

Iran Galvanizes Regional Diplomacy Amid Israeli Bluster

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Report

Expansionist NATO is source of insecurity

TEHRAN — As a military entity that claims it wants to establish sustainable security in the world, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or NATO is seemingly seeking to spread its influence all around the world.

The recent developments in the global community have raised questions about the true intentions of NATO. Russians are adamant that NATO is looking to expand itself in the realm of the former Soviet Union.

In an interview with the khamenei.ir published on Wednesday, Mehdi Safari, the former Iranian ambassador to Moscow noted that the danger of NATO's expansionist policy is not only directed towards Russia, but also towards Iran and other countries.

"NATO is trying to reach the Eurasian region. This means that it even wants to cross the Caspian Sea and be present in Kazakhstan and Mongolia. As we have seen, NATO was present in Afghanistan for several years and did not succeed there," Safari noted.

In a meeting with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in Tehran on June 19, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei pointed to the Ukraine war and said the main problem is that "the Westerners want to expand NATO, and they will not hesitate to expand their influence wherever they can."

During the Libyan civil war and the efforts of the opponents of the Gaddafi regime, NATO bombarded the cities of this North African country in an interventionist move by declaring a no-fly zone over Libya, and NATO's military operations continued until the fall of Gaddafi and his death.

With the fall of Gaddafi and the end of NATO operations, Libya became a fragmented, poor and insecure country, and now there is a power struggle in this country, as well as the lack of an effective government. Even ISIS has dominated parts of Libya since the fall of Gaddafi. ► Page 2

Report

Khosravi Vafa registers for presidency of Iran Olympic Committee

TEHRAN – Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa, current president of Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) has registered for presidential election of the Iran's National Olympic Committee (NOC).

Khosravi Vafa, who is leading Iran's NPC since 2001, registered for the Iran's NOC on Wednesday.

Khosravi Vafa said he will withdraw from the elections if Reza Salehi Amiri, current NOC president, registers for the elections.

Hadi Saei, the most successful Iranian athlete in Olympic history, has registered for the presidency.

Mehdi Alinejad, the Iranian Deputy Minister of Sport and Youth, is another candidate for the presidency.

Arash Miresmaeili, president of Iran judo federation, has also registered for the elections.

Salehi Amiri was appointed as NOC's president in 2018 as replacement of Kioumars Hashemi.

The Iran's National Olympic Committee presidential election will be held on Aug. 28.

Leader: Western powers are mafia



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TEHRAN— On the occasion of the anniversary of the first Friday prayers organized after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei met with Friday prayer leaders from across the country on Wednesday.

During the meeting in the Imam Khomeini Hus-

sainiyah, the Leader explored the identity of the Western civilization, noting, "The core of the identity of Western civilization is separation of religion from progress. The Islamic Republic of Iran has invalidated this 200 to 300-year-old claim. The Islamic Republic started with the slogan of religion and it has progressed. This has enraged the West."

He went on to say that the Western powers are a mafia.

"The reality of this power is a mafia. At the top of this mafia stand the prominent Zionist merchants, and the politicians obey them. The U.S. is their showcase, and they are spread out everywhere," Ayatollah Khamenei underlined.

Iran's 4-month non-oil exports increase 22% yr/yr

TEHRAN – The value of Iran's non-oil exports reached \$17.24 billion in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), up 22 percent compared to the last year's same period, according to the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Based on the mentioned data, Iran exported 35.656 million tons of non-oil commodities in the mentioned four months, IRIB reported.

Meanwhile, some 11.159 million tons of goods valued at \$17.24 billion were imported into the country in the said period, indicating a 17-percent rise in terms of value compared

to the last year's same time span.

In total, the Islamic Republic traded about 46.815 million tons of non-oil goods worth \$34.48 billion with its trade partners in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year, up 19 percent in terms of value, the IRICA data showed. ► Page 4

Economic diplomacy, deepening neighborly ties priority for Iran: FM

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has said that economic diplomacy and strengthening ties with neighboring and Muslim countries are a priority for Iran.

Addressing the 20th Session of the Council of Ministers of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation via videoconference on Wednesday, Amir Abdollahian stated that the foreign policy agenda of Iran prioritizes relations with neighboring and Muslim countries.

"Economic diplomacy and deepening ties with neighboring and Muslim countries are two of the priorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy. Furthermore, strengthening multilateral mechanisms such as the D-8 organization is of high importance to my government," ► Page 3

Proto-Elamite earthenware accidentally discovered in southern Iran

TEHRAN – Two pieces of earthenware, estimated to date from the Proto-Elamite period, have accidentally been unearthed in a southern Iranian village while the locals were digging the ground to install sidewalk curbs.

"Two clay vessels belonging to the Old Elam (Banash) were discovered while people were digging to install curbs for the sidewalk in the village of Golmakan, Marvdasht county," Mehr quoted the Marvdasht tourism chief

as saying on Thursday.

According to cultural heritage experts, the objects belong to the period of old Ilam (Banesh), Mohammad-Taqi Qalenoee said.

"These objects comprise a clay bowl with geometric designs in the form of a triangle on the edge with a height of about 10 cm, and a simple pot, which was probably used to store spices and special liquids," the official explained.

Having a rich history, Marvdasht has been settled for a long time during various eras, including the Elamite, Achaemenid, Sassanid, and Islamic periods... and it embraces important archaeological sites such as Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam, Naqsh-e Rajab, Tal-e Bakun, Mian Roud, and Ashkeft Gavi to name a few, he said.

According to Iranica, the archeological use of the term Elam is based on ► Page 6

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Interview

Arabs see ties with Moscow beneficial despite U.S. pressure: GSA chief

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – Giorgio Cafiero, chief executive officer of Gulf State Analytics (GSA), says that all Arab states have realized that maintaining partnerships with Moscow still serves their interests despite the U.S. pressure.

"Basically all Arab states have determined that maintaining partnerships with Moscow still serves their interests despite the U.S. pressuring them to join Washington and the EU's failed efforts to make Russia a global 'pariah'," Cafiero tells the Tehran Times.

However, he says, "Russia is very far away from being able to replace the U.S. as a security guarantor for any GCC state."

Following is the text of the interview:

Q: How do you assess Biden's trip to Saudi Arabia? What are its implications for Arab countries and Israel?

A: From the standpoint of U.S. interests, this trip was a mixed bag. Biden did not secure many of the major gains that some in Washington were hoping for before the U.S. President left for the Middle East (West Asia) earlier this month. Yet, most serious analysts understood from the beginning that many of those foreign policy wins were unlikely. ► Page 5

Venice festival 2022 picks movies from Iran

TEHRAN – Movies from Iran will be competing in different sections of the 79th Venice International Film Festival as the organizers announced the event's lineup on Tuesday.

"Beyond the Wall" by Vahid Jalilvand will be screened in the main competition of the festival, which will take place on the Lido from August 31 to September 10.

Starring Navid Mohammadzadeh, Diana Habibi and Amir Aqai, the film is about the life of a blind man, which starts to fall apart when a wandering woman enters his life.

Jalilvand's 2017 drama "No Date, No Signature" won him the Orizzonti best director and Mohammadzadeh best actor at the 74th Venice Film Festival.

Jafar Panahi's "No Bear" will also be showcased in this section. However, Iran doesn't recognize the film as an Iranian production as it has not been subjected to the country's official procedure for obtaining production and screening licenses.

Arian Vazirdaftari's "Without Her" and Hooman Seyyedi's "World War III" will be screened in the Orizzonti competition.

"Without Her" tells the story of Roya, a woman who is planning to emigrate. ► Page 8

Iran FM discusses Jeddah summit with regional counterparts

TEHRAN— Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has begun a series of regional consultations following the July 16 Jeddah summit, making some calls to his Emirati and Kuwaiti counterparts.

Amir Abdollahian and his Emirati counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed held talks on the phone over the trend of the expansion of ties as well as some regional and international issues late on Tuesday.

The foreign minister referred to the positive view of the high-ranking Iranian and UAE officials on bilateral relations, saying Tehran welcomes new steps to boost ties.

He also warned the presence of the Israeli regime in the Persian Gulf will cause instability and insecurity, adding that Tel Aviv made an effort to turn the Jeddah summit into a regional crisis but thanks to the forethought of the participating countries, issues of regional cooperation, progress and security were underlined at the meeting.

Iran's top diplomat further touched on the sanctions-removal talks, saying that the European Union is doing its utmost so that the talks will pay off, noting that Iran is serious about reaching a good and lasting outcome.

During the conversation, the UAE foreign minister noted that expansion of ties will serve the best interests of Riyadh and Tehran in line with the interests of the two "brotherly nations" and realizing the goals of the high-ranking officials of the two countries.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed went on to say that promoting the level of political ties is necessary as it would facilitate strengthening ties.

Anwar Gargash, the UAE Presidential Advisor, has said the UAE is planning to send an ambassador to Tehran.

The Emirati foreign minister said, "We have zero doubt that not only we can make bilateral ties warm again but also we are able to open new horizons in ties, especially at a time when we are facing numerous challenges in the region, including environmental and climate challenges," according to the Iranian foreign ministry website.

Abdullah bin Zayed added that countless economic opportunities are available to both nations that can be used optimally.

According to the top Emirati diplomat, bilateral visits by officials, businesspeople and experts of Iran and the UAE will be much of an impact to this end.

"For us, peace, stability as well as the good and dignity of Iran, as a neighbor and brother, is highly important, because this will also have a positive effect on our own country and we hope that in the future, we will be able to take longer strides in expanding relations between the two countries", the UAE foreign minister said.

FM consults with Kuwaiti counterpart ahead of impending visit to Kuwait

Later on Tuesday, Amir Abdollahian and his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Ahmed Nasser al-Sabah held consultations over the phone about the process of

consolidating bilateral ties, regional and international events including the Jeddah conference.

Amir Abdollahian also briefed the Kuwaiti foreign minister about the nuclear talks intended to lift sanctions on Iran ahead of his impending visit to Kuwait.

During their negotiations, the two top diplomats referred to the growing trend of bilateral ties and underlined the need to expand ties more than ever before.

During the conversation, Amir Abdollahian also welcomed the launching of specialized committees between Iran and Kuwait, saying they will help advance cooperation.

Iran warmly shakes the hands of friends and neighbors

Iran's top diplomat also invited his Kuwaiti counterpart to visit Tehran.

He underlined that Kuwait, alongside other neighboring countries, has a positive view on bolstering regional ties, and Iran "warmly shakes the hands of its friends and neighbors as well".

Amir Abdollahian further condemned some efforts to portray the Jeddah summit as anti-Iran gathering.

However, he said, Iran is pleased that the meeting got nowhere thanks to the prudence of regional countries.

According to the foreign minister, regional countries showed that the issue of Palestine is a priority for the Muslim world and no country in the region can ignore the Israeli regime's crimes.

Concluding his remarks, Amir Abdollahian also said Iran hopes the U.S. side will adopt a realistic approach so that the nuclear negotiations to revive the 2015 nuclear deal – JCPOA - will reach an outcome.

The top Iranian diplomat added that the Islamic Republic abides by its commitments and urges the U.S. to be realistic so that a good, robust and lasting deal will be possible.

For his part, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister al-Sabah thanked Iran's initiative aimed at expanding ties with regional countries.

He underlined the necessity of expanding relations between Tehran and Kuwait more than ever before.

Reiterating that Kuwait's political leadership has always sought to strengthen ties with Iran, Kuwait's top diplomat noted that the appointment of a new Kuwaiti ambassador to Tehran is in line with this goal.

The top Kuwaiti diplomat further pointed to a visit by Iran's environment chief to Kuwait and talks between the two sides on the issue of dust storms, saying such meetings can resolve issues of common concern through cooperation.

Nasser al-Sabah also spoke about the summit in Jeddah, rejecting the speculations prior to the meeting that it had anti-Iran goals on its agenda.

The top Kuwaiti diplomat underlined that the regional leaders in their remarks at the summit underscored the need to establish and maintain good relations with Iran.

We have carried out successful operations against Israel: Iran's intelligence chief

TEHRAN— Iran's intelligence minister announced on Wednesday that Iran has conducted various intelligence and counter-intelligence operations against the Israeli regime.

"In recent months, apart from confronting the conspiracies of the Zionist regime, we have also managed to carry out a number of successful operations against this regime, which shows the security power of the Islamic Republic," Seyyed Esmaeil Khatib told a number of Intelligence Ministry officials.

Khatib also referred to the efforts and actions of the Intelligence Ministry to follow up on the demands of the people to solve the problems, noting that if today the enemies, regardless of the actions they take, are failing to provoke the nation against the



country's security, is due to the popular approach of the ministry.

He added that the ministry's approach is to interact with the people in order to create lasting security.

The intelligence chief considered another important task of his ministry to fight terrorism, the Israeli regime and subversive actions against Iran.

Expansionist NATO is source of insecurity

From page 1 ► During these years, NATO not only has not prevented breakout of wars, but has been constantly present in many wars and has actually played a role in the insecurity of the West Asian region.

Therefore, the expansion of NATO is a threat to global peace and security and the independence

of countries, and Iran has repeatedly expressed its opposition to this military pact.

In a meeting with the Polish foreign minister in Tehran on May 8, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said, "Just as the Islamic Republic of Iran opposes conflict and war, it also declares its strong opposition to NATO's expansionist policies."

EU's Borrell: "Maximum pressure" against Iran failed

'Iranians have been deprived of full benefits of sanctions lifting'

TEHRAN - In May 2018, former U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally quit the 2015 nuclear deal under his "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

Under the agreement, endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

Trump's administration not only returned sanctions lifted under the multilateral deal, it also imposed more sanctions with the illusion that Iran will be forced to capitulate and abandon its right to peaceful nuclear program.

Iran even remained completely loyal to the terms of the agreement for a full year after the U.S. left the accord.

Iran began to gradually lift ban on its nuclear activities after the remaining members of the deal, particularly the European trio – France, Germany and Britain – failed to honor their agreement under the deal and compensate Iran for the U.S. sanctions.

At the time Iran announced that if the E3 honor their JCPOA commitment, it will return to its obligations.

Writing an article in Financial Times on Tuesday, the European Union high representative for foreign affairs and security policy says the "maximum pressure" imposed against Iran "failed".

However, after Joe Biden was elected president and announced his willingness to return to the agreement, the talks started in April 2021 to resurrect the agreement through a mediation by the EU.

"I seized the political momentum of a new U.S. administration to launch in April 2021 a diplomatic process involving the JCPOA participants and the U.S. The aim was to facilitate a U.S. return to the deal and full U.S. and Iranian implementation of their JCPOA commitments," Borrell wrote.

Iran has been insisting that it is seeking a "lasting and sustainable" agreement so that the full benefits of the Iranian nation from the agreement are guaranteed.

Iran is also legitimately worried that a next U.S. president may revoke the JCPOA again if it is revived and cause another shock to its economy.

Iran has also been insisting that though it has expedited its nuclear program, it has no intention to build nuclear arms with or without revival of



the agreement.

The text of the article by Borrell, headlined "Now is the time to save the Iran nuclear deal", is as follows:

Seven years ago, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany, Iran and the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy concluded a landmark diplomatic deal. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was the result of years of intense diplomacy on Iran's nuclear program and won the UN Security Council's unanimous endorsement.

It secured strict limits on Iran's nuclear activities and the most extensive monitoring and inspection regime ever implemented by the International Atomic Energy Agency. In return, it opened up the prospect of benefiting economically from the lifting of U.S., EU and UN sanctions to Iran.

Full implementation of this deal has been severely affected by Donald Trump's decision in 2018 to withdraw the U.S. from it and to pursue a unilateral "maximum pressure" campaign.

For its part, Iran has ratcheted up nuclear activity to alarming levels. Regrettably, it has also limited IAEA monitoring, while failing to co-operate fully with the agency under its basic safeguards obligations. "Maximum pressure" failed. Meanwhile, and despite the best efforts of the remaining participants, Iran's people

have been deprived of the full benefits of the sanctions lifting.

To reverse this dangerous escalation, in my capacity as JCPOA coordinator, I seized the political momentum of a new U.S. administration to launch in April 2021 a diplomatic process involving the JCPOA participants and the U.S. The aim was to facilitate a U.S. return to the deal and full U.S. and Iranian implementation of their JCPOA commitments.

After 15 months of intense, constructive negotiations in Vienna and countless interactions with the JCPOA participants and the U.S., I have concluded that the space for additional significant compromises has been exhausted. I have now put on the table a text that addresses, in precise detail, the sanctions lifting as well as the nuclear steps needed to restore the JCPOA.

This text represents the best possible deal that I, as facilitator of the negotiations, see as feasible. It is not a perfect agreement, but it addresses all essential elements and includes hard-won compromises by all sides. Decisions need to be taken now to seize this unique opportunity to succeed, and to free up the great potential of a fully implemented deal. I see no other comprehensive or effective alternative within reach.

We know the JCPOA remains politically polarizing in Washington as the midterm elections approach. The deal may not have addressed all U.S. concerns with respect to Iran. The EU

shares concerns that go beyond the nuclear issue, such as human rights and Iran's regional activities.

We continuously address them with Iran in bilateral discussions. The JCPOA does not address them, and was never supposed to do so. It did, however, provide the benefit of winding down the previously expanding Iranian nuclear program and opening it up to strict IAEA monitoring and inspections. This makes it a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation architecture.

Restoring the full implementation of the agreement now can deliver on these benefits again, including through strict limitations on Iran's uranium enrichment capacity and close monitoring by the IAEA.

It can also help bring about a more co-operative security dynamic in the region, creating a positive momentum of confidence building.

We know, too, that in Tehran there are significant reservations over fully implementing a deal after the negative experience of recent years. The deal on the table reflects, however, the determination of all JCPOA participants to ensure its sustainability, including the commitment of President Joe Biden and U.S. assurances in this regard. As a result, the deal is better protected from potential unilateral moves to undermine it.

Every day with no agreement in Vienna postpones concrete economic benefits to the Iranian people through substantial U.S. sanctions lifting, as well as the benefits of non-proliferation for the world. Concluding an agreement now will deliver significant economic and financial dividends as well as strengthen regional and global security.

Rejecting it assures a loss on both accounts — who knows for how long.

It is now time for swift political decisions to conclude the Vienna negotiations on the basis of my proposed text and to immediately return to a fully implemented JCPOA. The deal serves the cause of non-proliferation in return for sanctions lifting, showing that in turbulent times balanced international agreements are still possible.

If the deal is rejected, we risk a dangerous nuclear crisis, set against the prospect of increased isolation for Iran and its people. It is our joint responsibility to conclude the deal.

Israel threatening regional states with 'nuclear annihilation': Iranian diplomat

TEHRAN- Iran's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations has said the Israeli regime has threatened to annihilate regional countries with nuclear weapons.

"The Israeli regime has even threatened nuclear annihilation against the countries in the region," Zahra Ershadi said in her Tuesday address to the UN Security Council.

Ershadi also said inaction by the UN Security Council has emboldened the Tel Aviv regime to go on with its "crimes" against the Palestinians and commit "malicious" acts against regional countries, including Syria.

"The Security Council's inaction has emboldened the Israeli regime to continue its crimes against the oppressed Palestinian people as well as its aggressions and malicious activities against the regional countries. The lack of accountability for such serious violations contributes to this impunity," the female diplomat regretted.

The full text of her remarks is as follows:

"The situation in occupied Palestine remains dire, as the Israeli regime's brutality and grave and systematic violations of human rights against the Palestinian people continue unabated.

According to the UN report, the Israeli regime continues to kill innocent people, including women and children, seize and demolish Palestinian homes, and forcibly evict Palestinians from their homes. At the same time, in blatant violation of international law as well as pertinent UN resolutions, the establishment of settlements in occupied Palestine continues.

The recent assassination of Shireen Abu Akleh, a veteran Palestinian journalist, was in line with Israel's long-running, well-documented campaign of harassment, intimidation, and violence against journalists with the ultimate goal of obscuring the

atrocities committed by the Israeli regime against Palestinians.

Meanwhile, the UN annual report on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflicts revealed that the Israeli regime continues to commit the most systematic and flagrant violation of children's rights in the Middle East. This regime murdered 86 Palestinian children and imprisoned 637 more in 2021.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza is tragic. According to the UN report, nearly 2 million Palestinians are 'locked in', with the vast majority unable to access the rest of occupied Palestine or the outside world. Longstanding Israeli policy on access restrictions against Gaza has egregiously impacted its economy, resulting in high unemployment, food insecurity, and reliance on aid.

As a collective punishment against all its inhabitants, the continued blockade of Gaza constitutes a clear manifestation of war crime and crime against humanity. In accordance with international law, the blockade must be lifted immediately and completely.

Furthermore, the Israeli regime's destabilizing activities against regional countries are continuing. The regime continues to violate Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity through its prolonged occupation of the Syrian Golan, as well as numerous attacks against civilian targets and civilian infrastructure within Syria, including the recent terrorist attacks against Damascus International Airport on June 10, 2022.

The Israeli regime also continues to occupy and violate Lebanese territory in a flagrant violation of international law and the relevant UN resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 1701.

We strongly condemn such grave violations and malevolent and destabilizing activities, which clearly threaten the peace and security of the region.

The Security Council's inaction has emboldened

the Israeli regime to continue its crimes against the oppressed Palestinian people as well as its aggressions and malicious activities against the regional countries. The lack of accountability for such serious violations contributes to this impunity.

The Security Council must uphold its Charter obligation to maintain international peace and security. The Council is expected to implement its own resolutions and compel the Israeli regime to immediately cease its systematic violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Finally, The Israeli regime's representative has once more abused this forum and made false accusations against my country, all of which are categorically rejected. These unfounded allegations are intended to distract attention from the continuous atrocities and violation of international law committed by the Israeli regime in occupied Palestine and other countries in the region.

The weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the Israeli regime have made this regime even more dangerous for the entire region.

This regime's nuclear arsenal, according to multiple reports, comprises 400 hundred warheads, including thermonuclear weapons. It has access to all weapons of mass destruction delivery systems. The Israeli regime has even threatened nuclear annihilation against the countries in the region. It has refused to adhere to any weapons of mass destruction disarmament or control regimes, as well as the repeated international calls to join the NPT, accept the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement, and submit its nuclear programs to the IAEA inspections.

It is high time for the Security Council to condemn the Israeli regime and force it to adhere to the international regimes banning weapons of mass destruction. The time to act is now."

Iran deputy FM holds talks with top Yemeni negotiator

TEHRAN - Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Special Political Affairs Ali Asghar Khaji has held talks on the phone with Yemeni National Salvation Government's top negotiator Mohammad Abdul Salam as part of the Islamic Republic's continued consultations over Yemen.

In the telephone conversation, the two sides discussed the latest developments concerning peace process in Yemen, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

The Yemeni top negotiator underlined the willingness of the officials of Yemen's National Salvation Government to maintain peace in the country. Abdul Salam however said extension of the truce in Yemen is contingent upon the other side's fulfillment of its obligations regarding removal of the blockade on Yemen, cessation of hostilities and paying the salaries of employees.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister for special political



affairs also expressed pleasure at the continuation of the truce in Yemen. Khaji voiced hope that the resistance of the Yemeni people will finally result in the removal of the oppressive siege and establishment of a fair and lasting peace.

Earlier this week, Khaji met with Gianfranco Petruzzella, Italy's special envoy for Yemen and Afghanistan. In the meeting, they exchanged views on the latest developments regarding the crisis

and the peace process in Yemen.

During the meeting, the two sides assessed the latest situation of the truce in Yemen and emphasized the necessity of enforcing the provisions of the ceasefire, especially humanitarian issues.

During the talks, the Iranian diplomat elaborated on humanitarian efforts by Tehran as a mediator in a bid to end the war imposed on defenseless and oppressed Yemeni people. He also

highlighted the need for a fair armistice and peace in Yemen.

"Since the outset, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been of the conviction that the Yemen crisis has no military solution, and that the crisis should be settled through intra-Yemeni political negotiations," he explained.

The career diplomat underscored the need to hurry up to adopt a pragmatic strategy in order to resolve the Yemen crisis.

"Now it is time for the United Nations to adopt decisions to get the economic blockade on Yemeni people lifted and to reinforce the truce," Khaji insisted.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran backs any ceasefire and peace initiative that would put an end to the pain and suffering of Yemeni people and establish lasting peace and security," he further said.

In early April, a truce was declared in Yemen. But it's unclear if the truce will hold.

Economic diplomacy, deepening neighborly ties priority for Iran: FM

From Page 1 ► he said, adding, "We have always supported the collective efforts made by developing countries to fulfil the creation of an efficient international economic system as well as the achievement of economic development and growth, people's welfare and wellbeing, preservation of values and national cultures and the attainment of a proper standing in international relations."

He noted, "That is why the Islamic Republic of Iran is an active member in international and regional economic groupings, including the D-8. In the realm of economic convergences, too, we are involved in creating the foundations of free trade and will soon finalize the Free Trade Area (FTA) Agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union."

At the beginning of the session, the Iranian foreign minister congratulated the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the D-8 and expressed hope that the organization will continue to make progress with utmost strength and speed.

"Despite being geographically scattered, D-8 enjoys abundant natural and human capacities, blessings, energy reserves, complementary economies as well as eager private sectors. Coronavirus crisis disturbed economic and developmental planning of the countries and made the world community face a kind of uncertainty. We are of the belief that in addition to their national policies and orientations, the D-8 member states need to also take into consideration options of collective cooperation in the post-Covid-19 era. Apart from Coronavirus, the member states are also facing food and energy security crises," the foreign minister stated.

"At this critical juncture, the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to place all its political, economic and cultural capacities and capabilities at the disposal of the economic growth as well as the development welfare, and progress of the shared values. I would like to remind that despite unlawful and unilateral economic measures by the United States as well as imposition of sanctions, the Islamic Republic of Iran has achieved significant achievements and great breakthroughs in different areas,

relying upon its indigenous resolve and might," the minister remarked.

He added, "We have voiced our preparedness to help the international community to cope with the current energy crisis and counter threats related to food insecurity. Our exemplary connectivity and transit position are at the service of the consumption markets. In addition, as the possessor of huge energy sources, we stand ready to contribute to the endeavors aimed at guaranteeing the security of energy supply. H.E. Mr. Raisi, the Honorable President of the Islamic Republic of Iran submitted his initiative dubbed 'Gas for Post-Covid Global Economy Recovery' at the summit of the of the 'Gas Exporting Countries Forum'. We are prepared to engage in dialogue between the producers and consumers within the framework of this initiative."

The Iranian foreign minister praised the D-8 track record in facilitating economic cooperation. "Throughout its 25-year-old life, D-8 has gradually been turned into a valuable ground for strengthening effective economic cooperation amongst its members. However, and despite the existence of high trade potentialities, the intra-D-8 trade still stands at below 10 percent. Therefore, mechanisms and arrangements are needed to facilitate and expand trade among member states. We believe that private sectors, too, should play their part in the fields of trade, energy, investment, industries, agriculture and tourism. We, as the governments of the D-8 member states, must accord the needed support to the private sectors," he said.

Amir Abdollahian added, "Moreover, the capacity of the parliaments of the member states should be tapped for the purpose of developing and advancing our cooperation. I propose that the D-8 Secretariat examines the possibility of holding joint meetings between the parliaments of the eight countries, and even the possibility of setting up a 'D-8 inter-parliamentary' body. We are ready to help this happen. Paying attention to education and technology are among key areas for the success of the D-8. Since the establishment of the organization, the Islamic Republic of Iran has



shown its strong interest towards these two areas by establishing the 'D-8 International University' in the city of Hamedan and the 'D-8 Technology Transfer and Exchange Network' at the Pardis Technology Park in Tehran."

He continued, "D-8 enlargement and accession of new members may serve as a tool for the realization of the organization's goals. We do welcome the readiness and desire of our friendly and neighboring country, the Republic of Azerbaijan to join D-8. The organization should move quickly to accept new members. Today regional organizations and initiatives play a significant role in guiding international politics and economy. The active and constructive approach adopted by the Islamic Republic of Iran in cooperating with regional organizations and initiatives have resulted in invitations extended to my country to participate in different conferences and initiatives. Tehran tries in such events to draw other countries' attention to the remarkable role of regional cooperation in peace, stability and their national development. My honorable colleagues are surely aware of the complicated developments in west and south Asia regions. The Islamic Republic of Iran tries to foster national and regional peace, stability and development through engaging with its neighbors and other regional countries."

"In conclusion, I am confident that this session will be yet another step towards achieving the lofty objectives of the organization and its founders as well as towards upgrading the position of the D-8 and gaining more exposure in regional and international relations."

were underlined at the meeting.

The UAE foreign minister, in turn, underlined the need for expanding relations between Tehran and Abu Dhabi. "For us, peace, stability as well as the good and dignity of Iran, as a neighbor and brother, is highly important, because this will also have a positive effect on our own country and we hope that in the future, we will be able to take longer strides in expanding relations between the two countries," the UAE foreign minister said, according to a statement by the Iranian foreign ministry.

The Arab countries of the Persian Gulf are taking steps to improve ties with Iran. The UAE and Kuwait have decided to dispatch ambassadors to Iran; the Iranian foreign minister will soon pay a visit to Kuwait; and the foreign ministers of Iran and Saudi Arabia are expected to meet in Baghdad soon.

administration's foreign policy in cementing ties with neighbors, Amir Abdollahian said, "We have learned from experience that the interference of foreign countries in this region has always been harmful, and the way to progress and stabilize the region will be the cooperation of the countries of the region."

This warning featured high in the phone call between Amir Abdollahian and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed given that the UAE was the first Arab country in the Persian Gulf region to normalize relations with Israel.

Amir Abdollahian told Sheikh Abdullah that presence of the Zionist regime in the Persian Gulf will cause instability and insecurity, adding that Tel Aviv made an effort to turn the recent Jeddah conference into a regional crisis but thanks to the prudence of the participating countries, issues of regional cooperation, progress and security

Underlining the Raisi

SPORTS

Mohammad Mousavi invited to Iran volleyball team

TEHRAN - Middle blocker Mohammad Mousavi was invited to the Iran volleyball team for the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship.

He had not been called up to the National Team since 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Iran are drawn with Argentina, Egypt and the Netherlands in Pool F in the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship. The team will first participate at the Memorial of Hubert Jerzy Wagner slated for Aug. 18 to 20 in Poland.

The National Team will start the world championship with a match against Argentina on Aug. 27 and meet Egypt and the Netherlands on Aug. 29 and 31, respectively.

A total of 24 teams, divided into six pools of four will play in a single round-robin format in the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship.

The top two nations in each pool and the four best third-placed teams will qualify for the elimination round - making it much simpler for fans across the globe to keep track of the action.

Iran squad:

Milad Ebadipour, Amirhossein Esfandiar, Morteza Sharifi, Meysam Salehi, Mohammadjavad Manavinejad, Shahrooz Homayounfarmanesh, Mohammad Mousavi, Aliasghar Mojarad, Amirhossein Toukhteh, Mehdi Jelveh, Amin Esmaeilnezhad, Saber Kazemi, Javad Karimi, Mohammadtaher Vadi, Mohammadreza Hazratpour and Mohammadreza Moazen

Brazilian Gustavo linked with Tractor

TEHRAN - Brazilian attacking midfielder Gustavo di Mauro Vagenin, known as Gustavo, has been reportedly linked with a move to Iran's Tractor.

The 30-year-old player currently plays for Romanian club Liga I club CS Universitatea Craiova.

Gustavo has also played in Italian clubs Salernitana, Novara and Messina.

Tractor, headed by Kurban Berdyev in the 2022-23 Iran Professional League season, finished in 13th place in the 16-team table last season.

Azerbaijan team defender Haghverdi joins Tractor

TEHRAN - Iranian defender Hojat Haghverdi, who plays for Azerbaijan national team, joined Tractor football club on Wednesday.

Haghverdi, 29, started his playing career in Aboomoslem in 2013 and after playing for Zob Ahan and Paykan joined Azerbaijani club Sumgayit in 2021.

He has also played for Azerbaijan national team 11 times.

The details of Haghverdi's contract have not been released.

Nassaji eye striker Adama Niane

TEHRAN - Malian forward Adama Niane has arrived Tehran to finalize his contract with Nassaji football club.

Niane, 29, has previously played in French clubs Nantes, Troyes and Sochaux.

Niane has most recently played at French club Dunkerque.

Nassaji, headed by Hamid Motahari in the

2022-23 Iran Professional League, will also take part in the 2022 AFC Champions League as Iran's representative.

The Ghaemshahr-based club, who won Hazfi Cup in late April, will play Iran league champion Esteghlal in the Iran's Super Cup.

Iran's fixture in 2022 CAFA U-19 Championships announced

TEHRAN - Iran will play Uzbekistan in the opening match of the 2022 CAFA U-19 Championships on August 5.

The Iranian team will also play Afghanistan and Kyrgyz Republic on August 8 and 10, respectively.

Uzbekistan won the first edition in 2016 and Iran claimed the title in the second edition held in 2019.

The CAFA Junior Championship is an international football competition in Central Asia for the member nations of the Central Asian Football Association (CAFA).

Iran to participate in 2022 Continental Futsal Championship

TEHRAN - The Iran national futsal team will vie for the 2022 Continental Futsal Championship title in Thailand this September.

The tournament will be hosted by the Football Association of Thailand (FAT) from Sep. 11 to 16 in Bangkok.

It will feature six national teams: Iran (sixth in world rankings), Morocco (ninth), Finland (18th), Thailand (20th), Vietnam (40th), and Angola (46th).

Except for Finland, the other teams have all participated in the 2021 Futsal World Cup, meaning this tournament could be considered a mini World Cup.

Six teams will be divided into two groups, played in a round-robin format. The top two teams per group will advance to the semifinals.

The Iran Futsal team are the current title-holders, having defeated Thailand in the final of the 2021 edition.

Iran to play six friendlies ahead of 2022 FIVB Volleyball World Championship

TEHRAN - Iran will play six friendly matches as part of preparation for the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship.

Behrouz Ataei's men will play Ukraine on Aug. 15 and 16. Iran will then take part at the Memorial of Hubert Jerzy Wagner slated for Aug. 18 to 20 in Poland and met Serbia, Poland and Argentina. Iran will play Slovenia on Aug. 23 in their last friendly match.

Iran are drawn with Argentina, Egypt and the Netherlands in Pool F in the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship. The team will first participate at the Memorial of Hubert Jerzy Wagner slated for Aug. 18 to 20 in Poland.

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Iran's 4-month non-oil exports increase 22% yr/yr



From page 1 ► Iran's top export destination during this period was China with \$5.617 billion worth of imports from the Islamic Republic, followed by Iraq with \$2.398 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$2.264 billion, Turkey with \$2.06 billion, and India with \$567 million.

Liquid propane, methanol, liquefied natural gas, urea, liquid butane, polyethylene, bitumen, light petroleum oils, iron and steel ingots, and light oil products were among the top exported items in the said four months.

Meanwhile, the country's top five sources of imports during these four months were

Turkey to increase oil, gas imports from Iran: Erdogan

TEHRAN - Turkey plans to purchase more oil and gas from Iran amid greater energy needs and developing ties between the two countries, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced.

Making the remarks in an interview with the state-owned broadcaster, TRT Haber, on Monday, Erdogan said: "Turkey will increase its purchases of oil and natural gas from Iran", noting that the trade volume between Ankara and Tehran could reach \$30 billion.

Erdogan's announcement came a week after his meeting with his Iranian and Russian counterparts, Ebrahim Raisi and Vladimir Putin, in Tehran, in which Turkey and Iran signed eight memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and agreements in various fields including trade and investment.

Erdogan reiterated the need for the development of ties at a joint conference with Raisi in Tehran last week, following the signing of the mentioned agreements.

Earlier this month, Erdogan and Raisi co-chaired a Turkish-Iranian High-Level Cooperation Council in Tehran in which the two sides discussed ways of expanding economic relations along with political ties.

During the meeting, the officials negotiated the extension of the gas export contract between the two sides for the next 25 years.

On the sidelines of the mentioned gathering, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian



also held talks with Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Fatih Dönmez in which the two sides exchanged views on cooperation in energy fields.

Later on, Head of Turkey's Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) Hasan Basri Kurt met with Head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) Ali Rasoulman to discuss ways of expanding cooperation between the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of the two countries.

In this meeting Rasoulman referred to the signing of an MOU between the two countries on cooperation between SMEs, saying: "President Raisi has emphasized on setting up joint industrial parks in the country's special economic zones, considering the good infrastructure for setting up such parks in the free and special economic zones and the active presence of economic enterprises in these areas."

Imports of at least 5,000 mining machineries needed in country: ICCIMA member

TEHRAN- As stated by the chairman of Mines and Mining Industries Committee of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), to meet the needs of miners in the country, at least 5,000 mining machineries should be imported.



Ebrahim Jalili said: "We want that the import of mining machinery be liberated", adding, "I believe it is better to do this as a group and by forming a special consortium to import these machineries. Because in this case, their final price will be about 50 percent cheaper."

Reiterating that at least 5,000

mining machines should be imported to solve the problems of the miners, he continued: "The necessary infrastructure for the import of these machines is also ready and the parliament and the government should help to solve this problem as soon as possible."

He also pointed out the

necessity of providing spare parts for mining machines and stated: "In addition to imports, the supply of parts for these machines should also be taken into consideration so that the original parts and not counterfeit parts will be provided for the miners."

Having 81 different types of minerals, Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries across the globe. In this regard, the Iranian government is pursuing several programs for promoting the mining sector as a major contributor to the country's economic growth.

But despite these programs,

this sector is facing several challenges.

According to a report released in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) by the Research Center of the parliament, the challenges of the mining sector are 44 percent related to laws and the lack of a long and clear mining strategy, 33 percent are related to mismanagement and problems of miners, 13 percent to environmental and natural resources problems, and 10 percent are related to international problems.

Lack of machinery is also a major challenge in the mining sector.

Iranian gas exports reach \$4 billion in 4 months

TEHRAN - Iran has exported nearly four billion dollars of natural gas in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), Oil Minister Javad Oji said on Wednesday.

"We have collected close to four billion dollars of gas revenue for the first four months of the year, which is nearly as much as what was collected for the entire previous year," ISNA quoted Oji as saying.

The Oil Ministry has previously announced that it has been able to collect funds from earlier energy exports and reached an agreement to resume gas supplies to Iraq in April as Baghdad paid part of its debts owed to Tehran.

Iran mainly exports gas to Turkey and Iraq but the sales have not always been consistent due to debt-payment issues, domestic consumption needs, and occasional technical problems



which forced a momentary halt in exports to Turkey over the winter.

Earlier this month, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) announced that the Oil Ministry fulfilled 70 percent of its revenue-generating obligations in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 22).

Despite the restrictions caused by the sanctions, the sale of crude oil, gas condensate, as well as petroleum products, and natural

gas is ongoing and the revenues from it are being collected, NIOC Financial Director Mohammad Roustas said.

Earlier in May, Ali Forouzandeh, the director-general of the Oil Ministry's Public Relations Department, announced that the country's income from the export of oil, gas, petroleum, and petrochemical products rose 66 percent during the first two months of the current calendar year (March 21-May 21).

Average daily gasoline consumption exceeds 100m liters

TEHRAN - Average daily gasoline consumption in Iran has reached 100.9 million liters in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), registering a 14 percent increase year on year, IRNA reported.

According to Afshin Mahdavi, the director of planning at National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPDC), daily gasoline consumption in the country stood at about 87 million liters in the previous year's same four months.

NIOPDC has also distributed, on average, 107.6 million liters of diesel every day during the mentioned period, Mahdavi said.

Managing and optimizing fuel consumption in the country is one of the priorities that the Oil Ministry and, accordingly, NIOPDC has put realizing this goal atop agenda, however, the significant increase in gasoline consumption in the current year has raised many red flags so that energy officials are concerned that the country might need to import gasoline



once again.

Back in March, NIOPDC announced that average daily gasoline consumption in the country increased 27 percent during the Iranian new year holidays (March 16-April 1) as pandemic-related restrictions eased and traffic rose.

As reported, average daily gasoline consumption in the country reached 112 million liters during the mentioned 17 days.

Having a production capacity of nearly 120 million liters per day of gasoline, Iran

currently has also the capacity to store three billion liters of the strategic fuel.

Although the Islamic Republic is currently self-sufficient in gasoline production, fluctuations in consumption at different periods through the year have led to the creation of storage facilities across the country to manage the sustainable supply and distribution of gasoline.

These tanks will help the country's refineries continue operating at full capacity if on certain days of the year (such as the Nowruz holidays) gasoline consumption rises significantly, and also prevent any interruption in the supply of the fuel if consumption increases drastically.

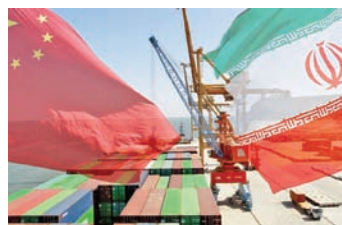
In this regard, the capacity of the country's gasoline storage facilities has increased in recent years, so much so that according to the National Iranian Oil Products Refining and Distribution Company, the volume of gasoline storage has increased from 1.8 billion liters to more than three billion liters.

Exports to China rise 31% in H1

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's non-oil exports to China reached \$4.081 billion in the first six months of 2022, to register a 31-percent rise year on year, according to the data released by China's customs administration.

The Islamic Republic exported \$3.116 billion worth of goods to China in January-June 2021, IRNA reported.

Based on the mentioned data, Iran and China traded \$8.263 billion worth of commodities in the mentioned six months to register a 23 percent increase compared to the same period in 2021 in which the figure stood at \$6.722 billion.



China's exports to Iran in the first six months of 2022 also grew by 16 percent compared to the previous year to reach \$4.182 billion. The Asian country had exported \$3.606 billion worth of goods to Iran in the same period of the previous year.

Iran-China non-oil trade stood at \$14.8 billion in 2021, according to China's customs

administration.

The value of trade between the two countries during the previous year declined by less than one percent in comparison to 2020 in which the figure was reported to be \$14.9 billion.

China's imports from Iran in 2021 grew by more than one percent compared to the previous year and reached \$6.5 billion. China imported \$6.4 billion worth of goods from Iran in 2020.

However, China's exports to Iran in January-December 2021 fell by about two percent to \$8.3 billion from \$8.5 billion in the previous year.

Iran mainly exports foodstuff

and agricultural products to China while importing machinery and industrial raw materials, medical equipment, fabrics, and auto parts.

China is one of Iran's main trade partners that has maintained strong trade ties with the Islamic Republic despite the strict U.S sanctions.

Iran and China officially signed the document for 25-year comprehensive cooperation in March 2021.

The document was signed between Iran's former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

300 idle industrial units revived in 4 months



TEHRAN - Head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) announced that 300 idle industrial units have been revived in the country since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21).

Ali Rasoulman said that 31 percent of the mentioned units have been revived by the entrepreneurs and noted, "We hope that we will see more private sector's contribution in this field".

Rasoulman has previously announced that

2,067 idle industrial units were revived in the country's industrial parks and zones during the previous Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20).

According to the ISIPO head, with the reviving of the mentioned units job opportunities were created for over 39,000 people.

"ISIPO had put it on the agenda to revive 2,000 stagnant units inside and outside industrial parks and zones in the previous year and by the end of the year 2,067 idle units returned to the production cycle, which provided employment for more than 39,000 people," Rasoulman said.

The official noted that 1,433 small workshop units were also established in the mentioned year most of which were production and knowledge-based units with high technology.

The necessary licenses were also obtained for establishing 26 new industrial parks and zones across the country in the previous year, he added.

TEDPIX gains 5,200 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 5,264 points to 1.443 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 3.925 billion securities worth 24.31 trillion rials (about \$86.82 million) were traded at the TSE.

Tehran Stock Exchange is on the four Iranian stock exchanges, the other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Aluminum ingot production rises 31% in a quarter on year

TEHRAN - Production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 31 percent in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

The IMIDRO's data put the production of aluminum ingot at 171,691 tons in the three-month period of this year, while the figure

was 131,376 tons in the same time span of the previous year.

Among the country's four major producers, South Aluminum Corporation (SALCO) had the best performance in the first three months of the present year, producing 74,100 tons of aluminum ingots, followed by Iranian Aluminum Company (IRALCO) producing 47,319 tons, Almahdi Aluminum Company producing 40,724 tons, and Iran Alumina Company producing 9,548 tons of

the product.

According to the data previously released by IMIDRO, production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 20 percent during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), as compared to its preceding year.

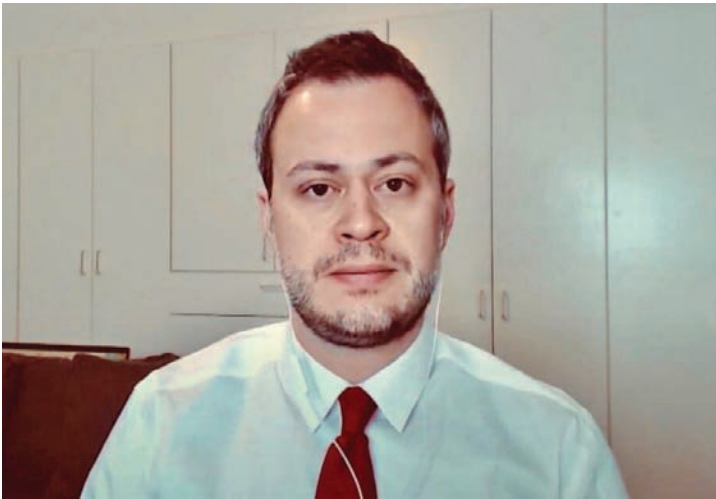
The IMIDRO's data put the annual production of aluminum ingot at 538,633 tons in 1400, while the figure was 446,836 tons in 1399, and 278,318 tons in 1398.

Arabs see ties with Moscow beneficial despite U.S. pressure: GSA chief

From page 1 ▶ As of now, it does not appear that Biden's trip did anything to bring Riyadh away from China or Russia. In terms of oil production, Biden received no firm commitment from the Saudis for an increase, although that may come later this year through OPEC Plus. One area where the U.S. administration can point to an accomplishment is the Saudi-Israeli relationship. Biden's visit to Jeddah did not result in the Kingdom joining the Abraham Accords, but only naive pundits who don't understand Saudi Arabia argued that a full normalization of ties between Riyadh and Tel Aviv was to be expected from Biden's brief visit. Nonetheless, Biden going to the Kingdom coincided with Saudi Arabia announcing that the country will permit Israeli planes to access Saudi airspace. This development, along with other baby steps toward normalization in Saudi-Israeli relations, will enable Biden to tell the U.S. public and pro-Israel lobby groups that his administration is making progress when it comes to expanding the scope of the Abraham Accords.

Do you see any about-turn in U.S. behavior when it comes to Saudi Arabia? Was MBS a pariah to Biden?

No. Biden's use of the word "pariah" to describe Saudi Arabia in 2019 was for his campaign. As a candidate, he was addressing his constituents in the Democratic Party, many of whom grew increasingly upset with Saudi conduct and the special relationship that Donald Trump nurtured with the leadership in Riyadh. The Khashoggi murder made the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman particularly toxic in Washington at that time.



Yet once Biden entered the Oval Office in January 2021 it was evident that he had no plans to treat Saudi Arabia as a "pariah." Biden's team views Saudi Arabia and the other five GCC states as critical U.S. allies and partners in the Middle East (West Asia).

Do you see harmony and integrity among Persian Gulf Arab states' positions when it comes to Iran? Is the Biden administration able to unite Arabs against Iran?

Ever since the GCC's establishment in 1981, the sub-regional institution's six members have had different perceptions of, and policies toward the Islamic Republic. No U.S. administration from Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) to Joe Biden (2021-present) has managed to unite all GCC states behind a single position in relation to Tehran. Given how each of the

Persian Gulf's Arab monarchies sees Iran in unique ways and has unique interests vis-à-vis Tehran, it is difficult to imagine team Biden uniting all of the GCC states in one anti-Iran alliance. It is particularly unlikely that the U.S. would be able to bring the Sultanate of Oman into any such alliance which targets Iran, especially mindful of the very pragmatic and cooperative relationship between Muscat and Tehran.

Obama chose Cairo as a venue to address the Muslim world while Trump and Biden preferred Riyadh as the first station of their trips to West Asia. Is that a meaningful difference?

A consequence of the 2010/2011 Arab Spring uprisings has been a rise in the geopolitical influence and clout of the three most powerful GCC states Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar. Although Egypt, Syria, and Iraq were the

traditional Arab heavyweights during the second half of the 20th century, it is the wealthy and relatively stable GCC states which have ascended in the Arab world's 21st century geopolitical order. This point is critical to consider when answering this question.

Do you think Biden is successful in persuading Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies to capitalize on the U.S. rather than Russia in terms of security and defense?

To an extent, the conflict in Ukraine has served U.S. interests in the sense that Russia's military performance has given Arab states reason to question the wisdom of assessing Russia as a possible alternative security guarantor to the U.S. The warfare in Ukraine has resulted in Arab statesmen considering that Russia's ability to project hard power in foreign lands may have been based more on abstractions rather than anything substantive.

To be sure, Russia is very far away from being able to replace the U.S. as a security guarantor for any GCC state. One must bear in mind that the Emirati leadership expected Washington, not Moscow, to protect the UAE in January 2022 following the Houthi missile and drone attacks against Abu Dhabi.

Nonetheless, the Ukrainian crisis has not resulted in Arab states wanting to walk away from Russia. Basically, all Arab states have determined that maintaining partnerships with Moscow still serves their interests despite the U.S. pressuring them to join Washington and the EU's failed efforts to make Russia a global "pariah." The leadership in Moscow is keen to constantly make this observation.

Now should I worry about monkeypox?

Monkeypox is spreading in the United States and around the world. There are at least 16,000 infections documented in over 40 countries, and the World Health Organization has declared it a public health emergency of international concern. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is reporting more than 3,000 infections, just two months after monkeypox was first detected in this outbreak.

How much should people worry about contracting monkeypox? Should everyone be trying to get the vaccine? Who are the groups most at risk, and what actions should they take? How exactly is monkeypox spread and how can people prevent from trying to get it? What are common symptoms to look out for?

To help us better understand monkeypox and the risk it poses, I spoke with CNN Medical Analyst Dr. Leana Wen, an emergency physician and professor of health policy and management at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. She is also author of "Lifelines: A Doctor's Journey in the Fight for Public Health."

How is monkeypox spread? Is it as transmissible as Covid-19, another disease that we know very well by now?

Monkeypox is not spread like Covid-19. As we know by now, Covid-19 is highly transmissible and can be spread through microscopic aerosols. That means you could be infected by someone who you're having a casual conversation with or even someone who happens to be in the same conference room or restaurant as you.

Monkeypox is primarily spread through prolonged, direct, skin-to-skin contact. Most cases thus far have been linked to sexual activity though this is not considered a sexually transmitted infection. Rather, individuals can spread monkeypox through intimate contact, such as kissing, hugging, cuddling and sexual intercourse.

Individuals who have lesions can also shed virus onto bedsheets, towels and other linens that can spread the virus to others. This is why people with active monkeypox lesions are instructed not to share potentially contaminated items like linens, towels, drinking glasses and eating utensils with others.

What kinds of symptoms do patients with monkeypox have?

People who contract monkeypox often first start developing fever, headache, muscles aches and overall fatigue — similar to many other viral illnesses. Many people also have lymph node swelling. They then develop a rash that progresses into blisters, pimples or sores. The lesions can be all over the body or only in one part. It could be localized to just the anal or genital area, on the face, inside the mouth, or any other part of the body.

A large study recently published in the New England Journal of Medicine examined 528 infections across 43 sites in 16 countries. It found that the most common symptoms are fever, tiredness, muscle aches and lymph node swelling. Nearly all had a rash with blisters, though some individuals only had one lesion while others had several or more. Some people only had sores inside their mouth or in their anal or genital areas.

Clinicians seeing patients with a fever and new rash should have a low threshold for testing for monkeypox, especially if the patient is in a high-risk group for contracting monkeypox. Importantly, the recent study also found that 29% of people diagnosed with monkeypox had a sexually transmitted infection. To me, this means that just because a patient is diagnosed with one thing doesn't mean they can't have another, too, and patients in high-risk groups who have new lesions need to get tested to rule out monkeypox.

What started monkeypox, and how widespread is it in the United States?

Monkeypox is a virus that is in the same family as the smallpox virus. It was first discovered in 1958 in monkeys, hence the name, though its usual animal hosts are rodents and other small mammals. It first appeared in humans in 1970 in east Africa. It has been endemic in countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with outbreaks sometimes occurring when infected travelers bring back the disease to their home countries. There was a big outbreak in the United States in 2003 due to imported rodents.



This outbreak is much larger. More than 3,000 people have been infected in the United States thus far, with infections seen in almost every state. The CDC has an updated map of cases and infections here.

Who are the individuals in the high-risk groups for contracting monkeypox?

Thus far, monkeypox has predominantly affected gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men. In the New England Journal of Medicine international case series, 98% of people with monkeypox were gay or bisexual, and the transmission was linked to sexual activity in 95% of the cases. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said that the "vast majority" of cases in the United States are in men who have sex with men, with a median age of 36.

Currently individuals at high risk are men who have sex with men and who have sex with multiple or anonymous partners. There are also reports in the United States of some women and two children who have contracted monkeypox, who are all believed to be direct contacts of men who have sex with men.

Has anyone died from monkeypox?

Monkeypox usually has a fatality rate of 3% to 6%, according to the World Health Organization. Thankfully, no one has died from monkeypox in the United States yet, but this is a painful disease that can and does lead to severe illness and death. Those particularly vulnerable include pregnant women, young children and immunocompromised people.

How much should people worry about monkeypox?

Because of the way that monkeypox is spread, it is not yet a concern for most Americans. However, individuals who are gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, who have intimate contact with multiple or anonymous people, are at high risk.

These individuals should immediately seek testing if they have a new rash or sore, and they should avoid close physical contact in the meantime. People who wish to reduce their risk should avoid crowded clubs, raves, sex parties and other places where there is prolonged skin-to-skin or face-to-face contact with many people who may be wearing less clothing.

Should everyone try to get the monkeypox vaccine?

No. First of all, the monkeypox vaccine is extremely limited right now. About 300,000 doses of the two-dose vaccine have been delivered thus far, much less than the 1.5 million people the CDC says are eligible.

Those who should definitely get the vaccine are those with known exposure to someone with monkeypox. If given within four days of exposure, the vaccine can prevent someone from developing monkeypox. If given within two weeks, it lessens the likelihood of progression to severe illness.

Soon, I hope there will be enough vaccine so that people in high-risk groups are able to access it. But given the way that monkeypox is spread, most Americans are not likely to contract it, and a mass vaccination campaign targeting the general population is probably not going to be recommended any time soon.

Is monkeypox going to be yet another virus that will be endemic in the United States?

I really hope not. It is still possible to contain monkeypox through testing and vaccination. I hope that the WHO's declaration of a global health emergency will spur more countries, including ours, to put every effort to try to prevent monkeypox from taking hold and becoming endemic here.

We can't afford not to prosecute Trump

We all learn from failure.

Our mistakes become the bridge to our successes, teaching us what works and what doesn't, so that the next time we muster the will to try, we'll succeed.

But nefarious actors can also learn from failure. And that, unfortunately, is where we find ourselves with Donald Trump. His entire foray into politics has been one of testing the fences for weaknesses. Every time a fence has failed, he has been encouraged. He has become a better political predator.

With the conclusion of this series of hearings about the Jan. 6 insurrection, it has become ever clearer to me that Trump should be charged with multiple crimes. But I'm not a prosecutor. I'm not part of the Department of Justice. That agency will make the final decision on federal charges.

The questions before the Justice Department are not only whether there is convincing evidence that Trump committed the crimes he is accused of but also whether the country could sustain the stain of a criminal prosecution of a former president.

I would turn the latter question around completely: Can the country afford not to prosecute Trump? I believe the answer is no.

He has learned from his failures and is now more dangerous than ever.

He has learned that the political system is incapable of holding him accountable. He can try to extort a foreign nation for political gain and not be removed from office. He can attempt a coup and not be removed from office.

He has learned that many of his supporters have almost complete contempt for women. It doesn't matter how many women accuse you of sexual misconduct; your base, including some of your female supporters, will brush it away. You can even be caught on tape boasting about sexually assaulting women, and your followers will discount it.

He has learned that the presidency is the



greatest grift of his life. For decades, he has sold gilded glamour to suckers — hawking hotels and golf courses, steaks and vodka — but with the presidency, he needed to sell them only lies that affirmed their white nationalism and justified their white fragility, and they would happily give him millions of dollars. Why erect a building when you could simply erect a myth? Trump will never willingly walk away from this.

Editors' Picks

Now with the investigation into his involvement in the insurrection and his attempts to steal the election, he is learning once again from his failures. He is learning that his loyalty tests have to be even more severe. He is learning that his attempts to grab power must come at the beginning of his presidency, not the end. He is learning that it is possible to break the political system.

Not only does Trump apparently want to run again for president; The New York Times reported that he might announce as soon as this month, partly to shield himself "from a stream of damaging revelations emerging from investigations into his attempts to cling to power after losing the 2020 election."

Trump isn't articulating any fully fleshed-out policy objectives he hopes to accomplish for the country, but that should come as no surprise. His desire to regain power has nothing to do with the well-being of the country. His quest is brazenly self-interested. He wants to retake the presidency because its power is a shield against accountability and a mechanism through which

to funnel money.

Should his re-election bid prove successful, Trump's second term will likely be far worse than the first.

He would tighten his grip on all those near him. Mike Pence was a loyalist but in the end wouldn't fully kowtow to him. The same can be said of Bill Barr. Trump will not again make the mistake of surrounding himself with people who would question his authority.

Some of the people who demonstrated more loyalty to the country than they did to Trump during these investigations were lower-level staff members. For the former president, they, too, present an obstacle. But he might have a fix for that as well.

Axios reported on Friday that "Trump's top allies are preparing to radically reshape the federal government if he is re-elected, purging potentially thousands of civil servants and filling career posts with loyalists to him and his 'America First' ideology."

According to Axios, this strategy appears to revolve around his reimposing an executive order that would reassign tens of thousands of federal employees with "some influence over policy" to Schedule F, which would strip them of their employee protections so that Trump could fire them without recourse to appeal.

Perhaps most dangerous, though, is that Trump will have learned that while presidents aren't too big to fail, they are too big to jail. If a president can operate with impunity, the presidency invites corruption, and it defies the ideals of this democracy.

A Trump free of prosecution is a Trump free to rampage.

Some could argue that prosecuting a former president would forever alter presidential politics. But I would counter that not prosecuting him threatens the collapse of the entire political ecosystem and therefore the country.

(Source: The New York Times)

Several explosions rock U.S. military base in Syria: report

A military base in Syria's northeastern province of Hasakah used by American troops has been reportedly hit by a series of heavy explosions.

Russia's state-run Sputnik news agency, citing local sources, reported on Wednesday that sounds of several loud blasts had been heard in the northern and western suburbs of the oil-rich town of al-Shaddadi, where one of the largest American bases in Hasakah Province is located.

Helicopters belonging to American forces flew over the skies of the area as the explosions took place, while U.S. troops fired a flare gun into the air, Sputnik said.

The Russian news agency further said that there were reports of a rocket attack on the American base, adding that two U.S. military convoys, carrying military equipment and armored vehicles, had been sent to the base prior to the attack.

The U.S. base in al-Shaddadi was

also targeted with two missiles several months ago.

Meanwhile, the Arabic-language al-Maloume news website quoted an Iraqi security source as saying that American forces had sent military equipment from Ain al-Asad Air Base in the western Iraqi province of Anbar to a U.S. military base near the al-Walid crossing between Syria and Iraq.

The U.S. maintains a force of several hundred soldiers and military

hardware in eastern and northeastern Syria, with the Pentagon claiming that the deployment is aimed at preventing the oilfields in the area from falling into the hands of Daesh terrorists.

Damascus, however, says the unlawful deployment is meant to plunder the country's resources. Former U.S. President Donald Trump admitted on several occasions that American forces were in Syria for its oil.

(Source: Press TV)

Proto-Elamite earthenware accidentally discovered in southern Iran

From page 1 ► a loose unity recognizable in the material cultures of the period 3400–525 BC. Elamite culture can be traced in Susa, which is situated in Khuzestan, in Anshan of Fars, and sites in adjacent areas of the Zagros mountains, particularly in the modern provinces of Lorestan, Kordestan, and Kerman.

Elam was distinct from the contemporary civilizations of Sumer and the Indus valley in the episodic cultural and political integration of large expanses of geographically diverse territory. The lines of communication between Susa and Anshan, the largest cities of Elam, as well as with other, more distant mountain regions, were limited in number and generally difficult, owing to the rugged topography.

Proto-Elamite (Susa III/Banesh) period, ca. 3400/3200–2800 BC was characterized by a distinctive assemblage of artifacts and an artistic style distributed from Lorestan in the west to Kerman in the east.

The establishment of a city at Anshan during the Proto-Elamite period and smaller outposts at Tepe Sialk and Tepe Yahya in the eastern highlands suggest that the foundations of the union between lowland and highland regions characteristic of later Elam were first laid in the late 4th millennium.

Experts believe the ecosystem of the Marvdasht plain, which was once the seat of power for the Achaemenid Persian Empire (c. 550 – 330 BC), has been one of the most important factors in the creation and development of several thousand years of civilization in this region.

That is why the remains of different settlements and cultures have been



discovered during many excavations carried out in ancient hills and historical sites of the plain, cultural heritage expert Hamid Fadaei says.

The ancient region, known as Pars (Fars), or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenid Empire founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC. Alexander the Great defeated the Achaemenian army at Arbela in 331 and burned Persepolis, apparently as revenge on the Persians, because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

Persis became part of the Seleucid kingdom in 312 after Alexander's death. The Parthian empire (247 BC– 224 CE) of the Arsacids (corresponding roughly to the modern Khorasan in Iran) replaced the Seleucids' rule in the Persis during 170–138 BC. The Sasanid Empire (224 CE–651) had its capital at Istakhr. Not until the 18th century, under the Zand dynasty (1750–79) of southern Iran, did Fars again become the heart of an empire, with its capital at Shiraz.

Arg-e Rayen: restoration work to renew cobs on the surface



TEHRAN – A restoration work has commenced renewing cob material covering the exterior façade and walls of Arg-e Rayen, a Sasanian-era fort located in southeast Iran.

Apart from the masonry work, the necessary equipment will be installed to light up the

ancient fortress, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

Situated in Kerman province, the adobe monument is still standing tall after tolerating several earthquakes and other natural disasters, which have flattened similar nearby structures.

Covering an area of about 20,000 square meters, the castle was inhabited until 150 years ago and some experts believe it is at least 1,000 years old.

The big and sprawling Kerman province has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribe dwellers. It is home to myriad historical sites and scenic landscapes, such as Bazaar-e Sartasari, Jabalieh Dome, Ganjali Khan Bathhouse, Malek Jameh Mosque, and Shahdad Desert, to name a few.

2,700-year-old bricks on view at Urmia Museum of Archaeology

TEHRAN – A collection of rare Mannaean bricks, which date back some 2700 years, has been put on show at the Urmia Museum of Archaeology in northwest Iran.

“49 pieces of Qalaichi glazed bricks are currently on show at the Urmia Museum of Archaeology,” the tourism chief of West Azarbaijan province said on Wednesday.

Excavated from Tepe Qalaichi, a Mannaean settlement in Bukan, the bricks were looted and smuggled out of Iran some four decades ago.

According to The Art Newspaper, the smuggled relics were recovered from a warehouse in Switzerland. Bearing images of various sphinxes, animals, and other motifs, the bricks were returned home from Switzerland last year.

In the 1970s, a farmer plowing at Qalaichi came across a decorated



brick, probably from the columned hall of its citadel. This discovery led to extremely damaging illegal excavations, partly using a bulldozer.

Eventually, in 1985, there was an official rescue excavation, but this

was quickly abandoned because of the intensification of the Iran-Iraq war. There were then 14 more years of illegal digging until 1999 when there was another official excavation. However, by this time, only small fragments of broken

bricks were found.

Mannaian civilization flourished in northwestern Iran in the 1st millennium BC. Mannai, also called Manna, was an ancient country surrounded by three major powers of the time, namely Assyria, Urartu, and Media. Qalaichi's archaeological site was once part of the Mannaean capital.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the Mannaean are first recorded in the annals of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (reigned 858–824 BC) and are last mentioned in Urartu by Rusa II (reigned 685–645 BC) and in Assyria by Esarhaddon (reigned 680–669 BC). With the intrusion of the Scythians and the rise of the Medes in the 7th century, the Mannaean lost their identity and were subsumed under the term Medes.

Photo exhibit marks 1st anniversary of Uramanat's UNESCO registration

TEHRAN – Kermanshah's provincial government office is hosting a photo exhibition organized to mark the first anniversary of Uramanat's registration on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

The pictures feature some of the original landmarks and rural buildings of the Uramanat region, which is home to dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

Stretched on the slopes of Sarvabad county at the heart of the Zagros Mountains, and shared between the provinces of Kordestan and Kermanshah in western Iran, the Uramanat cultural landscape embraces hundreds of villages, 106,000 hectares of land, and 303,000 hectares of surrounding properties.

Archaeological findings dating back about

40,000 years, caves and rock shelters, ancient paths and was along the valleys, motifs and inscriptions, cemeteries, mounds, castles, settlements, and other historical evidence attest to the continuity of life in the Uramanat region from the Paleolithic to the present time.

According to the UN body, Uramanat is an exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition of the semi-nomadic agropastoral way of life of the Hawrami people, a Kurdish tribe that has resided in the Zagros Mountains for millennia. This outstanding cultural tradition is manifested in the ancestral practices of transhumance, the mode of seasonal living in Havars, steep-slope terraced agriculture, soil and water management, traditional knowledge for planning and constructing steeply terraced villages, and rich diversity of intangible heritage, all reflecting harmonious co-existence with



nature.

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.

Police stumble upon Elamite artifacts

TEHRAN – Police in Tehran who were patrolling streets near Mehrabad Airport uncovered a backpack full of relics, which experts estimate to date from the Elamite era (3200 – 539 BC).

Officers suspect a person with a black backpack who was standing next to a parked car and left the place upon seeing the policemen, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

The accused who fled from the place was finally caught by the officers in a chase, and in the preliminary investigation, 13 pieces of different types of historical artifacts were discovered inside the backpack, the report said.

The relics, according to cultural heritage experts, date to the Elamite era. The suspect was detained and surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation and trial.

Elam was one of the most impressive



civilizations in the ancient world. It was never a cohesive ethnic kingdom or polity, but rather a federation of different tribes governed at various times by cities such as Susa, Anshan, and Shimashki until it was briefly united during the Middle Elamite Period, briefly, as an empire.

Copper and coppersmithing in ancient Iran

TEHRAN-The history of the usage of copper is best understood when studied under the three stages of its use throughout human life, namely, the Chalcolithic or Copper Age, Bronze Age, and ancient times. And some anthropologists believe copper is the first metal used by humans due to its softness and ease of manipulation.

The archeological evidence discovered at [Tepe] Sialk and other mining localities such as Talmesi and Anarak, and Tall-e Eblis indicates that several of the earliest sites of copper extraction were located in Iran.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, the sites that have yielded the most ancient evidence in Iran on copper smelting are the first and second levels of excavation at Sialk, which is undoubtedly older than Tall-e Eblis. It has been suggested that the oldest copper mine in Iran was Talmesi, which probably supplied the raw material needed for the furnaces at Sialk.

Here are the edited excerpts of the history of copper and

coppersmithing in the country originally published by the illustrated encyclopedia:

During the 5th and 4th millennia BC in Iran, craftsmen were able to create enough heat to reach temperatures required for the melting of most of the then known raw materials, and thus extract metal.

On top of that, copper-smelting techniques became well known in various parts of Iran in this period. With the advancement of the knowledge of metallurgy in the Achaemenid era, finely crafted copper and bronze objects were created, continuing through ancient times.

Although copper is mentioned in geographical texts much less often than precious metals, it appears to have been mined over wide areas of Persia in early Islamic times.

In a travelogue inscribed by the medieval Arab traveler Abu Dolaf, he wrote about the Neyshabur copper mine though the extent of the deposits in Iran became known only from accounts of European



travelers from the Safavid period onwards.

Sir John Chardin (1643–1713), for instance, wrote that “copper is found in Sari, Khorasan, and Qazvin. However, Iranian copper is not malleable. It has to be mixed with copper from Sweden and Japan to make it soft”.

The physician and traveler Engelbert Kaempfer, who resided in Persia in the 1680s during the reign of the Safavid Shah Solayman (r. 1666–94), wrote: “Kerman possesses enormous resources of copper. Copper is found in Khorasan also”.

In the arena of coppersmithing, it should be mentioned that less luxurious objects might be inlaid only with copper, but on more sumptuous pieces it was used in combination with silver and a black bituminous compound to give polychrome effects. The balanced use of copper and silver on one 12th-century inkwell suggests that some metalworkers turned to such inlays as a way of transposing polychrome book illustrations into the medium of metalwork.

As metalworkers drew away from manuscript sources and evolved their own decorative traditions, copper was less favored than the more prized metal, silver, as a material for inlays.

Objects apparently made of unalloyed copper survive in very small quantities from early Islamic times. The general rarity of early

Islamic copper objects is probably because they were normally purely utilitarian, beaten out of sheet copper, and left undecorated for town or village use; they would have been melted down and reworked when old.

In the 15th century, however, decorated objects made of tinned copper became common. The reasons for this change are unclear but may have been related to the gradual dwindling of interest in inlaid base metals and the return to precious metals for luxury objects.

Also during the 17th century, Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri stated: “three miles from Tabriz, there exists a gold mine

which is not operational because the extracted gold is not sufficient to cover the running cost of the mine. A copper mine is situated four miles from there whose produce is enormous and has huge revenues

for the Royal Treasury”. During the Qajar period, the French ambassador Comte Julien de Rochechouart wrote: “Copper consumption is very high in Iran with no equivalents around the world. Every domestic device is made of copper. Most of the copper utensils are produced at Kashan”.

Under the Safavids, tinned copper seems to have been common throughout Persia, whence the taste spread to Mughal India. The designs on most Safavid tinned-copper objects seem to have been derived from the Timurid tradition, rather than that of the Turkman dynasties, though some are related in style to Safavid painting. For example, a group of objects with figural decoration has been linked to western Persia in the second quarter of the 17th century.

Furthermore, the products of the copper-sheet maker and the coppersmith in the 20th century, together with the techniques and terminology associated with these trades, have been studied by Hans Wulff and Sigrid Westphal-Hellbusch, and Ilse Bruns.

New outbreak of hepatitis: can we step toward elimination?

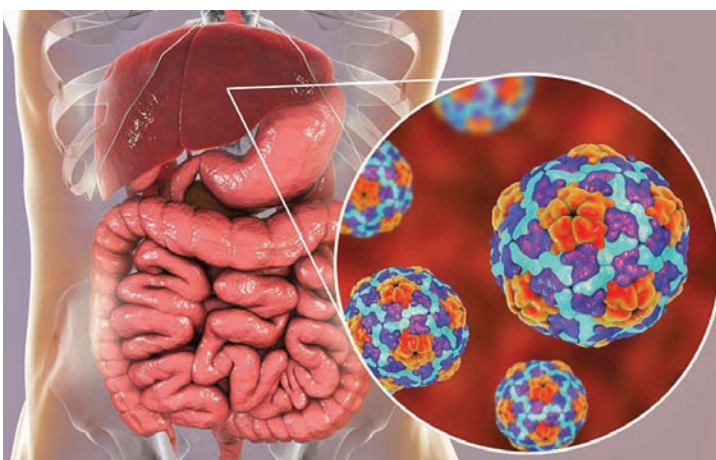
By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – The world is currently facing a new outbreak of unexplained acute hepatitis infections affecting children. The infection does not appear to belong to any of the known 5 types of hepatitis viruses of A, B, C, D, and E.

July 28 is observed each year as World Hepatitis Day to raise awareness of viral hepatitis, which causes inflammation of the liver that leads to severe disease and liver cancer.

This new outbreak brings focus on thousands of acute viral hepatitis infections that occur among children, adolescents, and adults every year. Most acute hepatitis infections cause mild disease and even go undetected. But in some cases, they can lead to complications and be fatal. In 2019 alone, an estimated 78,000 deaths occurred worldwide due to complications of acute hepatitis A to E infections.

Global efforts prioritize the elimination of hepatitis infections B, C, and D infections. Unlike acute viral hepatitis, these 3 infections cause chronic hepatitis that lasts for several decades and culminates in over 1 million deaths per year from cirrhosis and liver cancer. These 3 types of chronic hepatitis infections are responsible for over 95 percent of hepatitis deaths.



July 28 was chosen because it is the birthday of Nobel-prize-winning scientist Dr. Baruch Blumberg, who discovered the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and developed a diagnostic test and vaccine for the virus.

Some 15 million Iranians are diagnosed with hepatitis B and less than 200,000 people with hepatitis C; nearly 3,000 people are infected with hepatitis C each year.

Iran is planning to provide free diagnosis and treatment services to people who are suffering from hepatitis and eradicate the disease by 2030.

By 2030, if we could reduce the incidence of hepatitis by up to 90 percent and decrease mortality by 65 percent, we would have imple-

mented the elimination program as planned by the World Health Organization.

Low coverage of testing and treatment is the most important gap to be addressed in order to achieve global elimination goals by 2030.

Iran's challenges in full elimination of hepatitis C

Complete control of hepatitis C in Iran with the global "point elimination" strategy needs to address several key challenges. One of these challenges is the lack of accurate statistics on people at high risk for hepatitis C, Amir Ali Sohrabpour, the head of the Iranian Hepatitis Network said.

While it is necessary to identi-

fy 20,000 patients with hepatitis C in Iran annually, only 10 percent of hepatitis C patients have been identified; Therefore, it seems that the challenge of identifying and accurate statistics of high-risk groups in Iran needs a more immediate solution, he added.

On the other hand, the provinces with high hepatitis C prevalence have not yet been fully identified but is planned to be done, and the country's medical universities can play an important role, while the prison organization can also help hepatitis network by identifying patients to determine how many prisoners are infected with hepatitis C, he emphasized.

There are 15 million drug users in Iran, 300,000 of whom are injecting drugs, but one of the challenges is the need for a full treatment of these high-risk groups, including adequate funding for diagnostic tests and distribution of free medicine, he stated.

July 28 is observed each year as World Hepatitis Day to raise awareness of viral hepatitis.

World Giving Index: Iran 32nd 'most generous country'

By Mehdi Garshasbi

TEHRAN – Iran has been named the 32nd most generous country among 114 countries by the World Giving Index 2021.

The ranking is done based on the three indices of 'helping a stranger', 'donating money', and 'volunteering time'.

Iran is 38th in helping a stranger, 23rd in donating money, and 92nd in volunteering time.

With an overall score of 39, Iran ranked higher than countries such as Canada, Poland, Netherlands, Denmark, Iceland, and Norway.

Indonesia has the highest Index score overall with an improved score of 69, up from 59 the last time a yearly Index was published in

2018. More than eight in 10 Indonesians donated money in 2020 and the country has a much higher than average rate of volunteering.

Zakat is a traditional form of Islamic charity practiced widely in Indonesia, the proceeds of which are redistributed to the needy. Reports suggest that Zakat payments globally were particularly high in 2020 as a response to the pandemic.

Kenya, Nigeria, Myanmar, Australia, Ghana, New Zealand, Uganda, Kosovo, and Thailand came second to tenth in the ranking.

The ranking is based upon data from Gallup's World View World Poll, an ongoing research project that was carried out in 114 countries in 2020.

Together those countries represent more than 90% of the world's population. The survey asks questions on many different aspects of life today including giving behavior.

In most countries surveyed, 1,000 questionnaires are completed by a representative sample of individuals living across the country.

The coverage area is the entire country including rural areas. The sampling frame represents the entire civilian, non-institutionalized, aged 15 and older population of the entire country.

In some bigger countries, larger samples are collected, while in a small number of countries, the poll covers 500 to 1,000 people but still features a representative sample.

Country swept by Muharram fervor once again

From page 1 ► Shia Muslims hold special ceremonies during the first ten days of the lunar month of Muharram, which falls from August 21 to 30 this year, to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his 72 loyal companions.

Due to the brutality of the battle and the murder of the Prophet's grandson during a month when fighting is forbidden, Shia Muslims mourn during Muharram and observe a set of commemoration rituals.

The commemoration of the battle of Karbala (AD 680/AH 61),

on the focal day of Ashura (literally meaning 10th as the battle took place on the 10th day of the month), is annually honored by Iranians to mark the bravery of Imam Hussein (AS) along with his 72 loyal companions who were all martyred.

Storytelling, self-flagellation, weeping, and re-enactments of the Battle of Karbala form the crux of the observances.

Along with mosques, many of the events associated with the ritual take place in congregation halls known as Hussainia, and each neighborhood sets up its own establishment for the ceremonial processions of the month

known as 'Tekkiyeh', which was historically a staying place for visiting pilgrims and dervishes.

Mourners participate in religious gatherings heading out on the streets in groups to parade dramatic mourning through a specific route and people follow and move with the cluster of mourners as they chant mourning songs.

As the special music is played people weep to the hymns and men in black flagellate their backs rhythmically with two pairs of chains or beat their chests with open palms.

Over the past two years, mourning ceremonies, however, have

been affected by the coronavirus pandemic that has been sweeping across all world countries.

The requirement to observe health protocols among the religious delegations and the mourners of Imam Hussein (AS) has made people substitute a different method instead of cooking and distributing food. And people avoided gatherings and attended virtual mourning ceremonies.

Now, with the reduction of the transmission chain of the pandemic, the people can once again set up Tekkiyeh and join mourning ceremonies across the country to commemorate Imam Hussein (AS) and his gracious sacrifice.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

'Water transfer from Sea of Oman entails no considerable environmental risk'

Transferring water from Sea of Oman to central drought-ridden provinces of the country, provided that the environmental requirements are met, will not poses threats to the environment, Issa Kalantari, the Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

To provide the amount of water needed for the country, agriculture and industries, there is no choice but to use seawater, the incredible and abundant resources, now and in the future, Kalantari stated, IRNA reported on Monday.

He went on to say that Iran located in an arid and semi-arid area, is facing environmental problems including water shortage, sand and dust storms due to low precipitation amounts coupled with climate change.

"Renewable water resources have drastically decreased to less than 80 billion cubic meters from 132 billion cubic meters over the past 50 years, and 50 billion cubic meters water consumption rate have increased to 95 billion cubic meters," he lamented.

شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان مشکل زیست محیطی ندارد

رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست کشور گفت: شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان به استان های مختلف به شرط رعایت الزامات محیط زیستی، جانمایی مناسب در ساخت آب شیرین کن و رهاسازی سیس آب آن مشکل و مانع زیست محیطی ندارد و از نظر این سازمان بلامانع است.

عیسی کلانتری دوشنبه شب در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: برای تامین آب کشاورزی، آشامیدنی و صنایع کشور چاره ای جز استفاده از آب دریا نداریم و باید چه اکنون و چه آینده به این منابع بیکران و بسیار فراوان رجوع کنیم.

وی افزود: ایران کشور پر آبی نیست و سالهای سال با بحران بی آبی، خشکسالی و مسائل زیست محیطی، گرد و غبار و ریزگردها مواجه است.

معاون رئیس جمهوری تصریح کرد: ۱۳۰ میلیارد مترمکعب آب تجدید پذیر ایران در ۴۰ تا ۵۰ سال گذشته به کمتر از ۸۰ میلیارد و مصرف آب از ۵۰ میلیارد مترمکعب به بالای ۹۵ میلیارد مترمکعب رسیده است.

SOCIETY

JULY 28, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

Two killed as torrential rain engulfs southeastern Iran

TEHRAN – Very heavy rain which was unprecedented in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province over the past 60 years has left two dead.

Average rainfall of 26.5 millimeters was recorded on Tuesday in the desert city of Zahedan, the capital of Sistan-Baluchestan, equaling 30 percent of annual precipitation in the city, IRIB reported.

The highest volume of rainfall, tantamount to 65 millimeters, was registered in the city of Konarak.

On July 23, a devastating flood in the city of Estahban, southern Fars province, left 22 people dead.

Twenty percent of areas across Iran are highly prone to flooding, Khosro Shahbazi, former head of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization, said in January 2020.

According to statistics, the average rainfall in



the country in the last 50 years has been 270 mm, which has decreased by 230 mm, in other words, over the past 5 decades, the average rainfall has dropped by 40 mm.

According to the World Meteorological Organization's multiannual forecast, in the next five years, Iran's average rainfall will decline by 75 percent, and the temperature rises by 50-75 percent compared to the long-term average.

Scientific challenge: predicting earthquakes or avoiding them?

Part 2

For example, the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 (Northern California) caused significant damage in the San Francisco Bay area of California. Twelve hours after the event, the US Geological Survey (USGS) reportedly claimed to have "predicted" the earthquake in a report the previous year. Various other claims have been made about the prediction.

18 reports in 1990 claimed, "scientific predictions of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake were presented 'in retrospect'" (in this case the correct time and location predictions were made with such a wide window (e.g. covering a large part of California for five years) which had lost its predictive value. Predictions were also presented with a probability of only 30% in ten or twenty-year windows.

One of the discussed predictions used the M8 algorithm, which was originally proposed by the great scientist in this field, Vladimir Keilis-Borok, and his colleagues. Prominent Soviet scientist Kilis Borok - who immigrated to the USA after the collapse of the Soviet Union - received his doctorate in mathematical geophysics from the Academy of Sciences in Moscow in 1948.

He was the founder and director emeritus of the International Institute of Earthquake Prediction Theory and Mathematical Geophysics in Moscow. The forecast misrepresented both the magnitude (M 7.5) and the time (a five-year window from January 1, 1984, to December 31, 1988).

It then extended the time window to July 1, 1992, by including more of California and

half of Nevada, and reduced the location (forecast target) to Central California. The range of magnitudes remained the same, but the magnitudes they presented were M7.0 earthquakes in central California.

In two revisions to the same model, the five-year time window for one expired in July 1989, and thus missed the Loma Prieta event (could not predict). The second revision extended to 1990 and included Loma Prieta Earthquake.

When discussing the success or failure of the Loma Prieta 1989 earthquake prediction, some scientists argue that the earthquake did not occur on the San Andreas fault (the target of most predictions) and instead involved strike-slip motion (vertical) and of course the horizontal slip component, and therefore not predicted.

Other scientists argued that the Loma Prieta earthquake occurred in the San Andreas fault "zone" and released much of the accumulated strain from the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

Dr. Susan Hough, a well-known seismologist of the United States Geological Survey, believes that in this way the Loma Prieta earthquake was not actually predicted, but some predictions were made that were only partially successful.

Let's imagine a scenario where a long-term prediction is possible, and a situation where an accurate prediction is made today that a magnitude 7.4 earthquake will strike a hypothetical city. If we were 100% confident in our prediction, the city could be evacuated in advance, dangerous buildings demolished and emergency services ready.

To be contd.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JULY 27

New cases	10,526
New deaths	37
Total cases	7,359,489
Total deaths	141,795
New hospitalized patients	1,441
Patients in critical condition	1,101
Total recovered patients	7,075,919
Diagnostic tests conducted	53,103,026
Doses of vaccine injected	152,979,499

