baratz-Logsted. The book has recently been

released by the Shahre Qalam publishing house.

“The novel, in fact, illustrates the loneliness of young adults in the modern world,” said Ranjbar, whose rendition of “Scorpions”, a young adult novel written by Walter Dean Myers, has been published by Peydayesh.

“‘Scorpions’ is really gruesome and compelling, forcing readers to feel empathy towards its characters,” she said.

A Persian translation of Irish writer Eoin Colfer’s young adult novel “Half Moon Investigations” by Ranjbar has been published by Porteqal.

This combination photo shows the front covers of the Persian editions of some books translated by Sheida Ranjbar.

## “The Very Lowly” comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – French writer Christian Bobin’s 1992 book “The Very Lowly: A Meditation on Francis of Assisi” (“Le Très-Bas”) has been published in Persian.

Translated by Tayyebeh Hashemi, the book has been published by Afkar.

Why have we come to revere Francis of Assisi, a simple thirteenth-century Italian merchant’s son, as a saint? Why has his appeal endured over eight hundred years and even expanded beyond the world of Catholicism to make him one of the most beloved religious figures of all time?

Front cover of the Persian edition of Christian Bobin’s book “The Very Lowly”.

This penetrating meditation on Francis’s life gently but sure-handedly cuts through every pious legend to uncover what is timeless and universally true about him.

Bobin’s unexpected and thoroughly original work presents a compelling image of a man whose power is found in humility, whose radical casting aside of wealth, honor and even personal identity is inseparable from his overwhelming intimacy with God.

Poetic, luminous, utterly hypnotic, “The Very Lowly” is a unique modern variation on the

saint’s life that will entrance everyone, whether “religious” or—almost especially—not.

Bobin, who is also a poet, received the 1993 Prix des Deux Magots for “The Very Lowly”, which was translated into English in 1997 by Michael H. Kohn.

Bobin says, “Nothing is owed to us in life, not even the innocence of a blue sky. Great art is the art of thankfulness for the abundance of every moment. Writing is a Chinese variant of this thankfulness, a courtesy to life in its cloak of nothing, lined with love.”

## A Loud-Laughing Neighbor

### An interview with Emad Ebadi

“A Loud-Laughing Neighbor” by Emad Ebadi is a collection of short stories in which the author deals with various social relations and seeks to understand what people normally

pay attention to.

**\* What inspired the stories in the book, and what is the overarching theme?**

The stories’ ideas came from a variety of sources, including my own mind, the environment, and a combination of both. Since I am interested in social topics, the themes are also more social, and as they are written in the form of stories, the majority of them are created by the imagination, however, there are actual instances of them all.

**\* Where did the book’s meticulous attention to detail come from?**

The ability to examine things in great detail, as if under a microscope, is an important part of storytelling, and one of the features of storytelling is the ability to analyze things in great detail. Also, to draw attention to an issue, the author may employ the art of dialogue to

build a discussion. The same is true in real life. We cannot show the significance and value of an issue or event unless we talk about it.

**\* Who is the book’s intended audience, and is the book written in such a way that the general public can understand it?**

Yes, however, the general public has abandoned reading.

**\* Some of the stories were devoted to specific individuals. Was there a connection between the people picked and the story and characters?**

It was sometimes because of the closeness of individuals, such as parents and spouses, and other times because the subject was discussed somewhere and the story’s idea began there, so the author owes himself to the founder who came up with the idea and devoted the story to that person.