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Interview 🚹

Covid possibly came out of a U.S. biotechnology lab, says Columbia professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN - Claiming that Coronavirus might have originated from a U.S. lab, a renowned economist and policy analyst urges the American government to be more transparent about the research it was sponsoring.

"The U.S. government was sponsoring a lot of dangerous genetic manipulation of SARS-like viruses and has not yet honestly revealed the nature of that work," Jeffrey Sachs tells the Tehran Times.

"There are worrying signs that this research may have created SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19 disease," Sachs

There is enough evidence "that made him reach this conclusion, which should be looked into," the professor from Columbia University

Sachs who also chairs the Covid-19 commission at The Lancet, a renowned medical journal, says that he was in the loop: It's a blunder, in my view, of biotech, not an accident of a natural spillover.

Following is the text of the interview:

Is there scientifically proven evidence about the origin of Covid-19 or we should just rely on theories or hypotheses? Did it break out of natural reason like the MERS that emerged in Saudi Arabia?

There are two hypotheses: a natural spillover (as with MERS) or a laboratory creation. Both are possible. ▶ Page **5**

Shahr Intl. Film Festival unveils official lineup

TEHRAN – The Shahr International Film Festival announced the official lineup for its eighth edition, which will take place in Tehran from July 18 to 22.

18 movies, including six films from overseas filmmakers, will be competing in the feature

The lineup features Indian director Pradip Kurbah's 2019 movie "Market", which portrays the lives of everyday people with everyday stories, not dignified as heroes, but nevertheless people who make the lives of each

Chinese director Ran Jing's 2020 drama "Model" will also be screened.

In this film, under pressure from her estranged father, a young Chinese architect agrees to establish guardianship of the 7-year-old half-brother she has never met so that she can obtain a U.S. visa to pursue her dream job. ▶ Page 8

Neighborhood Policy Neutralized U.S. Sanctions

Report

U.S. police kill black American with "60 bullets"

U.S. officials are bracing for fresh anti-racism protests after the release of graphic police body-camera footage in which at least "60 bullets" are said to have been used by eight officers to kill 25-year-old Black motorist Jayland Walker during a traffic stop in Akron, Ohio.

The city of Akron has been the scene of four consecutive days of demonstrations calling for accountability over the fatal incident that has once again caused outrage among racial justice advocates in the United States over police brutality against black Americans.

The multiple videos that have been released following days of public pressure and anger show a fast police chase of Walker's vehicle after a traffic stop on Monday, the victim then exiting the car and running from officers, and ends with the officers surrounding the 25-year-old in a parking lot. The police attempt to taser Walker before opening fire on him indiscriminately.

Eight officers who were directly involved in the shooting spree have been placed on administrative leave. The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation is conducting an investigation on behalf of Akron city police, with the FBI also involved.

The city's Mayor Daniel Horrigan has pleaded with the public for calm and for patience while the investigation is taking place. "The video is heartbreaking, it's hard to take in," Horrigan acknowl-

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's President Derrick Johnson has published a statement saying the officers involved should be held accountable. ▶ Page **5**

Report



Reinforced Iran determined to book place in quarters

TEHRAN - Iran started the 2022 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) in a shaky way but the Persians, at the moment, have a chance to book their place in the competition's quarterfinals.

Iran sit eighth in the table and the top seven teams as well as hosts Italy will qualify for the

Iran have earned four wins in the previous two weeks and suffered four losses.

Behrouz Ataei's men have defeated China, Australia, the U.S. and Canada so far and lost to the Netherlands, Japan, Bulgaria and Brazil.

Iran will start the Week 3 with a match against Poland Tuesday night.

The National Team are scheduled to meet Italy

on Thursday and face Slovenia and Serbia in the following day. Iran bagged disappointing results against Japan, the Netherlands and Bulgaria but defeated

powerhouses the U.S. and showed a glittering

performance against defending champions Brazil. Young players namely, Amin Esmaeilnezhad, Amirhossein Esfandiar, Mahdi Jelveh, Amirreza Sarlak, Amirhossein Toukhteh, and Morteza Sharifi have already shown that they are ready to fill vacancy of stars Saeid Marouf, Mohammad Mousavi, Amir Ghafour, Shahram Mahmoudi, and

Farhad Ghaemi and. Booking a place in the competition's quarterfinals will be a big boost for the reinforced team.

Iran need at least two wins out of four to seal a berth in the final eight.

Iran volleyball federation's long term is to win a medal in world championship and Olympic Games and has invested heavily in young generation.

The federation has chosen the right path.



TEHRAN— In a meeting with Azeri Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov on Monday afternoon, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said that promoting excellent mutual relations

can lead to effective regional cooperation. The president carefully listened to Bayramov's detailed report about the increase in diplomatic exchanges and consultations between the two countries and its effect on the expansion of relations and cooperation in various commercial, economic and political fields.

He then emphasized the need to create

new openings in Tehran-Baku relations.

Pointing out that there is no limit to deepening and strengthening Iran-Azerbaijan ties, the president said promoting good bilateral relations can lead to effective regional cooperation. ▶ Page 2

go transportation department of the Road

Maintenance Organization announced that

Quarterly rail transport of basic goods up 150% yr/yr

TEHRAN - Transportation of basic goods via Iran's railway network has increased 150 percent in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21) compared to the figure for the same quarter last year, the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) said.

According to Seyed Miad Salehi, following a memorandum of understanding signed with the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, the railway network has become the priority for the transportation of basic goods across the country, Mehr News Agency reported.

Last week, the director-general of the car-

more than 5.5 million tons of basic commodities were transported from eight port cities of the country to the designated destinations during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year. ▶ Page 4

Iraq hosting Iranian technology delegation

TEHRAN - Representatives of more than 30 knowledge-based and creative companies have traveled to Iraq with the aim of developing exports to West Asia.

Irag, as the sixth destination of the Iranian Houses of Innovation and Technology (IHIT), hosted a delegation of Iranian knowledge-based firms in order to provide the basis for joint scientific cooperation and the sale of Iranian products.

On this three-day trip, which started on Sunday, the Iranian delegation will visit Sulaymanivah and hold 2 business and technology meetings and negotiations with Iraqi counterparts.

In the first meeting of this trip, about 100 Iragi traders, businessmen, and investors are present to get acquainted with the capabilities and products of Iranian knowledge-based companies and to provide a ba-

sis for joint cooperation. ▶ Page 7

Foreign visits to East Azarbaijan at record high

TEHRAN – Over 30,000 foreign travelers visited East Azarbaijan province during the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year, which according to the provincial tourism

ing the Prophet Mosque in Medina.

Bairamzadeh said on Monday.

"Over 30,000 foreign travelers visited the

province during the first three months of the year," the official said.

"This statistic is related to tourists from all over the world who have stayed in East Azerbaijan hotels and accommodation centers officially for a few days."

This number of foreign tourists shows a growth of about 300% compared to the twoyear restriction period caused by the coronavirus pandemic, he said.

"It shows more than 100% growth compared to the period before the spread of the coronavirus, which is a very high and significant progress.'

Citizens from Turkey, Iraq, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia, China, Germany, Sweden, France, the United Arab Emirates. and Bahrain were among people who traveled to the province during the three months, the official explained. ▶ Page 6

directorate makes a record high since 2017.

Hajj pilgrims become Muhrim

This year, some 40,000 Iranians attend the Hajj pilgrimage.

Hajj pilgrims, wearing Ihram, go to Shajarah Mosque to become Muhrim, after visit-

"The five-year record of foreign tourists entering East Azarbaijan province is broken," the deputy provincial tourism chief Alireza

POLITICS

Straight Truth **TEHRAN TIMES**

U.S. incompetent to comment on human rights: Gharibabadi

TEHRAN- Kazem Gharibabadi, Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, noted on Sunday that the United States is not qualified to speak on the subject of human rights due to its numerous abuses of international law.

"The United States is, by no means, qualified to talk about the issue of human rights," Gharibabadi pointed out.

The official made the remarks on the sidelines of the fourth international conference on the American human rights from the perspective of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Iran has named July 3 the "day of the revelation" of the U.S. human rights. In such a day in 1988 a U.S. warship downed an Iranian passenger plane with 290 passengers and crew over the Persian Gulf. The civilian airliner was en route from the port city of Bandar Abbas to Dubai, the UAE. 66 children were among the victims.

"The U.S. administration should be held responsible to the oppressed peoples, who have lost their lives as a result of (U.S.) terrorism, sanctions, aggression, and occupation," Gharibabadi added.

The U.S. illegal sanctions against Iran have been called crime against humanity. Even during the Coronavirus pandemic, the Trump administration was not ready to loosen sanctions against Iran for import medicine and medical equipment.

"During the American Human Rights Week, examples of American human rights violations inside and outside the country should be reviewed," the top human rights official remarked.

He cited America's logistical support for the Saudi-led war on Yemen which has been raging on since March 2015.

As an example, munitions experts told CNN in August 2018 that the bomb used by the Saudiled coalition in a devastating attack on a school bus in Yemen was sold as part of a U.S. State Department-sanctioned arms deal with Saudi

"The U.S. does not even respect the rights of its own citizens, but it claims to defend human rights in other countries," the Iranian human rights chief stated.

"Racial discrimination, women's rights, and the right to exist are examples of human rights violations in America. For example, the number of black prisoners is four times that of white prisoners," he underlined.

"82% of Muslims in the U.S. say that they are very strict in performing religious ceremonies, and according to statistics, the U.S. has the highest rate of income inequality in the world," Gharibabadi concluded.

U.S. offered no initiative in Doha talks, Iran tells France

TEHRAN- In a phone conversation with his French counterpart Catherine Colonna on Sunday night, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said although Washington presented no innovative proposals to advance nuclear talks in Doha, Tehran is sincere and honest in its desire to bring the talks to a result.

The talks in Doha, held on June 28-29, came after seven rounds of inconclusive negotiations in Vienna, the capital of Austria, since April of last

"Our assessment of the recent talks in Doha is positive, but we have to see how the American side would take advantage of the diplomatic opportunity," Amir Abdollahian noted.

Iran's top diplomat reaffirmed Tehran's stance that dialogue is still a viable option, stating, "We are serious and honest to reach the final point for a good and durable agreement. We have always presented our positive suggestions and proposals during negotiations."

He criticized the American side, on the other hand, for taking part in the Doha negotiations without any plans.

"We believe that insistence on previous stances should not replace political initiatives, Amir Abdollahian underscored.

The Iranian foreign minister highlighted how the Islamic Republic has consistently upheld all of its commitments under international law

and made it clear that Tehran expects the other parties to do the same.

For her part, Colonna emphasized that in order to make a compromise that would be acceptable to all sides, the opportunity for dialogue should be taken into consideration.

"We believe that the window for diplomacy is still open and we must seize it in the best is better than no agreement at all," the French

ties between Tehran and Paris and emphasized the need of the nuclear talks' continuation and

She also expressed the hope that the new ambassadors of the two nations would quickly begin their work to hasten the growth of their

During the most recent round of negotiations, which took place in Oatar last week, the European Union was engaged with arranging indirect

Former U.S. president Donald Trump quit the nuclear pact, formally known as the JCPOA, in May 2018 and slapped the harshest sanction in history against Iran.

Top negotiator: Time and venue for next Iran-U.S. talks being finalized

TEHRAN— Iran's chief negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani believes that there will be a new round of indirect talks between Iran and the United States to facilitate a possible U.S. return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the 2015 nuclear deal.

Bagheri Kani, the deputy foreign minister for political affairs, said the time and place of the talks are being finalized.

He made the remarks on the sidelines of the international conference on American human rights based on the views of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution that was held late on Sunday.

"The negotiations in Doha took place in a framework that was pre-determined in advance," Bagheri Kani told the press after the conference.

The last round of indirect talks between Iran and the U.S. was held in Doha, Qatar, on June 28-29. The talks were mediated by Enrique Mora, the European Union deputy foreign policy chief who coordinates the JCPOA talks.

He added that the continuation of the talks is based on the agreement between Tehran and "the other party, which is clearly represented by

Iran's chief negotiator pointed out that the time and venue of the next negotiations are included in the exchange of messages between Tehran and Mora.

Later, in an interview with ILNA news agency, Bagheri Kani explained about his recent trip to

The chief negotiator said all throughout the talks the Iranian side has been holding talks with the remaining parties in the JCPOA.

"During the negotiations, we met with all the negotiating parties. We consulted with China and Russia," he remarked.

He then noted that China is not in a favorable situation for travel due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"For this reason, we have continuous consultations with the Chinese through their embassy in Tehran and our embassy in Beijing and by phone. Yet, as the Russians do not have coronavirus travel restrictions, sometimes they come (to Tehran) or we go (to Moscow)," he concluded

TEHRAN— Azerbaijani Foreign **Amir Abdollahian:** Minister Jeyhun Bayramov visited Tehran on Monday to consult with several high-ranking Iranian Energy, transit officials, including his Iranian counterpart Hossein Abdollahian. main areas of Iran-On Monday morning, Bayramov met Iranian Parliament Speaker Azerbaijan co-op

"During my trip to Ankara last

week, we agreed to soon hold a

tripartite meeting of the Islamic

Republic of Iran, the Republic of

Azerbaijan, and the Republic of

Turkey in Tehran at the level of

foreign ministers with my brother

Mr. Cavusoglu, and today, we will

agree with my brother Jeyhun about

the timeframe and date later," he

The foreign minister then stated

that there will be another format at

the level of senior experts known

as the 3+3 summit in the Caucasus

"This meeting will be held among

senior experts, and in the next step

the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan,

Armenia, Georgia, Russia, Iran and

Turkey. Iran will host this meeting

in Tehran or one of the cities of our

country on a date that we will agree

Amir Abdollahian said, "We

received the official note at the

same time as the visit of Mr. Jeyhun

Bayramov regarding the readiness

of the President of the Republic of

Azerbaijan to visit Tehran. Regarding

the finalization and agreement

on the date of the official visit of

the president of Azerbaijan, we

will examine the proposals in the

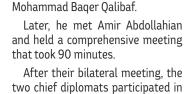
continuation of today's meeting and

Republic of Iran."

of the two countries."

on later," he highlighted.

stated.



a joint presser. During the presser, Amir Abdollahian said that he and Bayramov discussed and exchanged opinions on a wide range of bilateral

He then acknowledged that the presidents of the two countries had two meetings with each other over the last 10 months.

"During these two meetings, especially last week's meeting between Mr. Ilham Aliyev and Ayatollah Raisi (in Turkmenistan on the sidelines of the Caspian Sea summit), we had constructive and forward-looking discussions regarding the new stage of development of relations between the two countries. We insisted on deepening the relations between the two countries based on good understanding, trust, and mutual benefits of the two countries," he

Iran's top diplomat added that in Monday talks, the issue of territorial integrity of countries, including the Republic of Azerbaijan, was once again emphasized by Iran.

"We also emphasized our support for the peaceful settlement of the ongoing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict based on the well-known principles of international law," Amir Abdollahian pointed out.

He then stated that since the beginning of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Tehran has always declared its readiness to help resolve the crisis through dialogue.

"We are still ready to continue our support and assistance in this field so that the remaining issues are resolved based on respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the parties and through political dialogue," he stated.

Iran's top diplomat then noted that in the new conditions of the world, regional formats that exist between two countries or with other countries should be emphasized and paid attention to.

to increase the flow of the people of the two

countries, saying increase in visits to each country

by citizens of the two neighboring countries and

interactions between them will strengthen the

Bayramov: We presented 5-point peace plan to Armenia

For his part, Azerbaijan's foreign minister Bayramov expressed his satisfaction at being in Iran, saying, "During this trip. I had a meeting with Mr. Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, Iran's Parliament Speaker, and had an exchange of views. After this meeting, we will be at the service of President Ayatollah Raisi, and I thank the Iranian foreign minister for arranging these meetings."

Bayramov stated that many issues were discussed in the meeting with the Iranian chief diplomat, noting that the relations between the two countries are based on historical and cultural commonalities, and the neighborliness and brotherhood of the people of the two countries.

According to the top Azeri top diplomat, several bilateral and regional issues were discussed in the meeting.

"According to the political will of the leaders of the two countries, despite the fact that we had a 30% increase in the volume of trade exchanges in 2021 and an 18% increase in the first five months of 2022 compared to the same period last year, the available capacities for the two countries are more than these figures," he stressed.

from here we welcome Mr. Ilham "We agreed to follow up on the Aliyev for his visit to the Islamic completion of the half-finished joint projects and to implement He added, "As you know, energy new projects between the two countries and give priority to the and transit are two important issues in the economic cooperation existing projects. Regarding the joint production of cars and spare parts and the production of tractors and agricultural products, good agreements have been made, which will be implemented," Bayramov explained.

The Azeri foreign minister continued that the North-South Corridor project is of particular importance and the Republic of Azerbaijan is ready to increase the capacity of this corridor and build and complete the Rasht-Astara railway and complete the railway dock in Astara.

"In the field of international cooperation in the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, we had successful cooperation, and God willing, after this, the two countries will support each other within the framework of these organizations," the senior Azeri diplomat added.

Baku is seeking to normalize ties with Yerevan

Bayramov also said the Republic of Azerbaijan wants to normalize relations with the Republic of Armenia after the war and has taken steps in this regard.

"We have presented a fivepoint peace plan to Armenia that will help sign peace agreement between the two countries, and we have announced our readiness to reopen transportation and inter-regional communications between Azerbaijan and Armenia and demarcation of the border between the two countries, and presented proposals in this regard," he explained.

Bayramov noted that the main priority is the reconstruction and development of the liberated areas.

"In this regard, regional cooperation and the implementation of joint projects with the countries of the region, including our important neighbor, the Islamic Republic of Iran, constitute one of the frameworks of our cooperation," he highlighted.

In this regard, he stated, Baku entrusted the construction of a hospital and a school to Iranian companies. In addition, he said, the activity of Iranian companies in industrial towns and free trade zones is foreseen.

Active companies and investors

will enjoy tax waivers and this will

lead to the development and growth

welcomed the constructive stance

of Iran and its participation and

cooperation in regional formats,

Bayramov

of border areas, he pointed out.

conclusion,

possible way to conclude an agreement. A deal foreign minister stressed. The French foreign minister praised the positive

the easing of sanctions.

bilateral ties and collaboration.

negotiations between Iran and the United States.

As Washington is no longer a signatory to the historic agreement, Iran is not ready to enter direct talks with the U.S.

friendship of the two nations.

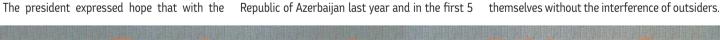
Raisi: Strengthening ties will lead to regional co-op visit of Ilham Aliyev, the Azerbaijani President, to From page 1 > Raisi also emphasized the need Tehran the two neighbors would see a leap in ties.

> For his part, the Azeri foreign minister pointed to the meetings between the two countries' officials and its impact on the level of cooperation, stating, "The volume of trade between Iran and the

months of this year has increased significantly."

Bayramov also presented a detailed report on the topics of interest and negotiations between the officials of the two countries and noted that Tehran and Baku agree that regional issues should be resolved by the countries of the region

including the 3+3 format.



Freedom warriors or oil thieves?

On april, 2003, US-led coalition forces took the control of all Iraqi oil fields only less than a month after the invasion under the name of freedom.

According to the infamous Project for a New American Century (PNAC) written in 1997,

"the need for a substantial American force pres<mark>ence in the Gu</mark>lf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein."

So Saddam's WMD was not the issue - a<mark>nd neither was</mark> Saddam himself. =

The real issue is candidly described in a 2001 report on "energy security", commissioned by VP Cheney.

It warned of an impending global energy crisis that would increase "US and global vulnerability to disruption"

and leave the US facing "unprecedented energy price volatility."

Iragis, promised freedom and liberty from Savddam's dictatorship , were only victims of western economic greed.

Raisi brought about 'unique' change in Iranian foreign policy: MP

a member of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has praised the foreign policy agenda of the Raisi administration, saying that it has brought about a unique change in the Iranian foreign policy.

"One of the most important programs of the 13th government is to restore relations with neighboring countries, which has always been emphasized by the late Imam and the Supreme Leader of the revolution in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran," he said in remarks to state news agency IRNA.

He added, "All neighboring countries of Iran are Muslim and the civilization field of these countries is common. For example, when you enter the country of Kazakhstan and some of its buildings and mosques, it is as if you have entered Goharshad Mosque in Mashhad. Because the cultural works, dialect and borders of these two countries are completely similar to each other and these cultural commonalities apply to other neighbors as well."

He noted, "But the enemies and the colonialists tried for many years to expand the unity in their lands and form unions like the European Union. But on the other hand, they promote the politics of division among Muslims and Islamic countries. Of course, unfortunately, the previous government and the previous Ministry of Foreign Affairs followed this



view and policy and only focused on European countries.

The lawmaker said U.S. sanctions had a negative impact on Iran in previous times because Iran's relations with neighboring countries were not favorable.

"Sanctions were also effective in cases where our relations with neighboring countries were strained in the previous government. When I asked Saif (Valiullah Saif, the former governor of the Central Bank) to make bilateral agreements for the exchange of national currencies between other countries, his answer was that this issue was not realized. While diplomacy and many trips between countries are for the realization of this goal," he stated.

Qoddousi added, "The 13th government created a unique and unprecedented transformation in foreign relations with neighboring countries in the shortest time.

important international agreements and this matter is for the benefit of Iran and other countries. Because Iran is located at the crossroads North-South and East-West countries of the world, and we will see the impact of this strategic location in the near future."

President Ebrahim Raisi gave a new boost to his administration's policy of cementing ties with Iran's neighbors as part of new foreign policy agenda. He has recently met with a number of foreign leaders on the sidelines of the 6th summit of the Caspian Sea littoral states, which provided him with a unique opportunity to advance his 'neighborhood policy". It marked a new orientation in Iran's foreign policy which is aimed at strengthening ties with neighbors.

President Raisi visited Turkmenistan with a clear goal in mind: further advancing the neighborhood policy. In his meeting with the Chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, Raisi said his administration "has a special program in the field of foreign policy to develop neighborly relations, and Iran-Turkmenistan relations are expanding rapidly based on extensive cooperation and mutual trust."

He reiterated this in his meeting with Turkmen President Serdar Berdimuhamedow, saying that his administration "attaches a special priority to develop relations and cooperation with neighbors."

IRAN IN FOCUS

Straight Truth TEHRAN TIMES

New season of Iran league to begin on **Aug. 12**

TEHRAN - The 2022/23 Iran Professional League will start on Aug. 12, according to the Iran Football League Organization.

Esteghlal, who will be headed by Portuguese coach Ricardo Sa Pinto in the new season, are defending champions.

Malavan Bandar Anzali and Mes Kerman won promotion and replaced Fajr Sepasi and Shahr

Iran Professional League is the highest division of professional football in the west Asian country. It is the top-level football league in Iran since its

foundation in 2001. Since 2013, the league comprises 16 teams. The winners of IPL and Hazfi Cup automatically qualify for the AFC Champions League group stages. The runnersup and the third-place teams should participate at the AFC Champions League Play-off round.

Persepolis are the most successful club with seven titles in IPL and 14 in total.

Iran football drawn with Morocco at 2021 Solidarity Games

TEHRAN - Iran football team have learned their opponents at the 2021 Solidarity Games.

Iran have been drawn in Group B along with Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan.

Hosts Turkey, Senegal, Algeria and Cameroon

The football federation of Iran will send U23 football team to the competition.

?The 2021 Islamic Solidarity Games will be 5th edition of the event scheduled to be held from Aug. 9 to 18, 2022 at Konya, Turkey under the aegis of Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF).

Thailand beat Iran in Asian Women's **U20 Volleyball** Championship

TEHRAN - Thailand defeated Iran in straight sets (25-23, 25-15, 25-15) in the 2022 Asian

Women's U20 Volleyball Championship on Monday. Iran will play hosts Kazakhstan and South Korea on Tuesday and Wednesday respectively in Pool A.

Pool B consists of hosts Japan, China, India, Uzbekistan and Chinese Taipei.

The competition is being held in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan from July 4 to 11.

The champion and vice-champion teams shall earn direct berths as Asian representatives

in the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Women's U21 World Championship, with the host city to be announced at a later date.

Japan are the defending champions.

The 19 Asian Championship tournaments have been won by three different national teams. China have won 12 times. The other Asian Championship winners are Japan, with sixth titles; and South Korea, with one title.

Morocco volleyball team to hold camp in Iran

TEHRAN - Morocco national volleyball team will travel to Tehran to hold a joint training camp with Iran.

The African team are preparing for the

Solidarity Games. Iran volleyball federation is going to send

Iran B team to the Games. ?The 2021 Islamic Solidarity Games will be

5th edition of the event scheduled to be held from August 9 to 18, 2022 at Konya, Turkey under the aegis of Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF).

Hugo Almeida named Sepahan assistant coach

TEHRAN - Former Portugal national football team forward Hugo Almeida was named as new assistant coach of Sepahan team.

Almeida has signed a one-year deal with Sepahan to work as Jose Morais's assistant in the Iranian football team.

The 38-year-old forward has previously worked with Jose Morais in Al-Hilal of Saudi Arabia.

Almeida was a member of Porto football team who won 2003-04 UEFA Champions League.

As a player, Almeida has played in all levels in Portugal national teams.

Islamic Solidarity Games: Iranian handball teams know rivals

TEHRAN - Iranian men's and women's handball teams discovered their rivals at the 2021 Islamic Solidarity Games.

In the men's division, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Morocco and Iraq are in Group A.

Iran, Turkey and Azerbaijan are drawn in Group B. Iran's women's handball team are drawn in Group B along with Cameroon, Afghanistan and Azerbaijan. Group A consists of Turkey, Senegal, Bangladesh

?The 2021 Islamic Solidarity Games will be 5th edition of the event scheduled to be held from August 9 to 18, 2022 at Konya, Turkey under the aegis of Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF).

Persepolis part ways with Ramin Rezaeian

TEHRAN - Persepolis football club parted company with its right winger Ramin Rezaeian.

Rezaeian joined the Reds from Al-Duhail in February but failed to meet the expectations.

He traveled to Qatar Sunday night.

The media reports suggest that the 31-year-old player has reached an agreement with a Qatari club.

Taremi nominated for Liga Most Valuable Player

TEHRAN - Iranian forward of Porto football club Mehdi Taremi has been nominated for the Liga Most Valuable Player (MVP).

Midfielders Otávio and Vítor Ferreira, already signed by Paris Saint-Germain, and strikers Taremi, second top scorer in the competition with 20 goals, and Luis Díaz, on loan to Liverpool in January, are the four players who represented the 'Dragons' in the 10-man list.

Pedrinho, Fran Navarro, Samuel Lino, Pablo Sarabia, Darwin Núñez and Ricardo Horta are the other candidates for the accolade.

The MVP of the I League for the 2021-22 season will be announced on Tuesday, during a ceremony at the Alfândega do Porto Conference Center.

Iranian volleyball teams learn fate at ISSF

TEHRAN - Iran's men's and women's volleyball teams learned their opponents at the 2021 Islamic

In the men's volleyball competition, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Morocco, Cameroon are in Group A.

Iran B also are in Group B along with Pakistan, Turkey and Qatar.

Iran's women volleyball team are in Group A along with Uzbekistan, Indonesia and Turkey.

Afghanistan, Senegal, Cameroon and Azerbaijan are drawn in Group B.

Kuwait, UAE condole with Iran

TEHRAN - Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have expressed their condolences to Iran over the earthquake that hit the southern Iranian province of Hormozgan.

on earthquake

The foreign ministry of Kuwait expressed sincere condolences to the Iranian leadership, government and people, wishing the injured quick recovery, according to Kuwait Times.

On Saturday, a series of quakes measuring 5.9, 6.1 and 6.3 in magnitude hit Hormozgan, leading to the death of five people and the injury of dozens.

Also, the UAE foreign ministry issued a statement offering condolences to Iran. "The UAE has expressed its sincere condolences and solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran over the earthquake that struck the south of the country, and caused dozens of casualties. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MoFAIC) expressed its sincere condolences to the government of Iran and its people, and to the families of the victims of this painful tragedy, and its wishes for a speedy recovery for the injured," it said, according to the official news agency WAM.

In addition, the leaders of the UAE offered a similar message. President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan "sent a cable of condolences to President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, over the 6.00 magnitude earthquake that struck the village of Sayeh Khosh, southern Iran, killing five people and injuring 44," according to WAM. Sheikh Mohamed expressed his sympathies and wished the injured a speedy recovery.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, also sent a similar cable of condolences to the

Iranian president, WAM reported. The earthquake occurred at 02:02 a.m. local time at the depth of 10 kilometers, the Iranian Seismological Center reported.

A 6.1-magnitude earthquake and a 5.9-magnitude quake followed the first 6.1-magnitude quake. There were more than a dozen aftershocks.

The incident cut power lines in around 30 villages with 2,500 families

Iran president congratulates **Belarus on Independence Day**

TEHRAN - Iranian President Avatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi has sent a congratulatory message to the president of Belarus to felicitate him on Independence Day.

Membership in unions such as

important agreements with countries

in the region and the world in various

fields are among the successful goals

of the 13th government that have

He noted, "Iran is one of the ancient

lands of the world, which has a very

deep scientific and cultural civilization

and a high military position, and it

is not an emerging power. Rather,

the enemies always tried to make

Iran's power invisible and the Islamic

Republic of Iran not to be in its place."

of Iran reaches its true position, it will

not rest. Because the lofty position is

the right of Iran and any civilization like

Iran, but the colonial system has tried

to distance Islamic Iran from its true

He concluded, "Iran has the

right and ability to participate in

position in the past years."

He stated, "Until the Islamic Republic

Eurasia, (and

etc., signing

[SCO],

BRICS,

Shanghai

possibly)

been achieved."

In his message to Alexander Lukashenko, President Raisi expressed hope that the cooperation between the two countries would expand even more in the light of joint efforts and by taking advantage of the existing vast capacities.

Under President Raisi, Iran and Belarus explored ways to boost relations, especially in the economic field.

In September of 2021, Raisi, while receiving the credentials of new Belarusian ambassador to Tehran, referred to his meeting with the President of Belarus on the sidelines of the Shanghai summit in Dushanbe and said, "Providing the groundwork for the activity of private sectors and companies of the two countries can be effective in strengthening economic and

Ayatollah Raisi also referred to the request of Ambassador Dmitry Koltsov to approve the country's university degrees in Iran, saying, "Considering the presence of a number of Iranian students in Belarusian universities, it is necessary to take appropriate measures for this problem."

Ambassador Koltsov called the relations between the two countries long-standing and

Iran and Belarus established diplomatic ties some 30 years ago, after the collapse of the Soviet

"My main mission is to develop relations between the two countries and I will do my best to achieve this goal," Koltsov said.

Belarus has always been and will always be a friend of Iran, Koltsov

"We are ready to raise the level of trade and provide groundwork for the presence and investment trade cooperation between Iran of Iranian companies," the diplomat

Neighborhood policy neutralized U.S. sanctions

TEHRAN - A year into his administration. Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi succeeded in diversifying Iran's foreign policy options through the nascent neighborhood policy he set out last year.

When he assumed office last year in August, Ayatollah Raisi made it clear that he had a new agenda for Iran's foreign policy. He outlined his foreign policy goals within what came to be known as the Neighborhood Policy, which rests on fostering mainly economic relations with neighboring countries and non-Western powers.

The new policy orientation soon yielded results, leading to Iran's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the first weeks of Raisi's presidency. Since then, the President traveled to many countries in a bid to advance his foreign policy goals. This included visits to Russia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Oman, and Qatar, to name a few.

A senior Iranian lawmaker has said that the neighborhood policy of Raisi played in a major role in Iran's efforts to neutralize U.S. sanctions. The lawmaker, Javad Karimi Quddousi, who is a member of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said the Raisi presidency marked a shift in Iranian foreign policy.

According to the lawmaker, one reason that



on Iran's economy was that the previous government failed to prioritize enhancing economic relations with neighboring countries and focused its time and energy on boosting Iran's relations with Europe, which has been seeking to sow divisions among Muslim states.

"Sanctions were also effective in cases where our relations with neighboring countries were strained in the previous government. When I asked Saif (Valiullah Saif, the former governor of the Central Bank) to make bilateral agreements for the exchange of national currencies between other countries, his answer was that this issue was not realized. While diplomacy and many trips between countries are for the realization of this goal," he told Iran's state news agency IRNA.

Qoddousi added, "The 13th government created why the U.S. sanctions had negative impact a unique and unprecedented transformation in foreign relations with neighboring countries in the shortest time. Membership in unions such as Shanghai [SCO], Eurasia, (and possibly) BRICS, etc., signing important agreements with countries in the region and the world in various fields are among the successful goals of the 13th government that have been achieved."

The Raisi administration is continuing the neighborhood policy. On Monday, President Raisi received Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov, who also met his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian. The visit came amid diplomatic efforts to upgrade relations between Tehran and Baku.

It also came against a backdrop of broader diplomatic efforts by Iran in the region to improve ties with regional heavyweights such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Amir Abdollahian recently paid a visit to Turkey where he met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu.

In parallel, Iran and Saudi Arabia seem to be on the verge of restoring ties as a result of mediatory efforts by Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi. The Iraqi premier visited Iran and Saudi Arabia in past week. According to Arab press reports, Iran and Saudi Arabia could soon announce the restoration of diplomatic ties in a meeting in Baghdad.

ECONOMY



Quarterly rail transport of basic goods up 150% yr/yr

From page 1 > This amount of basic goods was loaded from eight ports of Imam Khomeini, Shahid Rajaei, Chabahar, Amirabad, Fereydoun-Kanar, Nowshahr, Anzali, and Bushehr, and transported to the desired destinations in the country, Mehrdad Hamdollahi said, adding, "According to the statistics of loading of basic goods from the country's ports, Imam Khomeini port ranks first with the issuance of 132,000 bills of lading and the loading of 3.277 million tons of commodities."

Shahid Rajaei port with 899,000 tons, Chabahar port with 516,000 tons, Amirabad port with 338,000 tons, and Anzali port with 182,000 tons are in the next ranks respectively, the official added.

As announced by the deputy head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), 30.9 million tons of basic goods worth \$19.6 billion were cleared



from the customs in the past Iranian calendar

Foroud Asgari, the deputy head of IRICA for customs affairs, said that the imported goods were in 25 commodity groups.

Putting the value of the imported basic commodities at \$19.6 billion in the past year, the official said that the imports show a 60-percent rise in worth and 32-percent growth in weight, as compared to the Iranian calendar year 1399.

TPO launches platform to provide traders with info on destination markets



TEHRAN - Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) has announced launching a platform that provides traders with a database containing information on Iran's trade partners, the TPO portal reported.

According to Alireza Peyman-Pak, the mentioned database has been established as part of the organization's strategy to move towards smart business and promoting new ways of foreign trade.

"In order to make foreign trade smarter and to move away from traditional ways, two important programs have been implemented by the Trade Promotion Organization," the official said.

The mentioned platform is designed so that traders can have a detailed analysis of the destination markets, Peyman-Pak said, adding: "Instead of spending days

for identifying appropriate trade partners traders can quickly find potential markets with the help of data mining, whose job is to collect market information and analyze it."

Noting that using such platforms has been popular in developed countries for years, the official said: "With the information collected using artificial intelligence, our businessmen are able to identify certain products and learn about the target community that has a demand for those products to become prepared to get into the business without wasting too much time."

According to the TPO head, the mentioned platform is currently undergoing trial stages for the validation of the collected data, and it will go into the operational stage in the coming weeks and the information extracted by this platform will be available to traders.

He also announced reaching agreements with China, Russia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to connect the mentioned platforms to the databases of these countries and said: "Since billions must be spent for a platform to be recognized in the world, and our domestic companies cannot afford this cost, we negotiated with China, UAE, and Russia to prepare the ground for connecting our database to the platforms of these

Iran exports \$358m of goods to Iraq via Mehran crossing

TEHRAN - Director-General of Customs Administration of the western province of Ilam has said that \$358 million worth of commodities have been exported to Iraq from the Mehran border crossing in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21).

In an interview with Mehr News Agency, Ruhollah Gholami noted that 886,000 tons of goods were exported to Iraq through this border in the said quarter.

Exports via the mentioned crossing have increased by 100 percent in terms of weight and 73 percent in terms of value compared to the same period last year, he added.

He underlined that Ilam province customs



has won the first place this year among the 12 customs bordering Iraq in terms of trade performance.

The Mehran border crossing has created jobs for over 2,000 people working currently in the place, he pointed out.

Railway fleet receives 319 domesticallymade wagons, locomotives

fleet received 319 domesticallymade wagons and locomotives worth 94.6 trillion rials (about \$34 million) in a ceremony on

The ceremony was attended by Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qasemi, IRNA reported.

Some 305 new freight wagons, six newly-made locomotives, seven renovated passenger wagons, and a renovated locomotive joined the railway fleet in the said ceremony.

The mentioned wagons and locomotive have been manufactured and renovated by domestic companies namely Novin Sanat Raja, Wagon Kowsar Company, Wagon Pars

Iranian railway Company, Green Plour Industrial Group, Iranian Rail Industries Development Company and Mapna.

> Speaking at the unveiling ceremony, Qasemi referred to the capabilities of domestic manufacturers to build wagons, rail infrastructure, and even locomotives, saying that there is a need for developing the country's railway network and consequently the railway fleet since the country is facing an increasing demand for domestic freight rail transportation.

According to the minister, in addition to the domestic demand for rail transportation, the country's neighbors are also calling for new corridors to transit their goods through Iran.

"Recently, we have signed a contract with Russia to transport 10 million tons of cargos to the Persian Gulf nations. Turkmens are also looking for a cargo transportation contract through Iran's transit channel. Turkey has also made such a request and a

The development of the railway sector is one of the macro policies of the Iranian government as it has been emphasized by the general policies of the country's National Development Plan.

delegation from the country is

going to visit Iran in the next few

days," he said.

In this regard, the national railway fleet has been constantly receiving new domesticallymade locomotives and wagons over the past two years under

the framework of a program implemented by the Transport Ministry in collaboration with the country's private sector.

ی از ناوگان جدید ریلی در سال «تولید، دانش بنیان،

رود 🌱 🐂 دستگاه قاوگان تولید داخل و بازسازو و پهسازی شده تولید ماخل به شبعه ر ولکوموتیو 🐞 واگن باری 🐞 واگن مسافر

> Advantages such consuming less fuel and creating less pollution as well as high safety attaches priority to the railway when compared to some other transportation systems, and makes its development economically viable.

> When it comes to railway development, the renovation of existing infrastructures comes also under the spotlight, as according to RAI, currently, the average age of the country's passenger and freight wagons stands at 24 years and there are also rail tracks that have been built over 50 years ago.

TEDPIX climbs 4,169 points on Monday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 4,169 points to 1.507 million on Monday.

As IRNA reported, over 9.47 billion securities worth 66.678 trillion rials (about \$240.25 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 2,865 points, and the second market's index climbed 8,985 points.

Iranian stock market has been struggling for months to get back on track, however various internal and external factors have been hindering this market from reaching its true potential.

According to Market Analyst Vahid Halalat, the uncertainty of the global economy in the wake of the Ukraine war, the uncertainty about the results of nuclear talks, the unclear situation of the privatization of the country's major automakers, and most importantly, the lack of enough attention paid by the



government officials to the stock market are among the internal and external factors that have caused the capital market to fall behind other markets such as housing.

Emphasizing that these factors have affected the mindset of the shareholders and caused everyone to stay away from the market, Halalat said: "Considering internal factors, the country's major automakers play an important role in the stock market and have a great psychological impact; And since their privatization process has not been realized yet, the validity of the entire project has become questionable."

He further mentioned the possible positive impact that reaching an agreement in nuclear talks could have on the market, saying: "We hope that the negotiations will come to a conclusion. Because in that case, it can have long-term and short-term effects on the stock market and reduce the return gap that has been created between the stock market and other parallel markets."

The analyst stressed that the market is in a stagnated condition, adding: "If new developments occur in favor of the market, for example, a political agreement is reached or the shares of automakers are offered, it can be an excuse for the market to return to its upward trend."

Overall, at the moment there is no expectation for the market to fall or rise. If nothing changes, the market will grow over

Monthly non-oil trade increases 3%

TEHRAN- The value of Iran's non-oil trade increased three percent in the third Iranian month Khordad (ended on March 21), from the same month of the previous year, the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi put the country's non-oil trade at 13.622 million tons worth \$8.9 billion in the third month, and said the with the country's exports being more than imports in that month, a positive trade balance of \$204 million was achieved.

The official further put the monthly non-oil export at 10.65 million tons worth \$4.553 billion, and that of import at 2.972 million tons valued at \$4.349

As previously announced by the IRICA head, the value of Iran's non-oil exports reached \$13.69



billion in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar vear, up 21 percent compared to the last year's same period.

Alireza Moghadasi said Iran exported 27.7 million tons of non-oil commodities in the mentioned three months.

Meanwhile, some 8.154 million tons of goods valued at \$12.464 billion were imported into the country in the said period to register an 18-percent rise in terms of value compared to the last year's same quarter.

In total, the Islamic Republic traded about 36 million tons of with its trade partners in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year, up 19.5 percent in terms of value, Moghadasi said.

According to the official, the country's trade balance was non-oil trade at 162 million tons \$605 million positive in the worth \$100 billion in the past mentioned time span.

Iran's top export destination during this period was China with \$4.214 billion worth of imports from the Islamic Republic, followed by Iraq with \$1.824 billion, Turkey with \$1.737 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$1.645 billion, and India with \$424 million.

Meanwhile, the country's top five sources of imports during these three months were the UAE with \$3.426 billion, China with \$3.131 billion, Turkey with \$1.273 billion, India with \$512 million, and Germany with \$456 million worth of imports.

As previously announced by

non-oil goods worth \$25.5 billion the IRICA head, the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), as compared to its previous year.

> Mogadasi put the country's year.

> He said that Iran exported 122 million tons of non-oil products worth \$48 billion in the previous year, which was \$14 billion (41 percent) more than the figure for its preceding year.

> The country's non-oil trade record in 1400 was reached while the toughest sanctions were imposed on Iran, but thanks to God and the efforts of entrepreneurs, producers and the cooperation of foreign traderelated organizations, a historical record was achieved in the past year which was unprecedented in recent decades, the official has underlined.

Loading, unloading of goods in Chabahar port up 40% in 3 months yr/yr

TEHRAN - Loading and unloading of goods in Chabahar port, in the southeast of Iran, increased 40 percent in the first quarter of the present Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the country's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) announced.

According to the PMO, loading and unloading of goods in the ports of Iran increased seven percent in the three-month period of this year, from that of the previous year, as 51,661,306 tons of commodities were loaded and unloaded in the ports during the mentioned three-month

Quarterly loading and unloading of oil products stood at 25,453,417 tons, with nine percent growth, and that of the non-oil goods stood at 26,207,889 tons, with seven percent rise year on year.

Meanwhile, loading and unloading in the container sector was 622,524 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in the first guarter of the present year, showing 12 percent as compared to 555,334 TEUs in the first quarter of the previous



As Iran's only oceanic port on the Gulf of Oman, Chabahar port holds great significance for the country both politically and economically. The country has taken serious measures for developing this port in order to improve the country's maritime trade.

In this regard, the Islamic Republic has been welcoming investors from all over the world to take part in the development of this port and benefit from its distinguished position as a trade hub in the region.

Chabahar port consists of Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti terminals, each of which has five berth facilities. The port is located in

Iran's Sistan-Balouchestan Province and is about 120 kilometers southwest of Pakistan's Baluchistan province, where the China-funded Gwadar port is situated.

In May 2016, India, Iran, and Afghanistan signed a trilateral agreement for the strategicallylocated Chabahar to give New Delhi access to Kabul and Central Asia.

Based on an agreement with Iran, India is going to install and operate modern loading and unloading equipment including mobile harbor cranes in Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar.

U.S. police kill black American **with "60** bullets"

From page 1 ▶ "This wasn't self-defense, it wasn't an accident in the heat of the moment, it was murder. Point blank," Johnson said. "This Black man was killed - struck more than 60 times by 90 fired bullets - for a possible traffic violation. This doesn't happen to white people in America" the statement read.

Speaking at a press conference Akron's police chief Steve Mylett admitted that "for many reasons, [the footage] is difficult to watch.. at the request of Mr. Walker's family we have blurred Mr. Walker's body" in the video. Asked if the officers had overreacted to any perceived threat, Mylett replied "I'm not going to pass judgment until the investigation is completed."

Walker was accused by police of firing a gun while driving away from the traffic stop before allegedly leaving the pistol in the driver's seat and trying to run from officers.

attorney the representing the victim's family Bobby DiCello has questioned the police narrative about the victim firing a gun. He emphasized how the videos show Walker running unarmed with his back to the officers when they opened fire.

DiCello says the footage shows officers had fired up to 90 times on the former Amazon employee describing what he had seen on the police bodycamera footage as "brutal" with officers' gunfire sounding "like a whole brick of fireworks going off."

Police investigators say they have not determined how many shots were fired despite Akron city's medical examiner spotting around 60 gunshot wounds on Walker's body. When the medical examiner

reached the scene, Walker was found lying on his back while in handcuffs. He had been shot in the face, abdomen, and upper legs, according to a preliminary medical report.

Speaking to a local newspaper, DiCello said his legal team has not seen any evidence Walker fired a weapon.

"He is just in a down sprint when he is dropped by I think the count is more than 90 shots, now how many of those lands, according to our investigation right now, we're getting details that suggest 60 to 80 wounds."

DiCello explained that It was not clear how many bullets struck Walker because bullets can "cause wounds both entering and exiting the body."

Walker had one traffic ticket and no criminal record, according to reports. In 2015, he graduated from a High School in Akron. He was working as a driver and had dreams of one day opening his own business, DiCello told the media.

The anxiety of the officials over Walker's killing and the response to the release of the body-cam video has been widely reported. Mayor Horrigan has thanked the Walker family over their public appeal for calm saying the situation had the potential for "aggression and violence" between officers and demonstrators.

In a sign of the authorities fear that public anger could turn to violence, officials had canceled the city's public festival to mark the Fourth of July holiday weekend before

family," the city's mayor said, "unfortunately, I feel strongly that this is not the time for a city-led celebration."

Stunned residents and city leaders will now await the results of an investigation into Walker's death. Whether the protests will lead to violence and what level of unrest in the city is expected; remains to be

Before the release of the video an angry crowd had gathered outside the city courthouse and chanted "no justice, no peace, prosecute the police." Authorities have placed large trucks to strategically serve as street barriers. The shooting was the third fatal one by a police officer in Akron in the past six months.

Mike Lawlor, associate criminal justice professor also says the police video raises more questions than answers.

Speaking to local media he pointed out "if this started out as clear equipment violation. which usually means like a defective tail light or there's not a light on the license plate, something like that, that would never justify a pursuit in almost any part of the country,"

Lawlor also noted that the officers first use stun guns, which would not have been used if police believe their lives were in danger.

The shooting was the latest in a spate of killings of black men by law enforcement agencies in the U.S. that have been widely condemned as racist and unjustified, including the 2020 murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis that ignited

black American and the question marks over the police narrative is also nothing new in

Germany's Scholz says Putin ready to wage

the United States.

to According research published by The Lancet last year, more than half of police killings in the U.S. are unreported and Black Americans are most likely to experience fatal police violence

Researchers comparisons between data from the U.S. National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) and non-governmental, open-source databases on fatal police violence, find out that NVSS had under-reported killings from police violence by 55.5 percent between 1980-2018.

Over the 40-year study period (1980-2019), Black Americans were estimated to be 3.5 times more likely to die from police violence than white Americans despite being a minority in the country.

Studies also show police officers are still killing people at an alarming rate, according to a data analysis that has raised concerns about the Biden White House's pledge to expand police investments.

According to Mapping Police Violence, a non-profit research group, as of March 24 this year, police killed on average about three people a day.

Experts say the data suggests in the two years since George Floyd's murder, the U.S. has made very little progress in preventing deaths at the hands of the police. people, which is one of the deadliest years on record, the monitoring group reported.

INTERNATIONAL

Straight Truth TEHRAN TIMES

Covid possibly came out of a U.S. biotechnology lab, says Columbia professor

"Bioweapons research needs to stop," Jeffrey Sachs suggests

"There are

that genetic

manipulation

of SARS-like

viruses that may

have created

SARS-CoV-2.

the virus that

causes Covid-19

disease."

Uzbekistan reports casualties in

From page **1** The U.S. government was sponsoring a lot of dangerous genetic manipulation of SARS-like viruses and has not yet honestly revealed the nature of that work. There are worrying signs that this research may have created SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19 disease. We can suspect this because U.S. scientists declared the intention to manipulate viruses in a way that could have created the virus. We need the U.S. government to be more transparent about the research it was sponsoring.

How do you see the media-political war over the origin of the pandemic? American officials and media blamed China for its outbreak.

Yes, the U.S. has tried to blame China without admitting its own possible role. Governments should cooperate with the WHO worrying signs to find the truth.

Though the U.S. is scientifically and technologically advanced country the Covid-19 death rate is still high. How do you evaluate the performance of the Trump and Biden administrations to curb the pandemic?

The U.S. did a poor job, with more than 1 million dead. The public behaves badly, rejecting face masks for example. Trump was completely irresponsible. Biden did a little better in terms

of science, but overall U.S. performance was

Do you think the globe can eradicate this kind of research.



Covid-19 in near future? And is it possible for the world to face new pandemics with

unnatural origins? It is likely that Covid will be with us for a long

time to come, perhaps with new serious waves. The pandemic is still not close to being ended.

A lot of dangerous biological manipulation of pathogens is still going on. This kind of laboratory research needs to be made public and properly regulated. Bioweapons research needs to stop. We need global cooperation for this to happen.

Do you agree with conspiracy theories that claim that Covid resulted from search for a biological war?

I do not believe that Covid came from bio warfare research. More likely, it came from

research to create drugs and vaccines. Either way, we need to know more. The U.S. NIH should make public the information about

unrest, opposition says at least 5 killed releasing the police videos. protests inside America and Since 2013, police have killed around the world. "Independence Day is meant around 1,100 people each year Another showed a young man crouching to be a celebration and a time The police account of the and In 2021 officers killed 1,136 of gathering with friends and deadly encounter with another



Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev said on Sunday there were casualties among civilians and law enforcement officers after rare protests in the Central Asian country, and an exiled opposition politician said at least five people had been killed.

Separately, a local government official told an Uzbek news website that thousands of people have been hospitalized.

In a statement posted online, Mirziyoyev said rioters had carried out "destructive actions" in the city of Nukus, capital of the northwestern Karakalpakstan region, by throwing stones, starting fires and attacking

"Unfortunately there are victims among civilians and law enforcement officers," he said. The statement did not specify the number and nature of the casualties.

Sultanbek Ziyayev, the head of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. told news website Daryo.uz that hospitals in Nukus were full of patients who had been wounded when protesters clashed with security forces.

"Thousands of wounded have been hospitalized and are being treated," he said, according to the website.

Photographs from Nukus published on Sunday by another news website, Kun.uz, showed street barricades, burned trucks and a heavy military presence including armored personnel carriers.

Videos shared on social media showed at least two severely wounded people being carried by their arms and legs. One was bleeding from the abdomen, while the other was screaming.

by an apparently lifeless body in the street, screaming "A man is dying" and then running for cover as shots rang out. Reuters could not immediately verify the authenticity of the

Ahunov, told Reuters that, based on contacts with local sources and video evidence, at least five people had been killed. He said there were unconfirmed reports of dozens more dead.

An exiled opposition politician, Pulat

Ahunov said people were unable to move around and obtain more information because of a state of emergency imposed by the authorities.

Uzbekistan is a tightly controlled former Soviet republic where the government clamps down hard on any form of dissent.

It was the second outbreak of unrest in Central Asia this year, after mass protests in Kazakhstan in January.

The protests in Uzbekistan were prompted by planned constitutional changes that would have stripped Karakalpakstan of its autonomous status. In an about-turn, the president dropped those plans on Saturday.

Ahunov, chairman of the opposition Berlik party, told Reuters from Sweden that he condemned the use of lethal force.

"The authorities, from the start, should have opted for dialogue and negotiations," he

He said he feared the potential for the situation to escalate into an ethnic conflict between Uzbeks and Karakalpaks, a minority group with their own language. Authorities had called a public meeting for Tuesday to discuss the situation, he added.

Kazakhstan said it was concerned by the events in Uzbekistan and welcomed moves by the authorities to stabilize the situation.

Steve Swerdlow, Associate Professor of Human Rights at the University of Southern California and an expert on the region, said Uzbekistan should engage as transparently as possible in declaring casualties and the use of force and over the longer term look at what concerns were at the heart of the protests.

war in Ukraine for "a long time"

Chancellor Olaf Scholz says Russian President Vladimir Putin prepared for his war on Ukraine for at least a year before inciting it, and predicted Putin is likely to be able to maintain a drawn-out offensive for a "long time."

Scholz made the comments in a Thursday interview with CBS News "Face the Nation" moderator and chief foreign affairs correspondent Margaret Brennan at the NATO summit in Madrid. The war on Ukraine has now dragged on for more than four months, and Russia is using its firepower to make incremental gains. U.S. intelligence estimates that Russia currently holds about 20% of the country, mostly in eastern Ukraine.

"When will Russia no longer have the ability to continue this fight? When will Putin run out of weapons, run out of funds? Or can this continue for years," Brennan asked Scholz.

No one really knows, Scholz replied, but Putin's lengthy planning suggests he's prepared for a sustained war

"He has — he is perhaps the leader of a very great country

with a lot of people living there, with a lot of means, and he is really doing this brutal war with — and he prepared for it [for] very long," Scholz said. "I think the decision to- to do this war was taken one year before it started or possibly earlier because he prepared for it. And so, he will be able to continue with the war really a long time."

Scholz said that even though Putin "will not really admit it," he still recognizes that Russia is feeling the impact of Western

"You get some idea that it really is hurting him, and that [Putin] understands the deep impacts of our sanctions on his economy..." Scholz said. "This is now happening to a country that is not that advanced, that is really needing all the technologies from the rest of the world for having a similar standard of living, and for having the chance to be part of growth in the world economy."

But when asked about the approximately \$2 billion a month Germany has spent on Russian gas, coal and other energy supplies — about the same amount Germany is sending in aid to Ukraine — Scholz denied he was giving Putin an out from the sanctions.

"He cannot buy anything from the money he's getting from us because he will — he has all these sanctions on imports for modern technologies and things he is looking for," he said. "So this is what is making [Putin] very angry."

But when Brennan noted that Putin could use that money elsewhere — just not in the West — and asked if Germany was still spending approximately \$2 billion a month on Russian energy supplies, Scholz noted that "it is always decreasing."

"And I, once again, say that we decided that we do the — that we draft the sanctions in the way that they hurt Putin, and this is what we do," he added. "And, once again, we are now doing real investments into technology, in pipelines, in ports. And I know that there are people that sometimes think that when you are having taken a decision one afternoon, the next morning you have a port and the 40 kilometers pipeline ... in the real life, this is not happening."

TOURISM



Foreign visits to East Azarbaijan at record high



page 1 Last November, Iran resumed the issuance of tourist visas and the flow of foreign tourists from land and air borders following 19 months of suspension. However, months of the steep recession took its toll on their incomes; many travel insiders, hoteliers, and tour operators faced big dilemmas such as bankruptcy, unemployment, debts, and the prospects of not being competitive on the international

Furthermore, the pandemic has taken a huge toll on the civil aviation sector. For instance, airlines reportedly lost hundreds of millions of dollars because of flight cancellations during the high seasons. Tourism authorities say Iran has the potential to experience a tourism boom after coronavirus is contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived

for a country that ranked the third fastestgrowing tourism destination in 2019.

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz, the capital of East Azarbaijan, embraces several historical and religious sites, including the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. The city became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295–1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

TEHRAN - The Islamic Republic of Iran aims to draw further travelers from Japan, a tourism ministry official in charge of foreign tourism marketing has

Leyla Ajdari said last week that maximum attraction of Japanese tourists will be possible with a coherent program.

"Having plans to attract Japanese tourists, we will soon participate in the JATA Tourism Expo Japan," she said.

Elsewhere in her remarks, the official reminded some tourism projects being carried out using Japanese expertise.

"In addition, based on an agreement, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is undertaking projects to develop tourism infrastructure in the (Iranian) provinces of East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Ardabil, Zanjan, Qazvin, and Kordestan."

"Those provinces are expected to have a serious entry into the international markets on the one hand, and experience the prosperity of domestic tourism on the other hand," she said.

"Japan ranks third economic power in the world. It has a population of over one hundred and twenty-six million people with some four million incoming tourists and three million outgoing travelers," the official noted.

"Japanese tourists are more interested in traveling to countries such as the U.S., China, France, the Philippines, and South Korea, and most tourists who travel to Japan are from countries such as the U.S., China, Vietnam, South Korea, and India."

Ajdari said Japanese travelers are one of the best. "Japanese tourists are among the best

Iran seeks to attract more sightseers from Japan



travelers in the world... And tremendously suffered from Japan is the traditional target market for Iran tourism."

"Japanese children read about Persia in textbooks from a very young age. We should appreciate this market and improve our infrastructure and service standards. Hoping to attract the maximum number of Japanese tourists will be possible with coherent planning," the official explained.

According to the deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian, a total of 715,519 foreign travelers, mainly from Iraq, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, visited Iran during the first three months of the current year (started on March 21),

Iran's tourism industry has Korea, on June 23.

the international coronavirus restrictions so the number of foreign arrivals in 1399 decreased by more than 94% in comparison to the year 1398, Shalbafian said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the deputy minister said only 74 foreign travelers arrived in the country during the spring of 1399. "During the first three months of the year 1399, only 74 foreign tourists visited Iran."

"Citizens from the neighboring countries have been the main source of tourism for Iran since coronavirus restrictions were eased several months ago," Shalbafian said, addressing the World Tourism Industry Conference held in Seoul, South

"A turning point in the country's tourism trend in the post-coronavirus period is the welcoming of tourists from neighboring countries."

Iran's tourism has experienced a boom in domestic tourism and a large number of Iranian citizens traveling during the Persian new year holiday (Noruz), the increase in incoming tourists following the re-issuance of visas, and the facilitation of the required conditions for tourists in post-coronavirus time, the official explained.

Last year, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts announced that tourism in the country was growing before the corona outbreak, its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent.

Experts expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after the coronavirus is contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

A wallet-friendly destination with hospitable people, Iran has long been a desired destination for nature lovers, birdwatchers, powder chasers, culture devotees, pilgrims, museumgoers, foodies, adventurers, and medical travelers to name

All things considered, the ancient land is determined to get through the coronavirus crisis with a greater reliance on its numerous tourist spots of which 26 are UNESCO World Heritage, and above all, its welcoming, sociable people.

Private sector at forefront of Iran tourism, minister says

TEHRAN - The private sector is at the forefront of Iran tourism as it has enormous abilities to make significant contributions, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ezzatollah Zarghami has said.

"There is no doubt that the private sector, organizations, and associations are at the forefront of tourism and the arm of the ministry in this area," Zarghami said on Saturday, IRNA reported.

Travel agencies are the link between Iran and other countries in the tourism sector and they need to organize tours and special packages for foreign tourists to encourage them to travel to Iran, he

Using the capacities of cities that have sisterhood agreements with Iranian cities can also be a basis for planning and attention, and the tourism sector should interact with these countries and make use of their capacities, he noted.

Iran's cultural offices and embassies abroad should use their canacities and opportunities to attract tourists and develop and prosper the tourism industry, he mentioned.

Iran was ranked as the second fastestgrowing country in tourism based on data compiled by the World Tourism Organization.



Experts expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after the coronavirus is contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in

TEHRAN - An ancient site at the basin

of the newly-constructed Chamshir Dam in southwest Iran has severely been destroyed by local farmers, an Iranian archaeologist has said.

About 70 percent of the archaeological site has been plowed and leveled by farmers, resulting in demolishing many relics buried in this area, ILNA quoted archaeologist Saeid Amir-Hajilu as saying

"Archaeological excavations have yielded poor results so far due to an extensive level of destruction by farmers."

"However, we have discovered a wide range of relics including pottery, glass, stone beads, and stone mortars at the site", he explained.

He also noted that architectural remnants of the Sassanids, early and middle Islamic eras have been identified at the site.

Sassanid architecture is characterized by the use of stone rubble and plaster mortar, whereas the early Islamic architecture found in this area lacks the quality of Sassanid architecture, he added.



Sassanid/Islamic site severely damaged by agricultural work

"The architecture of the third period is very poor and lacked order and quality, and was probably developed by nomadic tribes that settled in this area during the middle Islamic centuries," he mentioned.

As a result of the overlap of architectures from different periods, it can be said that in the early Islamic period, new walls were built on the walls of the Sassanid period without affecting the rest of the plan, he explained.

Earlier this week, Amir-Hajilu announced that whenever the nearby dam's water flows, the entire historical area is at risk of sinking, which raised some worries among cultural heritage aficionados.

However, he explained that all findings of the survey were carefully documented.

It appears that human societies in this area began at least during the Sassanid era (224-651), considering the presence of two ossuaries on the rocks overlooking this historical site, the types of pottery, and the architectural style of some of the walls, he added.

Furthermore, the natural characteristics of the region and its proximity to the Zohreh River led to the establishment and settlement of this area for over a thousand years, until the Islamic era, he mentioned.

The Sassanid age is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under Sassanids, Persian architecture in addition to arts experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions such as palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan which are amongst the highlights of the ensemble.

Sassanid archaeological typically represent a highly efficient system of land use and strategic utilization of natural topography in the creation of the earliest cultural centers of the Sassanid civilization.

Iron Age pottery recovered from excavators in northern Iran

TEHRAN - Iranian authorities have recovered an Iron Age clay jar from a gang of unauthorized diggers in Mazandaran province, northern Iran.

The suspects were detained and surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation and trial, IRNA quoted a local police commander as saying on Monday.

Preliminary investigations suggest the earthen jar dates 2,500 years, the commander said.

Sandwiched between towering Alborz mountain range and the Caspian Sea, Mazandaran has a rich yet turbulent history. An early civilization flourished at the beginning of the first millennium BC in Mazandaran (Tabarestan).

insecure eastern southeastern borders were crossed by Mongol invaders in the 13th and 14th centuries. Cossacks attacked the region in 1668 but were repulsed. It



was ceded to the Russian Empire by a treaty in 1723, but the Russians were never secure in their occupation. The area was restored to Iran under the Qajar dynasty.

The northern section of the region consists of lowland alongside the Caspian and upland along the northern slopes of the Alborz Marshy backlands Mountains. dominate the coastal plain, and extensive gravel fans fringe the mountains. The climate is permanently subtropical and humid, with very hot summers.

Rose harvesting festival held in East Azarbaijan



TEHRAN – On Monday, locals of Ansarood village in northwest Iran held a harvesting festival in celebration of the Damask rose

The annual festival plays host to hundreds of tourists who come together from all over the country, a local

"This capacity of agritourism significantly contributes to the economy of the region", the official added.

Experts believe that in addition to the customer

services jobs, agritourism pays special attention to the production sector, saying agricultural tourism is much more important and practical than some other branches of tourism because it creates a new chain and diversity in the field of production and services.

Agritourism is a subset of a larger industry called rural tourism that includes resorts, off-site farmers' markets, non-profit agricultural tours, and other leisure and hospitality businesses that attract visitors to the countryside.

Beautiful villa orchard (Lots of walnut, sweet and sour cherry, and other ftuit trees) 300 square meter of residential/office garden, swimming pool, security cameras, emergency power generator, security lighting, staff facilities, for sale in Emameh (Between Lavasan and Fasham) ideal for all year residence of





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Iranians donate 13% more blood

TEHRAN – The blood transfusion organization announced a 13 percent increase in blood donation in the first three months of the current [Iranian calendar] year (started March 21, 2021).

In the spring, about 710,000 people referred to blood donation centers all over the country, of which about 570,000 donated blood, ISNA quoted Abbas Sedaghat saying on Monday.

Based on the blood donation index, the highest blood donation growth was recorded in North Khorasan provinces with 35 percent, Hamedan province with 33 percent, and Kordestan province with 32 percent growth respectively.

Referring to the 4.5 percent women's share of blood donation, he noted that the index of women's participation in blood donation is significantly lower than the average of developed countries.

Fortunately, our country is one of the few countries in the world and also the only country in the North African and Eastern Mediterranean region that has a national blood supply network that is fully established and active, he highlighted.

This means that the blood needed by all the medical centers and all the patients who need to receive blood or blood products can be supplied from all over the country. Therefore, through this network, 940 hospitals across the country have blood banks.

Today, we can supply the needed blood by 100 percent across the whole country with the highest quality in terms of blood health and blood products and based on the highest international standards, he emphasized.



Blood donation in Iran has long been done voluntarily as over 2.1 million Iranians donate blood annually, Bashir Haji-Beigi, the Blood Transfusion Organization spokesman, said on June 14.

There are currently 178 blood donation centers in the country, with Fars, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Tehran, and Mazandaran provinces having the largest number of blood donation centers. he stated.

Highest blood donation in Eastern Mediterranean

While blood donation in 70 countries still depends on replacement or paid donors, Iran is the first country in the region that has enjoyed voluntary blood donation by 100 percent since 2007.

More than 85 percent of all donated blood worldwide is used to produce blood products, while the rate is 65 percent in Eastern Mediterranean countries. Iran ranks among the highest-income countries in terms of converting more than 97 percent of the blood donated by people to plasma-derived medicinal products

Iranian houses

of innovation

have already

been set up in

Russia, Turkey,

China, Syria,

Kenya, and

Armenia

Only 55 of 171 countries produce PDMP through the fractionation of plasma collected in the reporting country. A total of 90 countries reported that all PDMP are imported, 16 countries reported that no PDMP was used during the reporting period, and 10 countries did not respond to the question, ac-

cording to WHO.

Iran currently has the highest blood donation rate in the Eastern Mediterranean region so out of 9.9 million blood donation units in this region, more than two million belongs to Iran.

Also, the index of blood donation is 25 per 1,000 populations, while in the member states of the Eastern Mediterranean region, this number is 14.9 per 1000.

117.4 million blood donations worldwide

According to the World Health Organization, blood transfusion saves millions of lives and improves health, but many patients requiring transfusion do not have timely access to safe blood.

About 117.4 million blood donations are collected worldwide. 42

percent of these are collected in high-income countries, home to 16 percent of the world's population

About 12,700 blood centers in 170 countries report collecting a total of 100 million donations. Collections at blood centers vary according to income group. The median annual donations per blood center are 1,300 in low-income countries, 4,100 in lower-middle-income countries, and 8 500 in upper-middle-income countries, as compared to 23,000 in high-income countries.

Data about the gender profile of blood donors show that globally 32 percent of blood donations are given by women, although this ranges widely. In 14 of the 119 reporting countries, less than 10 percent of donations are given by female donors.

Moreover, 62 countries collect 100 percent of their blood supply from voluntary, unpaid blood donors. Some 108 million blood donations are collected globally, and half of these are in high-income countries. Meanwhile, blood donation by 1 percent of the population can meet a nation's most basic requirements for blood.

Blood donation in Iran has long been done voluntarily as over 2.1 million Iranians donate blood annually.

SOCIETY

JULY 5, 2022
Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

Over 700 quakes take place in a month

TEHRAN – A total of 713 earthquakes have been recorded across the country over the past calendar month (May 21-June 22), according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Of the total 713 quakes, 32 were more than 4 on the Richter scale, the largest of which occurred on May 23, with a magnitude of 5.5 in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.

Statistically, 572 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, and 109 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 to 4 have occurred. At least 30 earthquakes with a magnitude of 4.5 to 5 have occurred in the country. There were 2 earthquakes with a magnitude of 5 to 6.

Also, Hormozgan province has the highest number of earthquakes recorded last month with 96 earthquakes, followed by Kerman and Fars provinces with 33 and 26 earthquakes, respectively. Some 8 earthquakes were also recorded in Tehran province, the largest of which was near Hasan Abad with a magnitude of 3.8 on the Richter scale.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran but more than 6% of the victims of the world earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes. This shows the high level of vulnerability in Iran, according to Mehdi Zare, a professor of engineering seismology.

Tehran is also one of the most hazardous metropolises in the world in terms of the risk of different natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, subsidence, drought, landslide, fire following an earthquake, etc.

Astrology and astronomy in Iran

Dart 7

It is not here attempted to assess the sectarian status of the "Zurvanites." The sacred character of time in Zoroastrianism, based primarily on its association with fertility and secondarily on cosmological doctrine, will only be briefly touched on. Important considerations will be found under calendars.

Astronomy and astrology, in the ancient Iranian view, together formed one science, which answered the questions: "How are the movements of the sun and moon and stars?" (astronomical aspect) and "what is their work and function?"

This was natural, since Zoroastrianism had traditionally viewed the luminary bodies as living divinities and creations. The science is termed "star-telling" (star-gowishnih) in Denkard, bk. 4 (ed. Madan, p. 412.18; tr. R. C. Zaehner, Zurvan, p. 9).

Its practitioners are known variously:

"asterism-reckoner" (axtar-amar, Bundahishn, pp. 28.8, 58.2); "zodiac-teller" (12-star-gowishn, Denkard 5.2.9, ed. Mole, La legende, pp. 108-09); "star-reckoner" (star-hangar, Shkand-gumanig wizar 4.28; cf. Persian setara-shomar, Scheftelowitz, "New Material," p. 327); "time-knower" (hangam-shnasag, Denkard, bk. 4, p. 428.15; cf. Persian setara-shenas; see J. de Menasce, JA 237, 1949, pp. 1-3).

A loan word occurs appropriately in Central Asia, where Indian literature, sciences, and arts were influential, and whence Indian astrology may have begun to reach Iran proper from the early Sasanian period or even before: Sogdian Sambatsar (Skt. samvatsara, see M. A. Mehandale, IIJ 3, 1959, p. 142).

The terms star and axtar have varied applications to the heavenly bodies (cf. the range of Latin sidus) but remain sufficiently clear. The large body of technical terms in astrology was rendered in Middle Iranian by calques, occasionally by borrowings as well (for examples of Iranian contributions to the terminology of Islamic and Western astrology, see MacKenzie, "Zoroastrian Astrology," p. 528 n. 76).

The problem of evidence

Throughout the Sasanian period the mass of the Iranian peoples presumably rever-

enced the sun, moon, Sirius, and some other stars in essentially the same way their ancestors had done.

It is not possible to know what proportion of the population was affected by astrological doctrine. The professional court astrology of the Sasanians is reconstructed from the testimony and methods of Islamic historians and astrologers.

A simplified system is represented in the 8th-9th century A.D.: Middle Persian (Pahlavi) books (particularly Bundahishn, Denkard, Zatspram, and Menog i Xrad, but also the more popular Kar-namag).

These texts probably indicated the "popular" astrology known to the provincial intellectuals (priests and scribes) of the Sasanian period and more or less disseminated among all the people.

The Middle Persian books base their claim of authority on older tradition, and they may thus be regarded as presenting an essentially valid picture of religious beliefs of the Sasanian period (see Denkard, bk. 3.420; H. S. Nyberg, JA 219, 1931, pp. 4-5).

Thus, the astrological fatalism of the Shah-nama need not entirely be due to the Arab conquest and Islamic astrology.

The mage Ablat (referred to above) is but one evidence of Iranian-Aramean communication on topics of cosmology. The process may go back to the second century B.C. (if the imagery of III Esdras 4:34 is indeed Iranian; cf. Zatspram 34.25; for other possible Iranian influences on the Apocrypha, see Widengren, Iranisch-semitische Kulturbegegnung).

The Mandeans, at whatever date their religion took its present form, adopted the Zoroastrian (Younger Avestan) calendar (Taqizadeh, "An Ancient Persian Practice"); they even assimilated Zoroastrian chronology into their apocalyptic mythology (Ginza 18; Lidzbarski, pp. 407ff.).

Perhaps then the Mandean Book of the Zodiac (tr. E. S. Drower, London, 1949) likewise borrowed from Iranian, as well as Hellenistic-Roman sources. Even more striking is the syncretic religion of Mani (who was "born in an auspicious sign," Salemann, Man. Stud., p. 28, M 543 R 4-5).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica To be continued

Iraq hosting Iranian technology delegation

From page **1** Among the other plans is the opening of the house of innovation and technology in the Kurdistan region. This center will be launched in cooperation with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the Innovation Fund, the Trade Development Organization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Iranian Consulate in Sulaymaniyah.

Exporting technological products of Iranian knowledge-based companies is one of the important and key programs of the vice presidency for science and technology, and in this regard, the Iranian houses of in-

novation have been set up in several countries to develop the global market for knowledge-based products.

These centers have already been set up in countries such as Russia, Turkey, China, Syria, Kenya, and Armenia.

By supporting innovative ideas, and holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

The three business districts of "Kurdistan, Baghdad, and Basra" are high-capacity areas for exporting Iranian knowledge-based and creative products. Iraq is a country that has a high potential to receive Iranian products and has sufficient financial resources to meet these needs by relying on the Iranian market.

Mehdi Ghalehnoei, an official with the vice presidency for science and technology, said

in February that last year, knowledge-based companies gained about \$800 million in revenue from export, and in the current year (started March 21), it seems to reach up to \$2 billion.

Africa, neighboring countries, Southeast Asia and Eurasia are our export target priorities, and we hope to create Iranian innovation and technology in all these areas, he added.

Knowledge-based firms' development

Due to the necessity of Iran's presence in the global technology markets and the high capa-

bility of knowledge-based and creative companies, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology stepped into the field to pave the way for its presence in the global market.

To this end, it has developed and implemented programs, policies, and support packages related to the development of export, planning to attract foreign investment, eliciting the participation of Iranians abroad, and connecting domestic capabilities to the global market are among the actions taken in this regard.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei designated the current Iranian year as "The Year of Production: Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating".

A plan for strengthening knowledge-based companies is on the agenda, raising hope for reducing obstacles on the path to development

The Leader has called on all Iranians, includ-



ing citizens and government officials, to work hard to boost knowledge-based production and create new jobs.

Today, the country's knowledge-based ecosystem accounts for more than 3 percent of GDP. And the figure is projected to reach 5 percent, however, the main goal is to step toward a 10 percent share in GDP, Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari told Fars on February 13.

The share of knowledge-based companies in the country's economy has exceeded 9 quadrillion rials (about \$34 billion), and since 2019, it has experienced a growth of more than 450 percent, he stated.

There are currently 6,263 knowledge-based companies operating in the country, offering advanced products and services in various fields of technology to domestic and foreign markets, and some of them have entered international markets, Siavash Maleki, deputy head of the Fund, stated.

The fields of aircraft maintenance, steel, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, oil, and gas are among the sectors that researchers in technology companies have engaged in, leading to import reduction.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Educational projects worth \$330m to be inaugurated

A total of 1,015 educational projects worth 14 trillion rials (nearly \$330 million) will be inaugurated across the country, Mehrollah Rakhshanimehr, director of the organization for renovation, development, and equipment of schools, has announced.

The projects will be inaugurated by the next 10 days, on the occasion of the 41st anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, he stated, ISNA reported on Sunday.

According to Rakhshanimehr, the projects include 4,168 classrooms,

11 swimming pools, and 32 gyms.

About 14,000 classrooms have been built so far this year (started March 21, 2019), compared with some 10,000 last year, he concluded.

افتتاح ۱۴۰۰ میلیارد تومان پروژه آموزشی

رئیس سازمان نوسازی، توسعه و تجهیز مدارس کشور گفت ۱۰۱۵ پروژه آموزشی با اعتباری به میزان۱۴۰۰ میلیارد تومان در سراسر کشور به بهرهبرداری می رسد.

بهرمبره ری می است. به گزارش ایسنا، مهراله رخشانی مهر افزود این پروژه ها طی ۱۰ روز آینده و به مناسبت چهلویکمین سالگرد پیروزی انقلاب اسلامی افتتاح

ر به گفته او، این پروژه ها شامل ۴۱۶۸ کلاس درس، ۱۱ استخر، و ۳۲ سال وینشه هستند.

رخشانی مهر ادامه داد تاکنون در سال ۹۸ حدود ۱۴ هزار کلاس درس افتتاح شده است در حالیکه در سال ۹۷ حدود ۱۰ هزار کلاس افتتاح شده بود.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JULY 4

New cases	1,007
New deaths	8
Total cases	7,240,564
Total deaths	141,404
New hospitalized patients	122
Patients in critical condition	232
Total recovered patients	7,063,479
Diagnostic tests conducted	52,652,431
Doses of vaccine injected	150,438,442

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JULY 5, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you are greeted then return the greetings more warmly. If you are favored, then repay the obligation manifold; but he who takes the initiative will always excel in merit.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:13:09 Evening: 20:45

Dawn: 4:09 (tomorrow)

Jamshid in Persian literature

Among more recent discussion of the Yima myth is that by Robert C. Zaehner (1961), who shared Moulton's opinion of the Videvdad. Zaehner gave a detailed description of the Yima myth and its parallels in Indic, but his chief purpose was to explore Yima's relationship with Mithra, and his insightful assessments of the myths were evaluated in the light of what he regarded as Zarathustra's teachings.

He viewed the Yima legend in the light of Zarathustra's condemnation of Yima as a sinner, who, for his sin, lost immortality for himself and all of humanity.

He regarded it as strange that the sin for which Zarathustra denounced him, the animal sacrifice, should not be mentioned in the later tradition and proposed that this reflected the popular tradition, which "developed independently of the Zoroastrian reform" and in which the story of Yima's sin was the more popular.

Similarly, the myth of the vara "must belong to a very old stratum of Iranian folklore wholly untouched by the teachings of Zoroaster," and Yima was worshipped as a god by those "who had not accepted the Zoroastrian reform".

Marijan Molé, in his discussion of Y. 32.8 and its commentary in the Warshtmansr nask, insisted that Yima is presented as first king and that the "sin," which the poet-sacrificer claims not to have committed and for which Yima was renowned, must have been a ritual fault.

Mary Boyce, too, relieved Zarathustra's teachings of the myths of Yima by assigning them either to pre-Zoroastrian beliefs or to late scholastic speculations.

She elaborated on a tradition that Yima dwelt in paradise succeeding that of Yima as the "god beneath earth", suggesting it developed as the result of Zarathustra's demotion of the subterranean dwelling to Hell; but, since this was no longer a suitable dwelling for King Yima, he was transported into a new, paradisiacal, dwelling, the story of which is told in Videvdad 2 and, apparently survived in the Denkard myth of Neryosang and Jam bringing Zarathustra's fravashi down to earth.

Boyce gives no reference for this last event, which appears to be based on a wrong reading of Denkard on the descent of Zarathustra from Jam and Neryusang.

Her statement that, according to the Videvdad, Yima did not die but withdrew to a hidden place, is unclear, since it is not said explicitly in the Avesta that Yima hid in the vara, that he dwelt there with his chosen, or, indeed, that he did not die.

Boyce followed Moulton and Zaehner (also Henning) in assigning a late date to the Videvdad and agreed that it is "perfectly possible" that this part of the legend was inspired by the Mesopotamian myth, where it was a punishment wreaked upon the "bad corporeal world," a "wholly unZoroastrian conception," but with the Flood changed into a natural disaster more appropriate for Iranian geography.

Boyce regarded the eschatological role of the war as due to an apocalyptic tradition that developed later as part of Zoroastrian scholastic learning, but did not become popular. as opposed to Yima's fall (echoing Zaehner). She also regarded Yima's association with first man as "priestly speculation".

Bruce Lincoln has written frequently about Yima in the context of "first men," he, too, on the basis of the assumption that the myth was manipulated by Zarathustra. Thus, Lincoln

believes Zarathustra "stripped" Yima "of his role as lord of paradise" and that the story of the vara was "in large measure influenced by the Mesopotamian flood legend".

He aims to reconstruct an Indo-European myth of first sacrificer and first sacrificed man/ king, who is dismembered to form the various parts of the world, typified by the Rigvedic Purusa "Man" and the Old Norse giant Ymir.

In Indo-Iranian, Lincoln too finds the first sacrificed man/king in Yama, who was replaced by (Pahlavi) Gayumard in Iran and (Rigvedic) Purusa in India, and the first sacrificer is Manush, who is represented as Manushcitra/ Manushchihr in Iran.

Lincoln suggests in conclusion that, because Manush as first sacrificer was closely associated with the cattle sacrifice, which had been condemned by Zarathustra, he "was written out of the tradition." He resurfaced, however, in Ahriman ("an original conception of Zarathustra"), first sacrificer; Spitiiura, as the brother who dismembered Yima [the gods, not Manu, dismembered Purusa]; Manushchihr, as the ancestor of the priestly line; and Zarathustra, as "priest par excellence."

In Germanic, Ymir was no longer either first man or king by internal developments. One of his principal pieces of evidence is the etymological relationship between Yama and Old Norse Ymir proposed by Herrmann Güntert. He also suggests that the original creative dismemberment of Yima was "transformed along royal lines" into the distribution of the Fortune among representatives of the three classes. Lincoln does not appear to cite the text in the Pahlavi Rivayat about the making of the world from a person.

Kellens has written on Yima in several articles. In 1984, he developed the theory that the tools given to Yima endowed him with a creative magic that permitted him to perform several tasks received from the gods: make immortality, give the earth its permanent size, and prepare it for the universal cataclysm; thus, he occupied a place between gods and humans.

The shared motif of the incest with his sister, however, suggests he was also a first man, ancestor of humanity. In 1987 and 1988, he suggested that the builder of the Cinuuant Bridge, who "piled" (ci-) it up, may have been

In his recent discussions of the myths of Yima, he questions several of the traditional interpretations of the Avestan evidence. What is more significant, he disputes the interpretation of xshatra as "royal command" and xshaiia- as "to rule, be in command", arguing that the two tools given to Yima are those of a magical power, although he points out they are the tools of a shepherd.

The notion of the shepherd king is ancient, however, and is found in Iran in the first strophe of the Gatas, the Yata ahu vairiiu. Kellens sums up his comparison between the Indic Yama and Iranian Yima, by asserting that, while Yama was the first man, first to die, and the first to occupy paradise, Yima first construed a paradise (though not really a paradise, since its occupants had not previously died) and was immortal in the first (Pishdadid) period of the world, then mortal and, with his sister, became the "first man" in the sense that, by renewing the xwedudah, he became the ancestor of the people of the second (Kayanid) period.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica To be continued

Murals on Imam Ali (AS) to embellish Tehran highway for Eid al-Ghadir

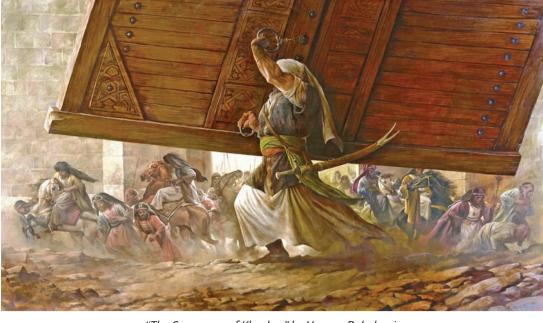
TEHRAN - Tehran will celebrate Eid al-Ghadir, the day on which Imam Ali (AS) was appointed as successor to the Prophet Muhammad (S), by murals that are being produced along the Imam Ali (AS) Highway.

Prominent artists, including Hassan Ruholamin, Ali Bahreini, Mostafa Gudarzi and Hassan Jafarinia, have been hired to reproduce some of their paintings on the walls of the highway for this art project, the Tehran Municipality's Beautification Organization said on Sunday.

The murals will be unveiled on Eid al-Ghadir, which will fall this year on July 18.

Ruholamin, who is best known for his works that illustrate stories from the history of Islam, is participating in this project with two works, one of which is "The Conqueror of Khaybar" originally produced in 2018.

This painting depicts Imam Ali (AS) removing the door of the enemy's fort in the Battle of Khaybar, which was fought in the year 629 between Muslims and the Jews living in the oasis of Khaybar. located 150 kilometers from Medina in the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula in modern-day Saudi Arabia.



"The Conqueror of Khaybar" by Hassan Ruholamin.

In the Battle of Khaybar, against a group of Medinese Jews who, having reached agreement with the Muslims and then broken their word, had barricaded themselves in a fort, Imam Ali (AS) is said to have torn off the door of the fort with one hand and used it as a shield. In addition, the archangel Gabriel, speaking to the Prophet (S) and referring to Dhu al-Figar, a sword

that the Imam received from the Prophet Muhammad (S), stated, "There is no chivalrous person but Ali, there is no sword but Dhu al-Figar."

"Based on my personal belief and interest, I choose these subjects for paintings," Ruholamin previously said.

"I create the paintings with all my spiritual feelings; maybe that's the reason why my works attract a lot of interest from people," he added.

He said that the Prophet's household has been shown little regard in the field of painting and noted that he enjoys working in this area and never cares about awards and prizes.

Earlier on Friday, Ruholamin unveiled his latest painting to celebrate the wedding anniversary of Imam Ali (AS) and Hazrat Fatima

Moritz Rinke's play "We Love and Know Nothing" published in Persian

TEHRAN - German playwright Moritz Rinke's play "We Love and Know Nothing" has published in Persian by Qatreh.

Translated by Behruz Qanbar-Hosseini, the play had its world premiere in December 2012 in Frankfurt by director Oliver Reese.

The play tells the story of two couples that

meet for an apartment exchange. Hannah will spend some time in Zurich to teach Zen classes to stressed-out bank managers. Her boyfriend Sebastian is supposed to accompany her. During that time Roman, a computer scientist,

is moving into their apartment; his professional interest is to observe a satellite being launched into outer space. He has no idea yet that he has been laid off by

about it for now. Roman's ignorance is but one of the points of conflict around which the characters in Rinke's

the Swiss company he has been working for. Only

his wife Magdalena knows, but she keeps quiet

Sebastian, a gloomy cultural historian, is very Nibelungen Festival in Worms as a timely

anxious about an imminent change of location: he is researching "high-minded societies" and comes up against all the complications of the modern mobile world where, with the right password or pin code, you can access everything, except your own self.

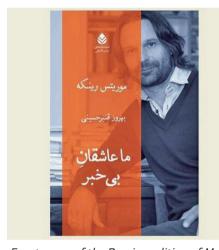
He immediately recognizes Roman, who is fanatic about technology and efficiency, as his archenemy. Magdalena on the other hand shares Sebastian's feeling of unsettledness and feels almost magically seduced by his melancholia.

And so smoldering relationship problems burst open, escalating into a battle of cultures, which even leads to the discharge of a loaded

Rinke's first play "The Gray Angel" was published in 1995 and premiered the following year at the Schauspielhaus Zurich.

His play "Republic Vineta" was voted the best German-language play in 2001 and filmed in

Rinke wrote "Die Nibelungen" for the



Front cover of the Persian edition of Moritz Rinke's play "We Love and Know Nothing".

new version of the Nibelungenlied, which was performed there in front of the south portal of the cathedral in 2002 and 2003 and in another new version, which was performed in two parts in 2006, 2007 and 2008 in front of the north portal.

Shahr Intl. Film Festival unveils official lineup

Frome Page 1 > Cambodian director Neang Kavich's 2021 drama "White Building" is another highlight of the lineup.

The film follows 20-year-old Samnang who faces the demolition of his lifelong home in Phnom Penh and the pressures from family, friends and neighbors which arise and intersect in this moment of sudden change.

Four films from foreign directors will be showcased in the documentary feature section.

Portuguese filmmaker Tiago Afonso's "Dystopia" is a highlight of this category.

This film centers on the changes in the social fabric of the city of Porto from 2007 to 2020. Demolitions,



evictions and resettlements that affect the Roma community of Bacelo, the inhabitants of Bairro do Aleixo and the sellers at Feira da Vandoma.

The Turkish-Japanese film 'Kodokushi" has also been selected to be screened.

Directed by Ensar Altay, the film

Building". tells the story of Norihito, who works at a company that cleans up the houses of people who die alone.

He begins to question his own life

and past due to all the lonely deaths

A scene from

Neang Kavich's

drama "White

Cambodian

director

Slovakian filmmaker Barbora Sliepková will also participate in the festival with her documentary "Lines".

The almost neo-realistically stylized footage shows the everyday hustle and bustle of contemporary Bratislava whose inhabitants, in addition to their own woes, have to cope with the constant grind of urban construction, congested traffic and rising housing prices.

Filmmakers from around the world will also take part in the short fictional and documentary film sections.

A number of animated movies from Iranian and foreign directors will be competing in the festival, which is organized every year under the auspices of Tasvire Shahr Institute at the Art and Cultural Organization of the Tehran Municipality.

Joining Zan Agha on a trip to a far-off village



A review of the book "Zan Agha"

The book's fascinating and beautiful cover captures your attention right away. The book introduced itself in the first pages with one word under the title: a travelogue. The book pushes you to read the whole of it out of curiosity.

A woman whose husband is a seminary student who travels to underdeveloped areas to teach Islamic ideology is the subject of the book. In the summer of 2017, they made their first trip to a village in the southern part of Fars province, during the holy month of Ramadan. They stay in two little rooms that are close to the village mosque. To protect the privacy of the locals, the details of the village are not given in the book, making it difficult to determine which village

The author has done her best in this book to explain everything honestly and interestingly, including the dangers and bitterness of their trip, as well as the pleasant aspects of it. In addition to providing a detailed account of the lifestyle of a seminary student's family, this book does a good job of portraying the villagers' attitudes, traditions, and religious convictions.

The story's creator and the protagonist is Zahra Kardani, who was born in Mashhad and currently resides in Qom. After taking her first long-distance trip with her husband and children, she made the decision to write a book out of her memories. Her first book has so far been a huge hit and has received awards.