

Report 

## Ankara: A Palestine sympathizer, Israeli companion!

TEHRAN — As Ankara and Tel Aviv moved on to normalize ties, pundits have looked at Turkey as a country that is trying to have its cake and eat it too.

The Israeli regime and Turkey declared full normalization of relations and the return of their ambassadors to Ankara and Tel Aviv on Wednesday.

The announcement brings a four-year diplomatic crisis between Turkey and the regime to an end.

According to the Israeli prime minister's office, the agreement was struck on Tuesday during a phone discussion between the directors general of the Israeli and Turkish foreign ministries.

The decision to restore full diplomatic representation was made mutually, with the Israeli regime's ambassador and consul general returning to Ankara and Istanbul and the Turkish envoy and consul general returning to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told a press conference in Ankara that Turkey will soon nominate an ambassador to Tel Aviv and that a joint economic summit will be hosted by Ankara and Tel Aviv in the coming weeks.

However, in an odd turn of events, he went on to say that Ankara will continue to back the Palestinians.

Cavusoglu said the decision will allow mostly Muslim, but prominently secular Turkey, to lobby for Palestinian interests in Gaza, the West Bank including Jerusalem.

The return of ambassadors "is important to improving bilateral ties," Cavusoglu said, adding, "As we have always said, we will continue to defend the rights of Palestinians."

This claim is in line with the claim of the Arab normalizers who said that after the normalization agreements, establishing relations with Tel Aviv would help the Palestinian cause and speed up the process of the two-state solution. Now, after two years, they were not even willing to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the Abraham Accords with Tel Aviv.

Yair Lapid, the Israeli regime's premier, spoke with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hours after the news broke out.

Erdogan, according to the Turkish presidency, favors the growth of cooperation and discussion between Turkey and Israel "on a sustainable basis and on the basis of mutual sensitivities." ▶ Page 2

## Iran defeat Argentina at Hubert Jerzy Wagner

TEHRAN — Iran wrapped up the Memorial of Hubert Jerzy Wagner with a 3-2 win over Argentina on Saturday.

The Iranian team won the match (25-21, 22-25, 19-25, 25-22, 15-13).

Iran had lost to Poland 3-0 and Serbia 3-2 in their previous matches.

The Memorial of Hubert Jerzy Wagner is a friendly tournament for the national teams, currently held every year and organized by the Hubert Wagner Foundation.

The first Memorial was held in 2003. The competition has been held every year since, except 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Iran participated in the four-team tournament as part of preparation for the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship.

Team Melli has been drawn along with Argentina, Egypt and the Netherlands in Pool F. Iran will play Argentina on Aug. 27.

Behrouz Ataei's men will also play Egypt and the Netherlands on Aug. 29 and 31 respectively.

# Israel in a Hole of its Own Making



© Getty Images

TEHRAN — There is a Persian proverb that says, "Why on earth a wise man does a thing that would lead to contrition." This seems to be perfectly applicable to Israel these days with respect to its onetime fierce opposition to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

In 2018, while the whole world was warn-

ing of the consequences of scuppering the nuclear deal, formally called the JCPOA, then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided to buck the trend and nudge then-U.S. President Donald Trump into quitting the JCPOA. That decision has now backfired on Israel, according to Israeli media.

The official Israeli television channel, Kan, reported that Israeli security leaders have privately expressed their regret over the pressure exerted by Tel Aviv over Trump to abandon the JCPOA in 2018, according to Al Araby Al Jadeed. ▶ Page 3

## IRGC chief: Iran is a pillar for Palestine to rely on

TEHRAN — In an interview with the khamenei.ir website published on Saturday, Major General Hossein Salami, the IRGC commander-in-chief, says the Palestinians have long found out that Iran is their real friend.

On the response of the letter of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to Ziyad Nakhalah, the Pal-

estinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) chief, Hossein Salami said, "Palestinians have found out who their real friends are. True friends are those who stand by their side in difficult situations. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said that we are with you until the end. For Palestine, this is a pillar they can rely on and a huge source of power. The Leader of

the Islamic Revolution is in control of the realities because of the very unique experiences he has in these difficult fields."

He then said that the Leader has a deep view on events and consequences and the behind-the-scenes of these events, that is, in terms of the depth of reflections and echoes of an issue and its effects. ▶ Page 2



**Maryam Kamyab wins Iran's best sports photo of the year**  
TEHRAN — Maryam Kamyab won the Best Single Photo in the Sports Section at the Sixth Iran Press Photo Awards on Friday.

Kamyab, who works for the Mehr News Agency, received her award during a special ceremony held at the Iranian Artists Forum.

"Despite all limitations being imposed on female photographers in the country's sports events, as a female photographer, I'm really glad to receive this award," Kamyab said after accepting her award.

## Ancient Siraf to reinforce physical protection

TEHRAN—Cultural heritage authorities in Siraf seek to enhance physical protection for the significant ancient port town, which is situated in Iran's Busher province.

"Siraf is one of the rare ports in the world, where marine and seafaring activities have been practiced there since the ancient times, and due to the importance of the issue, physical protection of Siraf is to be enhanced," CHTN quoted a local tourism official as saying on Friday.

The project will be commenced by installing

fences around historical monuments such as the Jameh Mosque of Siraf, its traditional bazaar, mansions, and its centuries-old customs house, the official explained.

The official said one of their purposes is to control illegal excavations around ancient sites and monuments.

"In addition, we are set to boost physical protection by strengthening field patrols to prevent possible diggings [by unauthorized excavators]," the official said.

"Moreover, many landscaping and restoration projects have been carried out here since last year."

Earlier in April, the tourism chief of Bushehr announced Siraf had considerable potential to become a UNESCO World Heritage. "The ancient port of Siraf can be registered on the World Heritage list due to its numerous historical monuments and originality of maritime trade with other ports of the world," Esmaeil Sajjadimanesh said. ▶ Page 6

From Inside 

- Cooperation with Israel will put security at stake, IRGC Navy chief warns **P2**
- Interior minister calls for resolution of sporadic border clashes in Iran-Afghanistan border **P2**
- Raisi administration reined in Western excessive demands: **MP P3**
- Israel regretful over role in collapse of JCPOA: report **P3**
- Iran 95% self-sufficient in dam construction: expert **P4**
- 1st phase of Esfandiar oil field development project to begin soon **P4**
- 'Stable regulations must be prepared to use cryptocurrencies for imports' **P4**
- Archaeologists excavate castle shedding light on ancient architecture in Ojan **P6**
- Morocco volleyball coach advises sightseers to test Iranian cuisine **P6**
- Next waves of COVID on the cards **P7**
- Indigenized technology needed for energy efficiency: **VP P7**
- World sales companies line up for Iranian film "Zalava" **P8**
- Iranian artist Mani Mehrzad wins Chairman's Award at Art Revolution Taipei **P8**

Interview 

## 'Iran can use Indonesia as a hub for marketing its products in ASEAN countries'

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- Indonesian Ambassador to Tehran Ronny Prasetyo Yuliantoro says Iran can use Indonesia as a hub for marketing its products in the ASEAN countries.

The envoy made the remarks in an interview conducted by the Tehran Times on the sidelines of a ceremony to celebrate ASEAN Day 2022 in Tehran on Tuesday.

"I think we [ASEAN member states and Iran] have some great potential that can be developed, for instant now with regard to the health field we can have some kind of cooperation, you know this is a time that we can increase cooperation in health sector", he stated.

"So, this is a good time and then I believe that here is some potential that can be still developed between ASEAN countries and Iran", the ambassador reiterated.

Speaking about trade and economic ties between his country and Iran, the official said, "Of course there is a lot of potential between Indonesia and Iran especially in the economic relation now we increase our cooperation in health sector."

And asked about the problems in the way of bilateral trade, he replied, "Of course the challenge is how to deal with the payment system between the two countries; we have to look for the way that can solve the problem of payment in the future." ▶ Page 4

## Split Film Festival to screen "The Locust", "Killing the Eunuch Khan", "Identibye"

TEHRAN — Iranian movies "The Locust", "Killing the Eunuch Khan" and "Identibye" will be competing in the Split Film Festival in Croatia.

Directed by Faezeh Azizkhani, "The Locust" will be screened in the official competition of the festival, which will take place in Split, the second-largest city of Croatia, from September 1 to 9.

The film is about Hanieh, who abandons the hope of directing her semi-autobiographical screenplay and sells it to her well-connected best friend to direct instead. The latter keeps Hanieh around to advise in script meetings and cast rehearsals, but as the production wears on, it becomes painfully clear that neither the new director nor her highly critical crew have any respect for our protagonist's original vision.

"Killing the Eunuch Khan" by Abed Abest has been selected to be screened in the Frame Extended section. ▶ Page 8

Report 

## Govt. adopts measures to support women

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — During the past year, the government sought to improve the status of women by implementing important projects.

The most important goals and executive programs of the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs include lifestyle reform, promoting hijab and chastity, promoting childbearing and population growth, employment and support for female heads of households, and dealing with social harm, especially the harm of divorce.

Of course, the formation of a loan guarantee fund for women heads of households, launching an empowerment plan for women breadwinners, improving the structure and position of women in provinces, carrying out women's sustainable business plans, boosting women's employment, ▶ Page 7

## Interior minister calls for resolution of sporadic border clashes in Iran-Afghanistan border



TEHRAN— Iran's interior minister believes that sporadic border clashes with the Taliban border guards are due to their unawareness of the demarcation of Iran-Afghanistan borders, stressing that the matter should be resolved through dialogue.

Speaking in a presser on Saturday, Ahmad Vahidi said, "So far, we have had five to six shootings by the Taliban border guards, which is due to the lack of awareness by the Taliban border guards, and each time it has been resolved by contacting Kabul and has not turned serious."

He then noted that it is necessary to resolve these issues peacefully and through negotiating with the people stationed at the borders and the Taliban forces.

"We are also trying to avoid sensitivity at the borders and we hope that the matter will be managed and controlled," Vahidi stated.

Regarding the conflicts with the Taliban border guards and the possibility of blocking the border, the interior minister ruled out such a possibility, saying, "This issue is not on the agenda."

On August 1, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, the Iranian special envoy for Afghanistan, said that a meeting was held with the Taliban defense officials in the wake of the recent border clashes during which it

was agreed to form a joint committee to prevent the recurrence of border clashes.

Following a border clash in the Hirmand region, a meeting was held on July 31 between the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Ministry of Defense of the Taliban government.

"The Ministry of Defense of the Taliban government, in contact with the border guard forces in Afghanistan, instructed them to avoid clashes, and included on the agenda the formation of a joint committee to avoid the repetition of such practices," Kazemi Qomi stated.

On July 31 evening, a border clash in the Hirmand border area took place between Iran and Afghanistan, according to press reports.

In this regard, the local governor of the Hirmand district said, "A clash took place between the Iranian border guards and the border guards of the Taliban authority in the Shalak area of the Hirmand district."

He indicated that the Taliban forces crossed the borders and the Iranian border guards responded as necessary, and then the Taliban responded, but there were no casualties, according to Al Alam.

A security official in Nimroz province told Fars that the Taliban forces were patrolling in an area close to the border with Iran, and they clashed with the border guards of the opposite side, and the two sides exchanged fire.

"In this clash, a member of the Taliban was killed and another wounded, and some residential areas were damaged," he added.

As for the reason for the clash, the security source explained that the Iranian border guards announced that the area in which the Taliban carried out their patrol is part of Iran's territory, and the Taliban forces had no right to enter it.

## Ankara: A Palestine sympathizer, Israeli companion!

From page 1 ► Over the last decade, Israeli-Turkish relations have been strained, most recently in 2018 when the U.S. relocated its embassy to Jerusalem and Turkey removed the Israeli ambassador from Ankara.

Erdogan began direct interaction with the regime with a congratulatory phone call after the regime's President Isaac Herzog was inaugurated in July 2021. They've spoken on the phone multiple times, and Herzog recently met Erdogan in Ankara. Cavusoglu paid his first visit to Tel Aviv as Turkish foreign minister in 15 years in May.

Relations between Turkey and the Zionist regime have been fraught since the Mavi Marmara ship tragedy 12 years ago, when Tel Aviv assaulted the naval fleet transporting humanitarian aid for Gazans under the name of the Freedom Fleet and killed ten crew members.

Erdogan's policy of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds has long been criticized by political pundits. Case in point is his separate meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Erdogan saw the Ukraine crisis as an opportunity to act on a global scale and bring himself closer to the West. As a result, efforts to promote talks between Moscow and Kyiv, the transfer of grain ships from Ukrainian ports, the dispatch of drones to Kyiv, and the criticism of Russia's actions and stances have been put on his agenda for months. Ankara's move to



normalize relations with Tel Aviv came as a surprise to several analysts.

While discussing the ongoing battle with Russia with Zelensky and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, Erdogan settled this matter with the Israeli regime. Some observers believe that this situation was staged and that Erdogan was attempting to demonstrate his capacity to manage multiple major events at the same time in a short period of time. This was not management in the dimensions of expertise. Rather, it was deemed unacceptable to close an important case at an inconvenient moment.

Given that Turkey never truly severed links with the Israeli regime, either on a security or economic level, Ankara's choice to normalize relations with the regime can be interpreted as implying that Turkey never had deep-seated issues with the Israeli regime. Erdogan's demonstration of support for Palestine and Palestinians is mainly a media ruse to present himself as a good guy.

## Iran commends Kenya for holding successful presidential election

TEHRAN- Nasser Kanaani, the spokesperson for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, has congratulated Kenya's people and government on conducting a successful presidential election.

Kanaani commended the role played by the government, parties, politicians, tribal elders, and religious leaders in holding and conducting the elections, describing it as an example and a successful experience in the area and throughout Africa.

William Ruto, Kenya's deputy president, was

declared the winner of the election on August 15. He narrowly beat his rival, Raila Odinga, taking 50.5% of the vote, according to the official results.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman congratulated Kenya's president-elect and expressed hope that the political process and the establishment of a government will follow the direction of the people.

This was the first time Ruto, 55, had run for president. He has served as deputy president for 10 years.

# IRGC chief: Iran is a pillar for Palestine to rely on

From page 1 ► "If you pay attention to the message, it is full of hope and belief in God's blessings for the Palestinians. It is full of advice for unity and empathy among all Palestinian movements, and an unbreakable hope for the future. This light of hope sprouts in the hearts of Palestinians and prepares them for a better future," he added.

Salami described the message as "very gratifying and moving," saying it was a "conceptual, epic and important religious message, to extend to a divine movement and spread the spirit of resistance."

### Palestinian movements have matured through continuity

Elsewhere in the interview, Salami said that with the passage of time, the Palestinian movements have become considerably mature and continued resilience.

"The struggle is changing from an intermittent to a continuous movement, this is the first characteristic. In the past, you witnessed conflicts and battles with long time intervals, and you did not see that continuity in today's struggle. For example, every few years, conflicts were in limited places, at limited times, with limited intensities and limited goals. Over time, the dimensions of the struggle grew, and the Palestinian talent for continuous struggle flourished," he noted.

The IRGC chief went on to say that since the beginning of Ramadan the flames of resistance that were kindled in the occupied territories have never been extinguished.

"You constantly observe that these struggles continue in all Palestinian territories. From the beginning of April until now, many Zionists have been killed in the operations of the resistance groups inside the occupied territories, which cannot be compared to last year - except for the Sword of Quds operation."

Continuation of Jihad is very important, Salami said, noting that the continuity is important due to the fact that the persistence of resistance strengthens the structure and spirit of resistance and develops technical tools, weapons, equipment, techniques, tactics and training.

"Therefore, the Palestinians face an unstoppable path of qualitative growth in the struggle," the IRGC commander-in-chief said.

Salami then moved on to the next point, which is variety and broadness of the struggle in the occupied territories.

Now it is not only Gaza which is involved in the field of resistance and struggle, but this struggle has also been transferred to the West Bank, he pointed out.



"You hear the names of Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Sheikh Jarrah, etc. a lot. These are the main cities of the West Bank. There is no geographical connection between the West Bank and Gaza, they are like two separate islands, surrounded by the Zionist regime, and there, too, there are concrete walls with a height of, for example, six meters, with wide thicknesses and extremely modern and advanced electronic and optical sensors. They even control the vibrations inside the ground to discover if a tunnel is dug somewhere. All advanced and modern tools from drones and night vision cameras to vibration meters which have been used in the small geographical environment of the occupied Palestine, so that there is no connection from the outside environment with the environment inside occupied Palestine," he explained.

Despite all these limitations, Salami pointed out, hundreds of rockets and missiles are now fired by resistance groups for a small operation.

"It is very difficult to understand the meaning of how the Palestinian struggle managed to equip itself with a large number of rockets despite all these seemingly impenetrable security fences," the IRGC chief underlined.

### Palestinians have gained the ability to generate power from inside

Elsewhere in the interview, Salami referred to the difference between the "stone intifada" and today's intifada, saying, "The Palestinians fought with stones, which they called the Intifada. What was the meaning of that intifada? The stone revolution. They fought with stone. How did the Palestinians gain today's power under the siege and under very complex and extensive security measures? Those who are familiar with the security arrangements of the Zionist regime to control the borders know that the Zionist regime in its own security logic, has

made the borders impenetrable. Yet, despite this isolation and extremely complicated siege, weapons are manufactured and distributed in the occupied Palestine. This power sprouted in the Palestinian territories. That is, this power is not transmitted from outside, they have gained the ability to generate power from within. Building such a power in such a geographical space is really one of the miracles of the Palestinian resistance. This power does not fade once it becomes an inside strength."

He then went on to exemplify the escape of six Palestinian prisoners from the Israeli regime's prisons in 2021, which caused a huge embarrassment for the regime. "Last year, you saw the escape of six Palestinians from the prison of the Zionist regime, who I think were mainly from the brothers of (the Palestinian) Islamic Jihad. Being able to break out of the prisons of the Zionist regime and escaping from these prisons means challenging all the security measures of the Zionist regime. It is true that these people were arrested later, but the very process of escaping from that prison under those conditions shows that the Palestinians can do whatever they want."

**"Building such a power in such a geographical space is really one of the miracles of the Palestinian resistance."**

### Dividing Hamas and Islamic Jihad was a Zionist conspiracy

On a claim by the Israelis that they have successfully created a division between Hamas and the PIJ, Salami said that this was a "Zionist conspiracy."

"The strategy was for the Zionists to act selectively against one group this time. That is, to target one group alone and announce that we have nothing to do with the rest of the resistance movements so that they stop too, and then when they are done with one group, they go to the next movement. This means dividing Palestine into separate resistance units so that the resistance cannot act in a united front," the IRGC chief explained.

He then noted that the initiative that the PIJ took was that it called this operation the "Unity of the Fields," which means everyone was the same.

"The reason why only the Islamic Jihad fought this round of wars was because the dimensions of that battle were such that it did not require to involve resistance units other than itself," he stated.

According to the IRGC top commander, the PIJ was in the field and the rest of the resistance movements provided spiritual support.

"If the battle were to develop, all the Palestinian factions would certainly enter the field, but since the Islamic Jihad was able to win this struggle alone, there was no need for others to enter. It was very important that Israel was defeated this time by a group inside Palestine. Hamas and other Palestinian groups, as well as the people were ready, but the battle in this area ended with the Islamic Jihad's tactics and operations," he added.

Salami said he was of the opinion that the resistance's strategy was to "suffocate" the Zionist regime with its own strategy.

"This means to prove to them that they don't even have the ability to continue fighting against a resistance group. If the Israelis could, they would have continued this battle. A person who feels superior does not end the war at the height of his superiority and does not look for a mediator. All the Palestinians were ready to enter the battle, but their plan was not to expand the level of conflict. The strategy that won was the strategy of the Palestinians to force the enemy to accept the conditions in a short time in a limited battle. What achievement can the Zionist regime claim now? The Zionist policy failed. The regime's inability to create divisions in Palestine was a failure," he underscored.

### I discussed disturbance within the Zionist regime with Nakhalah

In another part of the interview, Salami said in his discussion with Nakhalah, he analyzed the power of the Zionists and the decline of their power in comparison to the past.

"A disturbance in the regime has been created. These dear friends (Nakhalah and PIJ members) have reached the same conclusion. That is why they stood firm in this war. This issue was very prominent in the minds of our friends. It is a strong belief that Israel is on the decline and the decline of its power has accelerated over time," he noted.

In conclusion, Salami said that the Palestinians believe that they can become the owners of their land in the near future.

## Cooperation with Israel will put security at stake, IRGC Navy chief warns

TEHRAN- Any collaboration with the Israeli regime, according to the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy, endangers and disturbs stability in the Persian Gulf region.

Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri stressed the value of security in Iran and its neighbors while addressing a gathering of IRGC commanders and officials on Friday. He also cautioned against allowing Israel and its Western supporters to establish a foothold in the region.

"We warn any country that prepares the ground for intervention and presence of arrogant powers in the region and gives them a base, space and soil to form a military coalition against regional nations. Firstly, they will pay the heaviest price for their unfriendly and provocative behavior; and secondly, the stable and secure situation of the region will pay a price for that," the IRGC commander cautioned.

On the basis of the Islamic unity concept, he said, Iran enjoys friendly ties with its neighbors in the Persian Gulf region. He also stated that the Islamic Republic seeks to increase long-term security among all the nations in the area.



The rear admiral said "the child-killing Zionist regime" has always brought "sabotage," "robbery," and "hostility" everywhere it has been.

"We are very sensitive to any enemy's threat and sedition and we do not hesitate for a moment to respond decisively to the enemies in a way that will make them regretful," he continued.

The commander added that protecting the Iranian nation's dignity and the country's territorial integrity and independence is the IRGC Navy's red line.

Tangsiri also praised the IRGC naval forces' strong fighting prowess and stated that they are prepared to undertake any assignment to secure and protect Iran's interests and people.

The senior IRGC commander's comments came

as Turkey and Israel declared on Wednesday that they had resolved to fully restore diplomatic ties and reappoint ambassadors. This announcement marked the conclusion of frantic efforts by the two sides to mend bilateral relations after years of animosity.

At a news conference, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told reporters that the action would represent what he called a milestone in attempts to improve relations between his nation and the Tel Aviv regime.

The Islamic Republic has consistently advised Persian Gulf states to stop depending on outside forces for their security and that the best way to ensure regional security is via cooperation among neighbors.

In July, Tangsiri issued a statement asserting that the countries in the area are capable of maintaining security. He warned that any Israeli regime's presence in the Persian Gulf region will only foment unrest.

"We believe that the Zionist regime gaining a foothold in the Persian Gulf region will have no result other than sowing sedition and creating insecurity," he underscored.

# Israel in a hole of its own making

From Page 1 ▶ That contrition, the report said, sprang from a belief that both Iran and the great powers are returning to the same agreement at a time when Iran has achieved great progress in its nuclear program, especially in the field of uranium enrichment, which could have been averted were it not for the Trump withdrawal from the nuclear pact.

Internal opposition to Israel's anti-JCPOA policies is nothing new. Israeli intelligence and security officials have long called for a return to the JCPOA. In February of 2021, a group of former security and intelligence officials sent a letter to Netanyahu expressing support for a U.S. return to the JCPOA.

The letter said it "welcomes the American initiative to get Iran to again transparently follow the guidelines in the JCPOA, as long as it includes an Iranian commitment to abide by UN Security Council



Resolution 2231."

Later that year, other former officials renewed their support for a revival of the JCPOA. And in early 2022, even incumbent intelligence officials started discovering the benefits of a deal with Iran. The head of the Israeli military intelligence told ministers during a Security Cabinet meeting

in January 2022 that Israel will be better off if the Iran nuclear talks lead to a deal rather than collapsing without one.

But all these opposition voices had one thing in common: they were from a camp of officials who were skeptical about Trump's jettisoning of the JCPOA.

That is what makes them different from the current voices who seem to have first supported Trump's withdrawal and then came to believe that that decision was a mistake.

Israel rushed to dismantle the JCPOA believing that Iran was unable to respond in a way that would make the Iran hawks regret their opposition to the JCPOA. In 2019, Iran proceeded in a measured way and gradually reduced its nuclear commitments all while leaving the door open for the West to make up for its mistake.

Since April 2021, Iran and its negotiating partners have started negotiations in Vienna to restore the JCPOA. Whether these negotiations would lead to an agreement remain to be seen. But Israel seems to be already concerned about whatever comes out of Vienna. And that is the result of not being wise.

## Raisi administration reined in Western excessive demands: MP

TEHRAN – An Iranian lawmaker has praised the Raisi administration's policy toward the nuclear talks with the West, saying that the administration succeeded in containing the West's excessive demands.

Qudratullah Hamzeh Shalamzari said, "The 13th government had favorable and acceptable activities in the field of foreign policy to remove the sanctions and seriously defended the rights of the people."

He added, "In the previous government, European and American countries usually put forward proposals in the field of nuclear negotiations, and Iran's negotiating team responded to them by examining them. But with the formation of the 13th government, this procedure changed, and Iran presents its proposals and plans, and the Western side must respond."

The lawmaker made the remarks in an interview with Iran's state news agency IRNA.

Stating that the Raisi government defended the interests of the Iranian nation with intelligence and authority at the negotiation table to lift the sanctions, Hamzeh Shalamzari said, "From the beginning, the priority of the government has been to preserve the dignity and authority of the country, and with seriousness in economic diplomacy and relations with the world and the region, it has brought changes in favor of Iran at the regional and global level."

He continued, "The 13th government modified the conventional procedures of the previous government based on the bitter experience of the people to the JCPOA, and curbed the excessive demands of the West by drawing up a policy of complete removal of sanctions."

He noted, "Respecting the red lines, protecting the interests of the people and protecting the absolute rights of the people brought honor and authority to Islamic Iran."

The lawmaker continued, "The Islamic Republic has never left the negotiation table, it was the Westerners who created a crisis in the negotiations by issuing a resolution in the

Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Now it seems that we are close to an agreement."

He added, "The negotiating team moved within the framework of the general policies of the establishment, and the important recommendations of the Leader of the Revolution were also considered by them, and they left an acceptable track record."

Referring to the parliamentary strategic ratification to annul sanctions, he said, "Passing this law facilitated the work of the negotiators and provided good support to the negotiating team. This law armed the negotiation team against the enemy. The actions and coordination of the government and the Majlis (Parliament) made the negotiating team come to the negotiating table with more strength in this round of talks."

After intensive meetings and consultations, Iran finally submitted its response to the text the European Union submitted to Iran and called it a "final" draft.

The Iranian answer to the EU draft came amid Iranian calls for the U.S. to show flexibility. The Iranian foreign minister has said that Iran showed much flexibility and America knows that full well. "America knows very well how much flexibility we have shown, now it is the turn of the American side to be flexible. In the recent Vienna negotiations, the American side expressed its verbal flexibility on two issues. This should be in writing. In the third issue and guarantees, we must have America's flexibility. If America shows flexibility, we will reach a point of agreement in the coming days," he stated.

After submitting the response, Iran continued its internal consultations. The Supreme National Security Council hosted a meeting of the members of Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee on Tuesday. Ali Shamkhani, Amir Abdollahian, and Ali Bagheri Kani attended the meeting. And on Wednesday, a closed session of Parliament was held with the same officials to discuss the situation around the talks in Vienna over reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive



Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Abbas Moqtadaei, who is a member of Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, has provided some details about the Iranian response to the text submitted by the European Union on reviving the 2015 nuclear deal.

Moqtadaei confirmed this point after MPs sitting on the Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee held a three-hour meeting on Tuesday with SNSC Secretary Ali Shamkhani, Amir Abdollahian, Bagheri Kani and chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI).

"The meeting was attended by the secretary of the (Supreme) National Security Council, and it was of great importance, because in the meeting held today (Tuesday), we studied Iranian views and visions, and a view was formed in order for the Council to be informed of the latest developments in this matter," the lawmaker said in an interview with Al Alam.

Moqtadaei stressed that the Parliament approved the strategic law on the rights of the Iranian people, and as it is known, it was America that withdrew from the nuclear agreement.

He noted that Iran had presented its response to the other side and stressed that its rights and guarantees should be taken into account.

Moqtadaei noted that it was premature to talk about the details of the Iranian response that was submitted to the European Union.

"In our response, we emphasized that the opposing party must meet Iran's demands and the rights of the Iranian people," he said.

and guarantees, we must have America's flexibility. If America shows flexibility, we will reach a point of agreement in the coming days," he said.

In a phone conversation with his Omani counterpart on Thursday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated that if Iran's red lines are upheld, a new phase will begin in Vienna, the venue for the talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal.

The chief Iranian diplomat highlighted that no side can definitively discuss reaching a good and permanent agreement on the resurrection of the 2015 nuclear deal in Vienna until all concerns have been resolved.

He also praised Oman's positive contribution to the Vienna negotiations on the renewal of the historic nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the lifting of sanctions on Tehran.

## Israel regretful over role in collapse of JCPOA: report

TEHRAN – Israel has reportedly expressed contrition over its role in encouraging the Trump administration to quit the 2015 Iran nuclear in 2018.

Israeli security leaders expressed their regret over the pressure exerted by Tel Aviv on former U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018 to withdraw from the nuclear agreement between Iran and the major powers in 2015, a withdrawal that led to the virtual collapse of the agreement, according to an Al Araby Al Jadeed report.

The official Israeli television channel, Kan, stated that the security leaders expressed this position because both Iran and the great powers are now heading to the same agreement, but after Tehran made a great development in its nuclear program, especially in the field of uranium enrichment, which could have been avoided were it not for the withdrawal of the U.S. from the agreement.

In a report broadcast on Friday

night, the channel indicated that the Israeli security leaders expressed this feeling during a recent consultative meeting, in which Prime Minister Yair Lapid participated. The channel pointed out that former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made the issue of the United States' withdrawal from the nuclear agreement an essential issue in the election campaign, and touted it as an achievement.

The channel noted that Israel has intensified its pressure on the administration of President Joe Biden to take into account its demands in any agreement reached with Iran, especially the preservation of the investigation files against Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency. It also said that Israel intensified its pressure that the new agreement would allow prolonging inspections of Tehran's nuclear institutions, and not allow the Iranian Islamic Revolution

Guards to be removed from the U.S. list of terrorist organizations.

The channel added that the Israeli National Security Adviser, Eyal Hulata, went to Washington to make contacts with his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan, about the conditions that Tel Aviv believes that any agreement with Tehran must adhere to.

Iran has submitted its response to the text the European Union submitted to Tehran and called it a "final" draft.

The Iranian answer to the EU draft came amid Iranian calls for the U.S. to show flexibility. The Iranian foreign minister has said that Iran showed much flexibility and America knows that full well. "America knows very well how much flexibility we have shown, now it is the turn of the American side to be flexible. In the recent Vienna negotiations, the American side expressed its verbal flexibility on two issues. This should be in writing. In the third issue

## SPORTS

### Iran into Asian U18 Volleyball Championship semis

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Thailand 3-1 (24-26, 25-13, 25-19, 25-15) in the preliminary round of the 14th Asian Men's U18 Volleyball Championship at the Iran's Volleyball Federation Hall on Saturday.

Iran's Mohammadreza Alejalil topscored the match with 24 points and Samphan Leklai earned 11 points for Thailand.

Iran secured their place in the next year's FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship.

Earlier in the day, Japan, South Korea and India had booked their place in the semifinals.

Iran are scheduled to meet India on Sunday, while Japan play South Korea.

The 2022 Asian Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship is the 14th edition of the Asian Boys' U18 Volleyball Championship held in Azadi Volleyball Hall, official known as Volleyball Federation Hall, Tehran, Iran from 15 to 22 August. The top four teams of the tournament qualify for the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship as the AVC representatives.

### Bam Khatoon, Sogdiana-W share spoils in AFC Women's Club Championship

TEHRAN – Bam Khatoon football club from Iran came back from a goal down to force a 1-1 draw with Sogdiana-W in the AFC Women's Club Championship 2022 West on Saturday.

Khabibullaeva Diyorakhon opened the scoring for Uzbekistan's Sogdiana-W, but Zahra Ghanbari's header in the second ensured Iran's Bam Khatoon go into the reverse fixture on Tuesday on level terms.

Bam Khatoon were quick to assert their dominance, with Zahra Sarbali having the first glimpse on goal within the opening 30 seconds after collecting a wonderful through pass into the area, only for an alert goalkeeper Gulmova Kumushoy to smother the effort.

Sogdiana-W, however, shook off their early jitters and began finding chances of their own through crosses from the flanks, with Diyorakhon's 19th minute run leading to the deadlock being broken.

Diyorakhon surged deep into the box on a counter-attack, and her effort to pull back for Ergasheva Dildora saw the ball deflecting off defender Kousar Kamali's legs and into the back of the net.

The Iranian champions struggled with Sogdiana-W's pressure, as the Uzbek club dominated proceedings to maintain their lead heading into the break, the-afc.com reported.

Bam Khatoon, however, came out fighting in the second half and drew level in the 59th minute with a diving Ghanbar heading home Sarbali's curling cross.

Sogdiana-W should have restored their lead in the 71st minute after Dadaboeva Kholida let loose a crackling strike which goalkeeper Zahra Khajavi could only parry but Diyorakhon failed to convert the loose-ball.

Sogdiana-W continued to have the lion's share of possession, but were unable to translate it into a second goal as Bam Khatoon defended in numbers to secure the draw.

### Yazdani, Taylor likely to wrestle in 2022 World C'ships final

TEHRAN – World and Olympic champions Hassan Yazdani of Iran and David Taylor from the US will likely wrestle at the 86kg weight class of the 2022 World Championships.

The competition will be held on September 15-16 in Belgrade, Serbia.

The top eight wrestlers will be seeded at the world championships based on points accumulated at rankings events since the Tokyo Olympics. Of all the weights, the seeds at 86kg are the truest in representing the weight's top wrestlers.

Since 2017, every world or Olympic gold medal at 86kg was won by either Hassan Yazdani or David Taylor, flowrestling.org reported.

Yazdani won world titles in 2017, 2019, and 2021 while Taylor won world gold in 2018 and Olympic gold in 2021. Yazdani and Taylor's rivalry might be the greatest in all of wrestling right now and they will likely lock horns in this year's world finals.

Taylor owned the first three matches against Yazdani winning at the 2017 world cup, 2018 world championships, and Tokyo Olympics. While Taylor came out on top each time, every match was a back-and-forth battle with one or two exchanges being the difference in the outcome.

In fact, in all three of Taylor's wins, Yazdani had built a lead in the first period before Taylor was able to chase him down in the second period. Most of their matches have been a "tale of 2 periods" with Yazdani outscoring Taylor by a combined 12-4 in the first period, but Taylor outscoring Yazdani by a combined 21-6 in the second period. Taylor clearly used his pace to wear Yazdani down to get the win in the first 3 matches.

### Sepahan to re-sign Payam Niazmand

TEHRAN – Sepahan football club have reached an agreement with Portimonense goalkeeper Payam Niazmand.

The 27-year-old keeper will pen a one-year dela with the Iranian club.

Niazmand joined the Portuguese side from Sepahan in last year's July on a three-year contract.

The Iranian international goalie has returned to his former club due to lack of playing time in Portimonense.

Sepahan, headed by Jose Morais, are favorites to win Iran league title after seven years.

### Mitja Gasparini on verge of joining Foolad Sirjan

TEHRAN – Iranian volleyball club have reportedly reached an agreement with Slovenian opposite spiker Mitja Gasparini.

Gasparini, 38, currently plays in Slovenian club Calcit Volley.

The Slovenian player started his playing career in his homeland club ACH Volley and has also played in Iraklis Thessaloniki, BluVolley Verona, Incheon Korean Air Jumbos and Wolf Dogs Nagoya.

Foolad Sirjan will play in Iran Professional Volleyball League.

### Lackluster Persepolis held by Foolad: IPL

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team were held to a goalless draw against Foolad in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Friday.

The Reds hosted Foolad in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Persepolis produced a poor performance in the match against Foolad in front of some 60,000 fans.

It was second goalless draw for Persepolis after they shared the spoils against Zob Ahan in the first week of IPL.

Tractor drew 1-1 with Zob Ahan in Tabriz, Mes Kerman defeated Paykan 3-0, Havadar finished in a 1-1 draw against Naft Masjed Soleyman, and Sanat Naft lost to Aluminum 1-0.

On Thursday, Esteghlal battled back to win 3-1 against Malavan, Sepahan defeated Nassaji 2-1 and Mes Rafsanjan were held to a goalless draw against Gol Gohar.

## 'Iran can use Indonesia as a hub for marketing its products in ASEAN countries'



From page 1 ▶ ASEAN Day 2022 was celebrated at the place of Royal Thai Embassy in Tehran on Tuesday, attended by ambassadors of some of the member countries in Iran as well as some Iranian officials, and also officials from other countries, including Russian and Indian ambassadors in Tehran.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a political and economic union of 10 member states in Southeast

Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic, political, security, military, educational, and sociocultural integration between its members and countries in the Asia-Pacific.

The association was established on August 8, 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand.

As set out in the Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN are to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in the region, to promote regional peace, collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest, to provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities, to collaborate for better utilization of agriculture and industry to raise the living standards of the people, to promote Southeast Asian studies and to maintain close, beneficial cooperation with existing international organizations with similar aims and purposes.

## 21 Iranian companies to showcase products at Russian auto exhibit

TEHRAN - Representatives of 21 Iranian companies are going to showcase over 99 automobile parts and equipment at MIMS Automobility Moscow 2022 which is due to be held during August 22-25, an official with the state-run Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) announced.

According to Amir-Abbas Farnoudi, since the Russian auto industry has been sanctioned by the west, this exhibition is a great opportunity for Iranian auto parts manufacturers to introduce their capacities and capabilities to the Russian market, IRIB reported.

He noted that the main goal of attending the mentioned exhibition is to form long-term cooperation with Russian car and auto parts manufacturers and added: "companies were selected to participate in this exhibition that have the necessary technology for producing auto parts or to offer up-to-date technical engineering services so that they can operate

directly in the Russian market."

According to Farnoudi, IKCO has also showcased one of the latest automobiles manufactured by the company called Tara in this exhibition in order to test the taste of Russian consumers.

"Iran Khodro's goal to re-enter the Russian market is completely strategic and planned," he said.

"Russia is the fifth largest car consumption market in the world and is one of the most attractive markets, with complexity and intense competition in the region, for this reason, for the last two years, studies, planning, and negotiations have been carried out for Iran Khodro to re-enter this market. And we are in the process of reaching good agreements, which will be announced as soon as the results are obtained," the official added.

MIMS Automobility Moscow 2022 is an international trade fair for automotive production, aftermarket, and service industry.

## 'Stable regulations must be prepared to use cryptocurrencies for imports'

TEHRAN - Head of Iran's Importers Group and Representatives of Foreign Companies (Import Association) Alireza Managhebi said on Saturday that stable regulations and infrastructure should be prepared to be able to successfully use cryptocurrencies for imports, Tasnim news agency reported.

Stating that the use of cryptocurrencies for imports can be useful if the right structure is created and used, Managhebi said: "Our concern is that this new trend could lead to the creation of rent for a certain group."

"The question is, has the government developed consistent regulations for the cryptocurrency use so that they will not change within two months and the businessmen active in this field will not be harmed?" he said.

Mentioning the beginning of the official use of cryptocurrencies for imports as of late September,



the official said the claim that this measure would immediately end the dollar dominance in Iranian market is not very accurate because the dollar has its own place and cryptocurrencies also have their own place in the market.

"It is necessary to train people for using this new technology in the country and have stable laws in this regard," the official added.

## TEDPIX drops 12,500 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 12,592 points to 1.438 million on Saturday.

Over 6.251 billion securities worth 32.429 trillion rials (about \$115.817 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index lost 10,406 points, and the second market's index dropped 21,805 points.

TEDPIX rose 20,931 points (0.2 percent) in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported, 40.58 billion securities worth

228.555 trillion rials (about \$816.267 million) were traded through 1.874 deals at the TSE in the past week.

The number and value of traded securities rose 30 percent and 34 percent, respectively, while the number of deals increased 114 percent in the past week from the preceding week.

TSE is one of 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).

# Iran 95% self-sufficient in dam construction: expert



TEHRAN - Former Head of Iran's Water and Power Resources Development Company Mohammadreza Rezazadeh has said the country is currently over 95 percent self-sufficient in dam construction.

"We are now more than 95 percent self-sufficient in the design and construction of dams in Iran, and we only import some parts and equipment for hydropower plants," Rezazadeh told IRIB on Saturday.

According to the official, dam construction is as important as other strategic knowledges like nuclear energy, nano, stem cells and military equipment.

Mentioning the country's current water shortage problems, Rezazadeh said: "In the country's water sector, it is necessary to move towards the use of a diverse resources basket, such as the use of sewage, desalination of seawater, use of deep water, etc."

"For example, the Persian Gulf coastal countries currently desalinate and use about 27 million cubic meters of seawater on a daily basis and have a plan to increase the figure up to 32 million cubic meters, but our country, having vast beaches in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, only desalinizes about 600,000 cubic meters of water," he said.

Regarding the reason for the ending of dam construction in advanced countries and its continuation in Iran, he said: "They started building dams 70-80 years earlier than us and built dams in all suitable geographical positions, but despite the great number of dams in our country, we still need to build dams in some regions."

"From 1900 to 1909, 545 dams were inaugurated in the world, and the figure reached 7,511 in the 70s," he added.

About 32 percent of the world's dams are located in North America, 30 percent in Asia, 19 percent in Europe, five percent in Africa, three

percent in South America, and two percent in Australia, according to the official.

Iran's total dam reservoirs currently stand at 50.5 billion cubic meters, according to the Energy Ministry data.

Out of a total of 183 currently operational dams across Iran, 52 are related to the Caspian Sea catchment area, 12 are based in the Urmia basin, 68 dams are located in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman watersheds, 34 dams are in the Central Plateau, 11 dams are in Sarakhs catchment basin, and another six dams are located across the eastern boundary basin (Hamoun).

## 1st phase of Esfandiar oil field development project to begin soon

TEHRAN - Head of Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) has said the first phase of the development project of Esfandiar oil field which Iran shares with Saudi Arabia is going to begin in the near future, IRNA reported.

According to Alireza Mehdizadeh, the first phase of the development of Esfandiar field which is an extension of the Lulu field in Saudi Arabia is expected to be completed within 36 months.

"The plan for the first phase of the development of the Esfandiar oil field has been prepared and approved by the board of directors of the National Iranian Oil Company, and the project will be handed over to the contractor soon," Mehdizadeh said.

In the first phase of the field's development, four production wells, as well as an explanatory



well, are going to be dug and the produced oil will be transferred to Kharg Island after being processed at the Abuzar oil field's platform.

Oil recovery from Esfandiar field has yet to begin about 50 years after the field was discovered with more than 500 million barrels of in-

situ reserves.

In May 2002, Iranian Oil Ministry signed a \$585 million buyback deal with Petrolran to boost oil recovery from the Foruzan field and produce 4,000 barrels per day from Esfandiar.

The project was halted after IOOC proposed to raise production from Esfandiar to 10,000 bpd and subsequently to 20,000 bpd.

Later, IOOC awarded the project to Malaysia's Petronas, with Qatar's National Bank (QNB) due to fund its €400 million development but the agreement was canceled after QNB refused to make the investment.

In 2015, IOOC and a Norwegian-Austrian company signed a preliminary agreement for the development of the offshore field, however, that agreement too was left unfulfilled.

## Supporting agricultural sector to help water, soil preservation: ICCIMA head

TEHRAN - Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) has said supporting agricultural sector would lead to the preservation of the country's water and soil resources, the ICCIMA portal reported on Saturday.

Referring to the numerous challenges that the country is facing regarding water and soil resources, Gholam-Hossein Shafeie said: "Providing bank facilities to support the agricultural sector will be effective in controlling such crises; so, the share of this sector from the country's banking facilities should be improved."

"The agricultural sector needs



support more than ever. The food security of the society is dependent on this sector, and more attention should be paid in this regard," he added.

The official noted that currently, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Money and Credit Council has proposed to allocate 15 percent of the country's banking facilities to the agricultural sector, which is not enough and the proposal should be amended

considering the needs of this area.

Expressing regret over the allocated share for the agriculture sector, Shafeie stated: "There is no bigger and more complex issue than water for the future of the country, and determining a 15 percent share of bank facilities for the agricultural sector is disastrous."

"The capacities of this sector should be developed enough to minimize the wastage of water resources in the agricultural sector and move this sector towards efficiency and optimization," he added.

Over the past few years, Iranian Agriculture Ministry has been allocating a separate credit line for

the mechanization of the agriculture sector every year.

Back in April, head of Iran's Agricultural Mechanization Development Center said some 50 trillion rials (over \$178.1 million) is going to be allocated for the mechanization of the country's agricultural sectors in the current Iranian calendar year 1401 (started on March 21).

According to Kambiz Abbasi, if the mentioned funding is provided the Agricultural Mechanization Development Center will be able to increase the total amount of facilities provided to farmers for the purchase of agricultural machinery by 25 percent.

## Export from Khuzestan rises 24% in 4 months on year

TEHRAN- The value of non-oil export from Khuzestan province, in the southwest of Iran, rose 24 percent in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), as compared to the same period of time in the previous year, an official with the province's customs department announced.

Behrooz Qarehbeygi said that 5.5 million tons of commodities worth \$2.695 billion were exported from the province in the said four-month.

He named polyethylene, urea fertilizer, paraxilin, steel ingot, ammonia, methanol, vegetables and agricultural products as the main exported items and China, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey and India as the main exported destinations.

As previously announced by another official with the customs department of the province, the value of non-oil export from Khuzestan rose 75 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), from its preceding year.

Gholamreza Balouti-Mirza said that 17 million tons of commodities worth \$677 million were exported from the province in the past year, indicating also 12 percent growth in terms of weight year on year.

He named clinker, petrochemicals, service goods for factories, and vegetables as the main exported items and the United Araba Emirates,



China, Brazil and European countries as the major export destinations.

The official further announced that 20.56 million tons of commodities worth \$10.197 billion have been imported to the country through Khuzestan province in the past year, indicating 51 percent rise in value and 18 percent growth in weight year on year.

He said that 99 percent of the province's imported goods were basic goods, which include corn, oil, rice, wheat and factory raw materials, imported from Russia, Ukraine, Brazil and other countries.

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

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.

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 the UAE with \$4.875 billion, China with \$4.422 billion, Turkey with \$1.787 billion, India with \$859 million, and Russia with \$599 million worth of imports.

# Why the UN is taking on plastic pollution

The United Nations is fast-tracking discussions that aim to forge an international agreement to curb plastic waste, one of the most pervasive and hazardous environmental pollutants.

What does the United Nations' plastic pollution resolution do?

The End Plastic Pollution resolution [PDF] passed by the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) sets out a diplomatic framework and timeline for UN members to negotiate an agreement to prevent and reduce global plastic waste. UNEA President Espen Barth Eide called the resolution, which was passed unanimously in March 2022, the most significant international deal on the environment since the Paris Agreement on climate.



It established a working group of representatives, which first met in May, to organize an intergovernmental committee that will draft an agreement by the end of 2024. An agreement of this scale typically takes between five and ten years to negotiate. But this accelerated timeline [PDF] pushes the committee to quickly establish standards on reporting, finances, and waste management, all while balancing countries' national agendas on trade and economics.

## How extensive is plastic pollution?

Plastic is a major source of pollution, particularly in the world's oceans. Approximately 76 percent of all plastic produced between 1950 and 2017 has become waste, with a majority discarded in landfills or marine environments. Some types of plastic are recyclable, but most can only be recycled a few times before the quality degrades to the point that the plastic becomes unusable.

Today, about 400 million tons of plastic waste are produced each year—a figure on pace to double by 2040. According to a study published

by Science Advances, product packaging accounts for most plastic waste (141 million tons), or more than triple the waste of the next biggest sector, the textile industry (42 million tons).

A similar study found that China, India, and the Philippines produce the most mismanaged waste (waste that is at a higher risk of entering the ocean), largely due to poor waste management infrastructure. However, high-income countries have historically generated more plastic waste, and they often export it to low- and middle-income countries.

## Why does plastic pollution matter?

The same durability that has made plastics a mainstay of modern consumerism makes them extremely difficult for nature to break down. Plastic waste is a major threat to marine life, which can be harmed by ingesting it or becoming entangled or scratched by it. Researchers also worry that

chemicals in consumed microplastics (fragments of plastic typically less than five millimeters long) can build up in the human body and cause illnesses such as cancer.

The production of plastic, much of which is derived from fossil fuels, also contributes to carbon emissions and climate change. The United Nations projects that greenhouse gas emissions associated with the plastic lifecycle will account for 15 percent of global carbon emissions by 2050, up from 3 percent today.

## What's been done so far to address the problem?

Not much. Nearly all nations have signed the 1989 Basel Convention, which aims to restrict higher-income countries from exporting hazardous waste, including plastics, to lower-income ones. Even so, some countries, including the United States, never ratified the agreement and continue to export

plastic waste.

Other global initiatives have been started, including the UN Environment Program's Clean Seas Campaign and the 2020 World Trade Organization (WTO) initiative to promote a circular economy for plastics—a system in which products are designed to be repurposed with no waste generation. However, the impacts of these on plastic waste are limited. The Clean Seas Campaign allows countries to decide their level of commitment, and the WTO initiative is making slow progress as members call for more transparency regarding plastics data and more technology sharing.

Meanwhile, individual countries are trying to mitigate plastic waste generation. In 2021, the United Kingdom's Environment Act required packaging producers to cover the cost of recycling and disposing of their packaging, which will decrease pollution. Similarly, China unveiled a plan to curb plastic pollution by 2025 by using alternatives to plastic, such as bamboo and paper, and researching degradable plastic technology.

Additionally, the new UN resolution lays out strategies governments can use to address the problem, including adopting circular economies. Some countries announced actions in connection with the resolution, including joining the Clean Seas Campaign. In the United States, the Joe Biden administration lauded the resolution and highlighted U.S. government programs to mitigate plastic pollution, including a 2021 plan to increase the national recycling rate to 50 percent by 2030, up from 32 percent today.

(Source: cfr.org)

Today, about 400 million tons of plastic waste are produced each year—a figure on pace to double by 2040.

## Pence says he didn't leave office with classified material

Former Vice President Mike Pence said Friday that he didn't take any classified information with him when he left office.

The disclosure — which would typically be unremarkable for a former vice president — is notable given that FBI agents seized classified and top secret information from his former boss's Florida estate on Aug. 8 while investigating potential violations of three different federal laws. Former President Donald Trump has claimed that the documents seized by agents were "all declassified."

Pence, asked directly if he had retained any classified information upon leaving office, told The Associated Press in an interview, "No, not to my knowledge."

Despite the inclusion of material marked "top secret" in the government's list of items recovered from Mar-a-Lago, Pence said, "I honestly don't want to prejudge it before until we know all the facts."

Pence was in Iowa on Friday as part of a two-day trip to the state, which hosts the leadoff Republican presidential caucuses. It comes as the former vice president has made stops in other early voting states as he takes steps toward mounting a 2024 White House campaign.

Pence also weighed in on Republican U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney's primary defeat earlier in the week to a rival backed by Trump. Cheney, who is arguably Trump's most prominent Republican critic, has called the former president "a very grave threat and risk to our republic" and further raised his ire through her role as vice chair of the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

"My reaction was, the people of Wyoming have spoken," said Pence, who was targeted at

the Capitol that day by angry rioters, including some who chanted, "Hang Mike Pence!" "And, you know, I accept their judgment about the kind of representation they want on Capitol Hill."

Pence said he has "great respect" for Cheney's father, former Vice President Dick Cheney, who served two terms under President George W. Bush.

"And I appreciate the conservative stance Congresswoman Cheney has taken over the years," Pence continued. "But I've been disappointed in the partisan taint of the Jan. 6 committee from early on."

Pence's aides said the committee contacted his legal team months ago to see if he would be willing to testify. Although Pence has said he would give "due consideration" to cooperating, he was adamant that the historic nature of such participation must be warranted and agreed upon.

"Beyond my concerns about the partisan nature of the Jan. 6 committee, there are profound constitutional issues that have to be considered," he said. "No vice president has ever been summoned to testify before the Congress of the United States."

Speaking further about the search of Mar-a-Lago, the former vice president raised the possibility, as he has previously, that the investigation was politically motivated and called on Attorney General Merrick Garland to disclose more details on what led authorities to conduct the search.

"The concern that millions of Americans felt is only going to be resolved with daylight," Pence said Friday. "I know that's not customary in an investigation. But this is unprecedented action by the Justice Department, and I think it merits an unprecedented transparency."

The Jan. 6 insurrection marked the first in a



number of public breaks between Trump and his once devout No. 2. But Pence has been careful not to alienate Republicans who have supported Trump but might be looking for another candidate in the 2024 election. Despite his reluctance to criticize the former president, Pence has occasionally spoken out against Trump, criticizing the attack at the U.S. Capitol and more recently urging his fellow Republicans to stop lashing out at the FBI over the search of Mar-a-Lago.

"The Republican Party is the party of law and order," Pence said Wednesday at a political breakfast in New Hampshire. "Our party stands with the men and women who stand on the thin blue line at the federal and state and local level, and these attacks on the FBI must stop."

Pence said Friday that he would make a decision early next year about whether to run for the White House, a move that his aides have said will be independent of what Trump decides to do.

Having visited the Iowa State Fair on Friday afternoon, Pence also headlined a fundraiser earlier in the day for Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley and was scheduled to speak to a Christian conservative group and a northern Iowa county Republican Party fundraiser before leaving Saturday.

vitamin injections.

The Palestinian Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs derided the Israeli suspension of Awawdeh's detention and called for further pressure on the regime for his full release.

"The decision to suspend prisoner Awawdeh's administrative detention is laughable," the commission said, adding, "We must ignore it in terms of the media and public. What is needed is more pressure on the occupation and the implementation of all means of support for this heroic [hunger] strike."

The commission warned on Sunday of the possibility that Awawdeh could lose his life as his health condition had drastically deteriorated.

"Prisoner Awawdeh's health condition is getting worse day by day," commission spokesperson



is asking for his release and not for a freeze of his detention."

Stressing that her client's health has been deteriorating and he is seeking to be released, Haddad said Awawdeh has not eaten since March 4, except for a 10-day period in which he received

## To achieve inclusivity, Afghanistan needs decentralization

Afghanistan must shift from an ethnic-based political system to one based on citizenship.

By Mirwais Balkhi

Numerous analyses have been conducted after the collapse of the unstable Afghan republic and the Taliban's rise to power, with a particular focus on what the structure of a future effective government should be. This has become Afghanistan's most important topic on the national and international levels, as a substantial percentage of Afghan intellectuals and elites believe that the problems in Afghanistan are due to the absence of a political framework suited to the country's needs. Meanwhile, almost all Afghans agree with and support the notion of "inclusive government." Even the Taliban was promising to form an inclusive government on the eve of its entrance to Kabul last year.

The Taliban are striving to split power among themselves to justify it as being in the best interests of the Afghan people. Under the pretense of their dedication to diversity, this was done at the Bonn Conference in 2001. A system adopted at the Bonn meeting based Afghan governance on ethnocentrism and did not consider the notion of citizen-oriented as a guiding principle. As a result, those who laid the foundation of Afghanistan's new government divided power based on ethnic identity and monopolized their privileges as political and religious oligarchs.

Even though the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was described as "inclusive," the quality of the government's commitment to inclusive political representation varied. But why is there an emphasis on a failed approach to state-building that has previously proven ineffective?

In Afghanistan's political discourse, "inclusive government" refers to "self-inclusive government," where a leader does not approve of the government unless he has a position within its existing power structures.

No one understood this lesson from Afghanistan's political history. A citizen-oriented system, as opposed to an ethnocentric one, was not acknowledged (or purposefully neglected) in its formation at the Bonn Conference over twenty years ago.

Afghanistan must shift from an ethnic-based political system to one based on citizenship. It should not come as a surprise that this approach establishes the groundwork for the distribution of power based on individuals' allegiance to the nation-state. Power would be distributed at all levels. In the previous government, the president's power was distributed to



the presidential institution, in which the president is the manager of the presidential team, vice-presidents, cabinet members, and the National Security Council.

Similarly, authority should be decentralized from the central government to the provincial and municipal levels so that the central government is not the sole institution that may make decisions on any particular issue. People in each city should be able to pick who will serve as their district governor. If the district governor participates in corrupt conduct or abuses his position, the people should be able to remove him from office and elect a new district governor through free elections. Because of this citizen-centered approach, districts and provinces do not need to rely on directives from the central government to reform their local governments. Instead, they could make their own judgments and take action locally to change their situation. This concept exemplifies a balanced distribution of power.

Naturally, when the political structure is changed, and the concept of inclusion is preserved, intra-elite disputes in Afghanistan will have to stop. We cannot argue over whether we should have a centralized government, a parliamentary format, or a presidential system. Once we have a system accountable to Afghan citizens at every level and founded on rule-of-law, the struggle over the system's form will be a conflict driven by hubris rather than a fight over the structure and functioning of the system.

Establishing and fostering a citizen-based government needs strong outside support. As a partner capable of laying the groundwork for this course of action, the United States must play a role in promoting an inclusive structure in Afghanistan.

Mirwais Balkhi is Afghanistan's former Minister of Education and a visiting scholar of International Relations and Middle Eastern Studies at Georgetown University-Qatar.

(Source: The National Interest)

## Finnish PM reveals she has taken drug test

Finland's prime minister has said she has taken a drug test, after new footage emerged showing the leader dancing with a Finnish popstar, BBC reported.

Sanna Marin, 36, came under fire this week after a leaked video showed her partying, with some politicians saying she should be tested for narcotics.

At a news conference on Friday, Marin said she had taken the test and expects the results next week.

The prime minister repeated her denials that she has ever taken drugs.

"I did nothing illegal," she told reporters in Helsinki.

"Even in my teenage years I have not used any kind of drugs," Marin said, adding that she took the drug test as an added measure to allay any concerns.

The prime minister also insisted that she is entitled to the presumption of innocence.

Reporters questioned whether Marin, who has

been in power since December 2019, would have been able to make snap governmental decisions if necessary.

"I don't remember a single time that there was a sudden situation in the middle of the night to go to the State Council Palace," she insisted.

"I think my ability to function was really good. There were no known meetings on the days I was partying."

Marin said she knew she was being filmed, but said she was upset that the footage had become public.

"I trust that people understand that leisure time and work time can be separated," she added.

One of the world's youngest leaders, Marin makes no secret of partying, and has often been photographed at music festivals.

Just last week, she was dubbed the "coolest prime minister in the world" by German news outlet Bild.

## Palestinian to continue with his 168-day hunger strike until full release: lawyers

Lawyers for hunger-striking Palestinian prisoner Khalil Awawdeh say he will press ahead with his 168-day fast until he is granted a full release even after the Israeli regime was forced to temporarily freeze the 40-year-old's detention, Press TV reported.

Awawdeh's lawyers made the announcement after an Israeli military court on Friday urgently suspended the administrative detention of the hunger-striking Palestinian.

The Israeli court had earlier in the week rejected an appeal to free Awawdeh despite the worsening of his health condition after 168 days of abstinence from food.

Ahlam Haddad, one of Awawdeh's lawyers, was quoted by the Palestinian media as saying his "hunger strike will not be suspended because he



is asking for his release and not for a freeze of his detention."

Stressing that her client's health has been deteriorating and he is seeking to be released, Haddad said Awawdeh has not eaten since March 4, except for a 10-day period in which he received

Hassan Abed Rabbo said. "He has lost more than half of his body weight, and he feels incredibly weak. His vision is impaired so much so that he could not recognize his wife Dalal Awawdeh as she was visiting him at the Assaf Harofeh hospital."

Human rights organizations also confirmed that the Palestinian prisoner "is at risk of martyrdom at any moment, in light of the occupation's refusal to respond to his demands to end his arbitrary administrative detention, despite the seriousness of his health condition."

Awawdeh, a father of four, is one of several Palestinian prisoners who have gone on prolonged hunger strikes over the years to protest so-called administrative detention, which allows Israel to hold prisoners without charge practically indefinitely.

## Iranian handicrafts, carpets to go on display at Qatar's World Cup



TEHRAN—An exhibition of Iranian handicrafts and hand-woven carpets is planned to be held on the sidelines of the Qatar World Cup, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade has said.

The exhibit, which will be organized by Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, will showcase collections of Iranian handmade products and traditional arts, IRNA quoted Omid Qalibaf as saying on Saturday.

Doha will also host five more Iranian exhibitions in the fields of food, furniture and chandeliers, decoration, construction materials, clothing, Islamic fashion, hotel and catering, and technical and engineering services, he noted.

These exhibits will be held in collaboration with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO) as well as Iran's embassy in Doha, the official added.

In addition to introducing Iran's export goods to Qatari businessmen, the exhibitions will include business meetings between Qatari and Iranian businessmen, he explained.

Back in May, Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ezzatollah Zarghami and Qatar's Minister of Culture and Sports Abdulrahman bin Hamad bin Jassim bin Hamad Al-Thani met in Tehran, exchanging views on how to facilitate tourism during the major event.

Zarghami says the country must take the immense opportunity to introduce the county to the international spectators of the major event. "A significant number of travelers, mostly young people, would arrive in Qatar to attend the World Cup... It provides an exceptional opportunity for us to properly introduce tourist attractions of the country."

"Over the past months, we have prepared

some plans to attract attendees to the upcoming 2022 FIFA World Cup soccer championship," Zarghami said. "Most importantly, our [southern] islands and free zones [in the Persian Gulf] are prepared to host foreign spectators since they are appealing and wallet-friendly destinations."

Many people are interested in visiting Iran for its historical attractions and ecotourism to name a few, Zarghami stated.

His deputy for tourism, Ali-Asghar Shalbafian, says the landmark event would give Iran a chance to dwindle the so-called anti-Iranian sentiments known as Iranophobia. "Qatar's World Cup offers a unique opportunity to introduce destinations near the host country, and we should take advantage of this opportunity to confront Iranophobia."

To make good use of this occasion, it is necessary to develop consensus among the relevant agencies, and if this does not occur, it will be detrimental to the country, Shalbafian explained.

The geographical position of Iran and its unique tourist attractions make it a potential destination for World Cup spectators, the official added. "Therefore, proper policy-making and management in collaboration with the private sector can pave the way for the widespread use of this event."

Head of the Iranian Tour Operators Ebrahim Pourfaraj believes the World Cup should be a turning point in Iran's tourism industry. "By attracting World Cup spectators to Iran, the Iranian tourism industry could secure a brighter future." There is also a need for the Iranian southern islands of Kish and Qeshm to re-affirm their accommodation centers' capacity to receive foreign travelers, he noted.

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.

Iran football team became the 14th team to book their place in the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Moreover, the 'Persian Leopards' became the first Asian team to book their place in a major competition.

## Morocco volleyball coach advises sightseers to test Iranian cuisine

TEHRAN—Ruben Wolochin, volleyball head coach from Argentina who currently works in Morocco, has said Iranian hospitality and cuisines are exemplary among countries across the world.

Wolochin on Thursday said he enjoyed having Iranian soup, kebabs, and salads, but especially advised foreign tourists in Iran to test the trademark cuisine, Ghormeh Sabzi herb stew, which is made with lamb or beef, vegetables, and beans.

Fresh from a trip to the Islamic Republic where he met dozens of the locals, Wolochin said, "During our trip to Iran, we were surprised; of course, positively.

All Iranians are hospitable and friendly, and the food is delicious."

He made the remarks at the Sa'dabad Cultural-Historical Complex in an interview with a reporter with IRNA. The Moroccan national volleyball team was in Tehran at an invitation by Iran's Volleyball Federation.

Iranian food is a highlight of traveling in the country, with considerable variety on offer. While you may often eat cheap meals on the run, remember that for many Iranians, eating is a social event in which food is only half the story. Experts believe food is a delightful vehicle for discovering the ancient land long



been situated at the crossroads of history.

A paradise for foodie travelers, the country is where it's not just food on the menu. Some believe the Iranian cuisine is itself a metaphor for the country: It's savory, sweet, fragrant, and incredibly complex.

No Persian meal is complete

without an abundance of herbs. Every table is usually set with Sabzi-Khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten rawly and by the handful. Persian cuisine is, above all, about balance — of tastes and flavors, textures and temperatures.

Iranian cuisine delicately combines characteristics and peculiarities of Near and West Asia, India, and East Asia due to Iran's checkered antiquity and the country's location as a hub of trade between East and West on the historic Silk Roads. Similarly, the Persians influenced many cuisines as part of their once policy of expansion.

## Ancient Siraf to reinforce physical protection



From page 1 ► Siraf was Iran's most important port from the Sassanid period to the 4th century AH. It bears plentiful evidence of Persian mastership and genius in seafaring, international relations, and interaction with other near and far cultures and civilizations.

Between 1966 and 1973, the British Institute of Persian Studies conducted seven seasons of excavation and survey at Siraf, which was a major

city on the Iranian shore of the Persian Gulf that played a leading role in the network of maritime trade that supplied Western Asia with the products of India, the Far East and Eastern Africa between 800 CE and 1050.

Siraf had a population of about 300,000 during the early Islamic era and this fact shows that it was a large city. However, today, just about 7,000 people live in Siraf in a small area.

The historical and architectural monuments of Bushehr include Islamic buildings like mosques and praying centers, mansions, old towers, castles, as well as gardens. Moreover, Bushehr embraces significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanid eras.

Furthermore, Bushehr is home to various archaeological mounds, including Tall-e Khandaq with Sassanid architectural style, Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace, and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion.

TEHRAN—Archaeologists have uncovered a former governmental castle in ancient Ojan, which was once a thriving town in northwestern Iran during the Seljuk and Ilkhanid eras.

"During this season of excavation, a team of archaeologists carved four trenches into the ruined castle so that experts could enter the interior of the governmental monument," CHTN quoted archaeologist Mohammadrahim Velayati as saying on Saturday.

"Contrary to our initial expectation, the interior space embraces a large hypostyle hall," said the archaeologist who led the team.

"We previously assumed, regarding specifications of the roof where those four trenches carved, that the interior has several rooms divided between stone walls coated with plaster mortar."

However, the new insight came to light when columns were found after debris removal, the archaeologist said.

Late in June, the team commenced work to fill the gaps between the written records and archaeological findings in the ancient city, which is located in the Bostanabad district of East Azarbaijan province.

"According to written sources, during the Seljuk and Ilkhanid periods, the entrance to the castle was on the eastern front, so one of the trenches was dug right there with the help of students from the



## Archaeologists excavate castle shedding light on ancient architecture in Ojan

University of Tehran."

This trench, at a depth of 30 cm, led to the discovery of a gate column... However, further excavation uncovered evidence that an eastern entrance was constructed in Safavid style after a severe earthquake caused extensive destruction on the opposite side, Velayati explained.

Early buildings in Ojan date back to the 5th-6th centuries AH and coincided with the Seljuks. Later, the city was an administrative center of the Ilkhanids in the 7th-8th

AH centuries and experienced its heyday until the late Safavid period.

Surviving architectural structures include square-shaped battlements, a government castle, some surveillance towers, enclosed walls, incised underglaze clays, underglaze paintings, and local clays without glaze from the 6th-8th centuries.

The Ilkhanid dynasty, also called Il-Khanid, was a Mongol dynasty that ruled Iran from 1256 to 1335. Il-Khan is Persian for "subordinate khan."

Hulegu, a grandson of Genghis Khan, received orders from the supreme Mongol chieftain Mongke to conquer Iran. Hulegu set out around 1253 with a Mongol army of about 130,000 men. He founded the Il-Khanid dynasty in 1256 and conquered Baghdad and all of Iran by 1258, according to Britannica.

The Il-Khanids consolidated their position in Iran and unified the region as a political and territorial entity after several centuries of fragmented rule by small dynasties. During the reign of the Il-Khanid Maumud Ghuzun (r. 1295-1304), the Il-Khanids lost all contact with the remaining Mongol chiefs in China. Mahmud Ghuzun himself embraced Sunni Islam, and his reign was a time of Iranian cultural renaissance in Iran, with scholars such as Rashid al-Din flourishing under his patronage.

Ghazan's brother Oljeitu (r. 1304-16) converted to Shia Islam in 1310. Oljeitu's conversion caused great unrest, and when he died in 1316, the civil war was imminent. His son and successor, Abu Sa'id (r. 1317-35), converted to Sunni Islam and was thus able to prevent a war.

During Abu Sa'id's reign, however, factional disputes and internal unrest continued to spread. Abu Sa'id died without leaving an heir, and with his death, the unity of the dynasty was broken. Thereafter, various Il-Khanid princes ruled parts of the dynasty's former territory until 1353.

## Efforts underway to protect one of world's biggest inscriptions

TEHRAN—A protection and preservation project has commenced on Kartir's inscription, which is considered one of the biggest ancient inscriptions in the World.

Located in Sarmashhad, Kazerun county, southern Fars province, the inscription is one of the four inscriptions carved by the Kartir, the great and influential Sasanian priest.

A project is being implemented to prevent natural factors from damaging the inscription, Kazerun's tourism chief Mohammad Javad Jokari said on Saturday.

Due to the efforts of the people of the region, the inscription, which bears Pahlavi script, is in a favorable condition, and nothing has been written or damaged on it in recent years, and everything is from the past decades, the official added.

Kartir is the only non-king person who was granted the right to have an inscription. His other inscriptions are in Naqsh-e Rostam near



the UNESCO-designated Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam, a royal rock-hewn necropolis, and "Cube of Zoroaster", a famed ancient quadrangular structure, all in Fars province.

Kartir's inscriptions introduce Kartir and describe his ascent in detail. He wants the reader to follow the path of Ahura Mazda like him and briefly lists his deeds, like building fire temples and devoting property to other Mobads. He then lists his titles on the Sasanian court.

## Natural properties in Ilam added to national heritage list

TEHRAN—A total of seven natural properties across Ilam province has recently been inscribed on the national heritage list of Iran.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced the inscriptions on Saturday in separate letters to the governor-general of the western province, CHTN reported.

Mahuteh Waterfall, Barreh Zard and Telesm caves, and Almas Strait were among the properties added to the list.

Home to almost half of Iran's UNESCO sites, western Iran is a land of hospitable people, wild extremes, and wilder history, and it may be an independent traveler's adventure playground. The region also witnessed the rise and fall of many great empires once bordering Mesopotamia, Ottoman Turkey, and Czarist Russia.

From the fecund Caspian coast to the stark, mountainous northern borders, and the crumbling



desert ruins of the southern plains, the region hosts everything from paddy fields to blizzards to Persian gardens.

Having an opulent tourist circuit with 26 UNESCO World Heritage sites, of which the vast Hyrcanian Forest and Lut Desert are among the natural properties, Iran seeks to acquire a greater share of the global tourism industry by 2025.

## Lighting project to begin on Achaemenid palace

TEHRAN—There are plans to make Charkhab Palace, an Achaemenid-era (c. 550 – 330 BC) structure in Dashtestan county of Bushehr province, brighter by installing new lights, a local tourism official has said.

The project aims to enhance the view of the palace and improve the physical protection of the complex, Farhad Zekavat-zadeh explained on Saturday.

Moreover, natural hazards had to be controlled against this valuable work, which was done last year by repairing the fencing and access road, flood control, and cleaning the surroundings, he added.

Cyrus the Great's Winter Palace or Charkhab Palace is the remains of an unfinished structure that resembles the Apadana Palace of Shush. It is believed that Cyrus (576-530 BC) had



ordered the construction of this palace near Susa (modern-day Shush), one of four capitals of the Achaemenid Empire, but construction was abandoned after his death. Today, 10 pedestals have been uncovered at the site, which resembles those found at Pasargadae.

With over 6,000 years of history and significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid,

Parthian, and Sassanid eras, Bushehr is one of Iran's most important historical centers.

Besides its cultural heritage, beautiful beaches and lush palm groves make it an attractive destination for world travelers.

The historical and architectural monuments of Bushehr include Islamic buildings like mosques and praying centers, mansions, old towers, castles, as well as gardens.

When it comes to cultural attractions, there are many historical mounds in Bushehr including Tall-e Khandaq with Sassanid architectural style, Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace, and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion. Qajar era Kazeruni Mansion, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, is another attraction that world travelers love to see among various ancient sites.

# Indigenized technology needed for energy efficiency: VP

TEHRAN - Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari, has said technologies in the field of energy should be indigenized in order to improve energy efficiency in the country.

The plan for improving fuel consumption patterns started 20 years ago, but we should acknowledge that the plan has not reached its stated goals, Sattari said at the opening ceremony of the two-day Iran Energy Efficiency Conference on Saturday.

The event aims to investigate energy efficiency in an integrated manner throughout the energy chain, including production, transmission, distribution, consumption, and storage of electricity, heat, fuel, and food, creating coordination of different sectors of oil, power, industry, roads and urban planning, environment, science, and tech

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Iran



is among the 10 largest emitters of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) in the world, and the residential and commercial building sectors are the main contributors to this challenge.

Increasing energy efficiency in existing and new buildings contributes significantly to reducing emissions

and addressing climate change.

Despite sanctions putting pressure on the country, a unique opportunity was provided for business development and the activity of knowledge-based companies in the country.

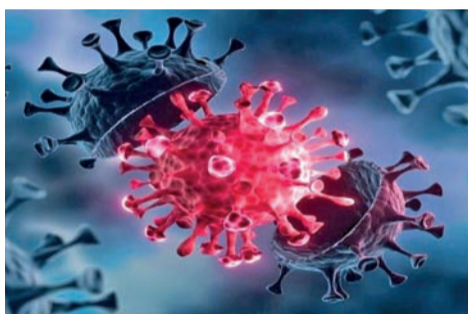
Currently, over 7,000 knowl-

edge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

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

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Iran is among the 10 largest emitters of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) in the world.

## Next waves of COVID on the cards



TEHRAN - There is still the possibility that the eighth or even subsequent waves of coronavirus hit the country, but it highly depends on which variant of the virus will emerge, Mostafa Salehi Vaziri, head of the national laboratory for COVID-19 at the Pasteur Institute of Iran, has said.

The new strain of Omicron known as BA.2.75 has not yet been identified in Iran. At present, the most available variant of COVID in the country

(more than 90%) is the BA5 strain, and in other parts of the world, the BA5 strain is the most widespread, he explained.

In comparison to other countries where Omicron was first detected, such as South Africa, Iran will probably not experience such a wide wave of Omicron, but in general, we cannot make an absolute prediction because the virus has shown us that something unexpected can happen at any moment, he highlighted.

He went on to note that there is a possibility of the eighth or more waves of the corona, but everything depends on what variant of the virus will emerge, which is also affected by other factors. Therefore, it cannot be said that the seventh wave is the last one in Iran.

Unless something unexpected happens, we probably won't have a dangerous mutation; but this issue is not certain at all. The only thing we are

more certain of is that there will be fewer deaths; Because the immune system of people has been stimulated during this period and the cellular immune response can prevent the high intensity of the virus, he emphasized.

Masoud Younesian, an epidemiologist, also warned that the Omicron variant may rise for the third time in the country.

Hamidreza Jamaati, secretary of the National Scientific Committee of Coronavirus, said in July that if preventive measures such as wearing masks and injecting booster doses are adopted, we will not experience the rates of mortality that happened in March with Omicron or last summer with Delta.

"Various studies have shown that in the first trimester after two doses of the vaccine, there is a 70 percent and after six months, about 50 to 60 percent effectiveness against omicron and its subtypes, so our emphasis is on completing the vaccination."

## Participation of people, benefactors in fight against drugs

TEHRAN - The Anti-Narcotics Headquarters follows three basic approaches to fight against drugs, one of which is through donors and public participation, Eskander Momeni, secretary general of the Anti-Narcotics Headquarters, has stated.

Public participation and the use of benefactors; the use of knowledge-based companies and smart plans; and the precedence of prevention with the priority of education are three approaches in anti-narcotics activities, he explained.

Iran is located in the neighborhood of Afghanistan, which has the highest production of narcotic drugs, and in the last 20 years, with the intervention of some countries, including the United States, the production has increased 50 times, from 200 tons to 9,500 tons, he said.

During this period, the production of man-made narcotics increased, and the raw materials, technology, and relevant knowledge were provided to Afghanistan, and some countries such

as the United States, played a supporting role in this development, he further noted.

In this regard, focusing on the borders, big gangs, etc., is on the agenda of the anti-narcotics headquarters, and the support and help of people, charities, benefactors, etc., should also be used, Momeni added.

Although children under the age of 10 may also use drugs, the average age of drug use in the country is 24 years old, and with the use of some effective measures in this field, including the life support project, the upward trend has stopped.

In the world, the average age of drug use is 19 years, he further stated.

### World record of narcotics seizure

Iran holds the record for narcotics confiscation in the world, Momeni said in December 2021.

However, great achievements in the field of countermeasures have been gained, and the United Nations has officially announced that 90 percent

of opium, 48 percent of morphine, and 26 percent of world heroin have been discovered by Iran.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime attaches special importance to the regional and global role of Iran in the fight against narcotics and, as a leading United Nations agency, Alexander Fedulov, UNODC Iran Country Representative, said in June.

In the Iranian calendar year ended in March 2021, about 1,200 tons of drugs were discovered, which was the highest rate of discovery in the world.

Despite the conditions caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the imposition of harsh sanctions against the country, fortunately, with the efforts of anti-narcotics police in 2020, drug detection increased by 41 percent.

After the Islamic Revolution (in 1979), 3,800 were martyred, and 12,000 were wounded and disabled in the fight against drug trafficking.

The UNODC has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics traf-



ficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

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

According to UNODC, Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries and has had a leading role at the global level in drug-control campaigns.

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

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

### Iran urges Afghanistan to resume talks on Hamoun wetlands

Iran and Afghanistan should resume negotiations on the water rights of Hamoun wetlands, YJC quoted Masoud Tajrishi, deputy chief of the Department of Environment, as saying on Friday.

Commenting on Afghanistan's injudicious dam construction on its tributaries Tajrishi also noted that low precipitation levels in the region has added insult to the injury.

"Iran and Afghanistan should reopen talks over the remaining water in Helmand River and discuss the water rights of the wetlands in Iran."

He further underscored the importance of reaching a formal agreement with Afghanistan as the exposed lake bed is the main hotspot for debilitating sand and dust storms which cause great discomfort both for Iranians and Afghans as well.

### افغانستان برای دادن حقایق هامون باید به میز مذاکره بازگردد

به گزارش روز جمعه باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان مسعود تجریشی معاون محیط زیست انسانی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: ایران و افغانستان برای دادن حقایق هامون باید به میز مذاکره بازگردند.

تجریشی با اشاره به سیاست های مسئولان افغانستان برای سد سازی در بالادست تالاب اظهار کرد: متأسفانه وضعیت بارش ها در منطقه در شرایط مطلوبی نبود و به همین علت شرایط وخیم تر شده است.

ایران و افغانستان برای حل مشکل آب باید به میز مذاکره بازگردند تا برای آب باقی مانده در رود هیرمند مذاکره کنند.

وی ادامه داد: ما باید پیگیر این آب باشیم و به یک تفاهمی برسیم چرا که این گرد و غباری که در سیستان و بلوچستان وجود دارد، حتی مردم افغانستان را نیز تحت تأثیر قرار می دهد.

## Govt. adopts measures to support women

From page 1 ► and setting up a market platform were among the measures to introduce new businesses of young people and women.

The plan to empower women heads of households was implemented with the aims of formulation, monitoring, and evaluating the implementation of the plan in the cultural, social, legal, and economic fields.

It has been prepared in four sections consultation, education, employment, and support, and has been sent to the cultural and social commissions of the government.

The creation of a loan guarantee fund for female heads of households is another effective and important measure. With the formation of this fund, the problem of many female heads of households who did not have a guarantor to receive loans is solved.

### Women's sustainable business plans

Launching and activating a sustainable business plan for women and families is one of the main strategies of the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs.

Developing a national plan for a family-centered sustainable business network and implementing an economic empowerment plan, laying the groundwork for the presence and effective role of women in economic fields, especially women heads of households and entrepreneurs, are among the other steps taken toward women's support.

Conclusion of 12 agreements for the implementation of the economic empowerment plan for women heads of households and support for women entrepreneurs in 12 provinces - as a result of which 387 entrepreneurs and 1,600 women heads of households in 62 professions in all agricultural sectors - and the creation of 200 production sites and supporting 100 cooperatives run by women are also the other measures.

### Research projects and interactions

Creating an interactive network with research and academic study groups in the field of women

and family, benefiting from the capacity of society and industry cooperation of faculty members in carrying out research projects, taking advantage of the opinions of intellectuals and activists in the field of women and family are among the goals of implementing the research project and elite interactions.

### Population growth studies

Organizing and integrating existing data in the field of women and family, strengthening the foundation of the family and promoting the culture of multiple children, increasing the population rate and identifying and classifying women entrepreneurs based on operational indicators, and networking of their capacities are among the expected goals of this plan.

Helping to treat infertile couples and increasing the possibility of having children for low-income families, dealing with factors threatening the population such as abortion and permanent contraceptive methods, enforcement of Family and Youth Protection Law are some of the measures taken in this regard.

Compilation of the statistical system for women and families, provision of an active counseling plan for new couples, a compilation of the national atlas of women entrepreneurs, preparation of a support plan for new mothers in the first week of childbirth, an educational plan for parents and student trainers, the formation of a working group for women's employment status are several achievements of these plans.

### Social harm prevention

Due to the government's sensitivity to family issues, in order to reduce the harm, especially in relation to divorce, addiction and suicide, detailed programs have been developed, which are supposed to be implemented in the form of a comprehensive program in all provinces.

It will support entrepreneurs and prioritize vulnerable and abusive women heads of households in the support programs to reduce the economic and livelihood pressures of this group.

## BIRDS IN IRAN

### Part 4

A number of species of Oriental origin, such as Indian sand lark Calandrella rayata, common mynah Acridotheres tristis, and Sind jungle sparrow Passer pyrrhonotus, are confined to extreme southeast Persian Baluchestan, while several others extend only as far west as the Bandar-e Abbas region, e.g., white-eyed buzzard-eagle Butastur teesa, Indian gray partridge Francolinus pondicerianus, and Sind pied woodpecker Dendrocopos assimilis.

In the west, the riverine poplar thickets and marsh edge habitat of Khuzestan hold several specialties, such as gray hypocolius Hypocolius ampelinus, Iraq babbler Turdoides altostris, and Dead Sea sparrow Passer moabiticus.

The wetlands. Although much of Iran is extremely dry, there are several very extensive wetland systems of great importance for a wide variety of waterfowl species.

The south Caspian Sea, its 700 km of sandy shoreline, and the fresh-water lakes, marshes, and brackish lagoons in central Gilan, the Gorgan Bay area, and the Turkoman steppes provide a complex of breeding and wintering areas for waterfowl almost

unequaled in the Western Palearctic.

The region is best known for its wintering waterfowl and the traditional commercial duck-harvesting which this has supported (Savage, pp. 30-46). Regular censuses in recent years have estimated the mid-winter population of ducks, geese, swans, and coots at well over a million birds, with perhaps as many birds again occurring on passage in spring and autumn.

In addition, there are large wintering populations of Dalmatian pelicans Pelecanus crispus, greater flamingos Phoenicopterus ruber, grebes Podicepsidae, herons and egrets Ardeidae, shorebirds Charadriidae and Scolopacidae, and gulls Laridae.

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

To be continued

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON AUGUST 20

New cases	1,836
New deaths	44
Total cases	7,503,369
Total deaths	143,332
New hospitalized patients	504
Patients in critical condition	1,361
Total recovered patients	7,226,357
Diagnostic tests conducted	53,628,916
Doses of vaccine injected	153,529,467



Seek sustenance through alms-giving.  
**Imam Ali (AS)**

## Iranian calligraphy (khattati, khoshnevisi)

### Part 1

#### Introduction

The writing system in use in Persia since early Islamic times grew out of the Arabic alphabet.

Comparison of some of the scripts that developed on Persian ground, particularly Persian-style Kufic, with the Pahlavi and Avestan scripts reveals a number of similarities between them, and this has led certain modern researchers to surmise that the Persians, when they adopted the Arabic writing system, may have made changes in the letter shapes and style of writing under the influence of their old national scripts and inherited tastes.

Distinctive Persian features appear mainly in the taliq, shekasta-taliq, nastaliq, and shekasta nastaliq scripts.

#### I. The beginnings

The Arabic script was derived from the Nabatean and Syriac scripts current in the Hawran district of Syria and the Mesopotamian city of Hira respectively; from the former derived the Arabic naskhi script and from the latter the Kufic (also called Hiri) script.

After the establishment of Islam Arabic naskh was used mainly for correspondence and documents and Kufic for copies of the Koran and later also for inscriptions on stone and on coins.

The development of the Arabic alphabet resulted in a number of identically shaped letters, which at first there was no means of distinguishing, but in the second half of the 7th century distinguishing points and other marks (pointings) began to be commonly used.

At the same time the short vowel signs called haraka (plur. harakat: fatha for short a, zamma for short u, and kasra for short i) and other diacritical marks were invented. Almost a century passed before these devices were perfected.

Ebn Moqla (Abu Ali Mohammad ibn Ali Farsi, 885-86 to 940): During the late Omayyad and early Abbasid periods the use of written Arabic spread to Egypt, North Africa, and Persia, and new styles of writing were developed from naskh and Kufic; however, around the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries, Ebn Moqla, a vizier in the service of the caliph al-Moqtader, and his brother Abu Abdullah Hasan (d. 949-50) put a stop to the proliferation of different styles.

They selected fourteen styles and by improving the pens used, by defining the geometric shapes of the letters, and by setting down the 12 essential rules of calligraphy they brought the art under a measure of discipline.

In their system the basic components of handwriting were straightness (sat'h) and roundness (davr).

Ebn Moqla's rules of calligraphy, set forth in his Resalat al-khatt wa'l-qalam, fell into two categories: the first category was good shaping (hosn-e tashkil, which concerned relative sizes, roundness and straightness, and tallness and shortness of letters, thinness or thickness of strokes, vertical, horizontal, and oblique straightness, etc., the two basic principles being respect for the elements (osul) and the proportions (nesba).

The second category was good layout (hosn-e waz'), which concerned ligatures of joinable letters, positions of detached letters, gaps between words tarz-e mojavarat), spaces between lines (nezam), elongations (madd) to equalize margins, etc., the two basic principles being composition (tarkib) and seating (korsi).

After Ebn Moqla other calligraphers gradually elaborated these principles and formulated them



Naskh, individual letters and their measurements in points, zeroes, and lines.

in eight, twelve, or more rules.

Ebn al-Bawwab (Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Helal Baghdadi, d. 1022-23): After Ebn Moqla, Ebn al-Bawwab added some new rules to the twelve traditional ones, paying special attention to nib cutting and ink selection; improved the thulth (thuluth), naskh, and reqa' scripts; and initiated the practice of measuring letters in points to set standards for the heights of tall letters (e.g., alef, laam), the length of an elongation in a particular context, or the size of a semicircle (e.g., of cf. qaf, laam, nun).

Today calligraphy teachers usually make these points hollow to avoid confusion with the pointings, but "half-points" are written as an Arabic zero (= a European full stop).

Yaqut Mosta'semi (Jamal ad-Din Abul-Majid; d. 1296-97 or 1298-99). Ebn al-Bawwab trained a large number of pupils, and during the next two centuries calligraphy flourished.

The next great master to appear was Yaqut Mosta'semi, who picked six scripts (thulth, naskh, rayhan, mohaqqaq, tawqi', reqa') to improve and make more beautiful.

These six, known as the setta-ye yaquti and as the khotut-e osul gradually supplanted all the others except Kufic.

#### II. Scripts

Since an adequate discussion of scripts and calligraphy is impossible without some knowledge of the rules established by Ebn Moqla and his followers, they are briefly summarized here in the form of general guidelines derived from Ebn Moqla's four basic principles of respect for the elements (osul), proportions (nesbat), composition (tarkib), and seating (korsi).

1. "Respect for the elements" means giving all the letters of the alphabet proper degrees of "boldness" (quwa/qowwa) or "faintness" (za'f) and proper shape.

Boldness is obtained by pressing the whole of the tip of the nib as hard as possible on the paper; it is required in the middle and end parts of elongations, in the middle parts of semicircular final flourishes, and on the tops of daal, faa, qaf, waw, etc.

Faintness is obtained by using the corner or part of the tip of the nib. It is required in the starts and middle parts of most letters and in the end parts of certain letters which ought to be made thin.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica  
To be continued

# World sales companies line up for Iranian film "Zalava"

TEHRAN – Five international sales companies have purchased the rights to the acclaimed Iranian drama "Zalava".

LevelK, EG Entertainment, Remain in Light, Corinth Films and PT Falcon will handle sales of the film in different regions of the world, the Iranian distributor Khaneh Film has announced.

Winner of the grand prize at the 36th Venice International Film Critics' Week, "Zalava" is Arsalan Amiri's directorial feature debut.

Amiri has co-written with Ida Panahandeh and Tahmineh Bahramian the terrifying horror film, which presents a brilliant examination of faith, science and tradition based on stories told to him by his father.

Investigating reports of demonic possession in a remote village, a skeptical military officer finds his beliefs tested by an enigmatic exorcist.

Set in 1978 at the onset of the Iranian revolution, the film opens in the Kurdish village of Zalava, nestled among the mountains of northwestern Iran, and cursed by an ancient fear that there's a demon amongst them.

So consumed by this superstition, the villagers frequently resort to bloodletting in crude, often deadly, amateur exorcisms. When Masud, a young gendarmier sergeant, attempts



"Zalava" directed by Arsalan Amiri.

to circumvent these rituals by confiscating Zalava's weapons, his actions lead to a shocking death.

The incident incenses the townsfolk, but it also draws out Amardan, a shaman who claims that he can provide a permanent solution to the terrifying curse. However, when Masud arrests the exorcist on charges of fraud, the villagers revolt and anger escalates, trapping the gendarmier and his lover, a

government doctor, in a cursed house, surrounded by villagers who believe they are both possessed by the demon.

Amiri also won the award for best director at the 8th Duhok International Film Festival in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.

LevelK will screen "Zalava" in Denmark, while EG Entertainment, based in Los Angeles and Hollywood, will handle the sales of the film in Sweden, Estonia, Finland and

Norway.

With offices in Amsterdam and Antwerp, Remain in Light will distribute the film in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg.

The film will have its North American premiere in Canada and the United States with Corinth Films.

PT Falcon has acquired the rights for Indonesian sales of "Zalava" starring Navid Purfaraj and Hoda Zeinalabedin.

## Split Film Festival to screen "The Locust", "Killing the Eunuch Khan", "Identibye"

From Page 1 ► In this film, a serial killer intends to slaughter so much that blood spills over the ditches of the city. To reach this goal, he designs a plan in which victims kill victims. The plan is carried out and the stream of blood gradually fills the ditches of the city by the people who kill each other.

The film won the Breakouts Feature Grand Jury Prize at the Slamdance Film Festival in the United States in February.

"Identibye" will compete in the short films category.

In "Identibye", directed and written by Sajjad Shahhatami, the protagonist of the

story faces a dilemma of choosing between sense and sensibility regarding one's innermost feelings. He has been judged from the very beginning by those closest to him. The fear of these never-ending judgments fills him with doubt and he has to work against the clock to achieve his goal as he knows that one's true identity is what matters most to them.

The international competition of feature and short films is the backbone of the program of the festival, which is open to all new, creative, personal, experimental, radical, and subversive works of all lengths and genres.



Hanieh Tavassoli acts in a scene from "The Locust" directed by Faezeh Azizkhani.

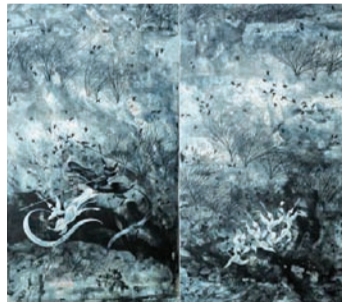
## Iranian artist Mani Mehrzad wins Chairman's Award at Art Revolution Taipei

TEHRAN – Iranian artist Mani Mehrzad has won the Chairman's Award of the Art Revolution Taipei.

He received the award for "The Snow Geography", his 180x120-cm acrylic painting on canvas.

The triptych surreal artwork shows human-like creatures fighting with each other.

Championship, the grand prize of the Art Revolution Taipei (A.R.T.), Asia's iconic art fair, was given to Turkish artist Mustafa Yuce for his oil on canvas named "Asylum".



"The Snow Geography" by Iranian artist Mani Mehrzad won the Chairman's Award of the Art Revolution Taipei 2022.

The 147x105cm hyper realistic painting shows a young woman dozing gently in a big hole on a wall.

This year's Art Revolution Taipei recruits 368 artists from 54 countries to present about 3,000 pieces of artwork with characteristic styles and in various art forms, including the world's most eye-catching NFT crypto art.

All the works exhibited are rigorously selected by A.R.T.'s art director Lee Sun-Don, an

internationally renowned artist.

Over 300 artworks competed in the International Artist Grand Prize Competition, the category in which Mehrzad won the prize.

The artworks were showcased in an exhibition at the Art Revolution Taipei from August 5 to 8.

The Art Revolution Taipei takes an innovative step to place the artist front and center, with every booth standing as the artist's solo exhibition, where the visitor can interact with the artist vis-à-vis.

## A feminine approach in "The Raised Flag"



### An interview with Somaye Jamali

In her book "The Raised Flag," Somaye Jamali writes of the Muharram 2020 nights, which took place amid the coronavirus's gloomy period. There are 11 chapters in this book, and each one is devoted to one of the first ten nights of Muharram.

**\* You previously published a book of poetry. How did you start writing novels?**

Since I was a teenager, I have been producing poems and stories. I therefore had experience creating stories in addition to poetry. However,

after my poetry collection was published, some friends who had previously seen my works advised that it would be preferable for me to stick to writing stories. Professionally, I decided to leave poetry aside and devote the majority of my energy on the story writing. Also, the reason I wanted to write this novel about this subject was that those days when the corona virus came, everyone was confused and surprised, and when Muharram arrived, they didn't know how to organize mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussein. At that time, everyone suddenly decided to help each other and follow the rules and protocols.

**\* What prevented you from incorporating some imagination into the stories?**

Future generations might read this book, and we should refrain from adding anything from our own imaginations to the story in the documentaries to a considerable extent. Also, I didn't want to add anything because the events going on around me were interesting enough.

**\* In your perspective, how does your work**

**differ from the stories that are based on this topic?**

The feminine approach in "The Raised Flag" distinguishes it. Although the majority of things said about religious ceremonies have been said by men, and everyone has heard and read those things numerous times, I have a feminine perspective on the matter, and the distinctive feature of my work is the way I described both the men's and women's sides from a woman point of view.

**\* Which night did you find to be the most interesting or challenging?**

Although the novel I wrote does reflect the spirit of Muharram, my intention was to write it in the best possible way, not merely for emotional reasons. I assert that I attempted to write my book pleasantly and to capture the joyousness that individuals experience when they get together. Thus, I found the second night to be fascinating. For me, the night of Ashura was the most challenging to write since it was filled with so much pain and significance.