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TEHRAN TIMES

8 Pages | Price 100,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 44th year | No. 14344 | Thursday | October 27, 2022 | Aban 5, 1401 | Rabi' Al thani 1, 1444

Europe Misunderstands Iran

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Iran sanctions 12 EU individuals, 8 entities

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement on Wednesday announcing sanctions against 8 entities and 12 individuals in the EU.

The action is taken in reciprocation to the European Union sanctioning several Iranian entities and individuals under false pretexts.

"In response to the unconstructive action of the European Union, we published a new list of sanctions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran against 8 entities and 12 individuals within the framework of the European Union today. These institutions and individuals had supported and intensified terror, extremism and violence in the recent events that happened in Iran. In our opinion, these institutions and sanctioned persons are considered examples of the definition of terrorism and will be dealt with in this framework," Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian told the press on Tuesday.

Below is the statement of the Iranian foreign ministry:

The Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as per the ratifications of pertinent authorities and within the framework of relevant regulations and sanctions mechanisms and as reciprocation, places under sanctions the following institutions and individuals in the European Union region for their deliberate acts to support terrorism and terrorist groups, promote and incite terrorism and violence, and engage in hatred-mongering, which have caused rioting, violence, acts of terror, and violations of human rights against the Iranian nation:

The following institutions will be placed under sanctions:

- The so-called "Friends of Iran" group and its members at the European Parliament

- The International Committee in Search of Justice (ISJ) and its members ▸ Page 2

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Palestinians in Gaza protest in solidarity with Nablus

Thousands of Palestinians poured into the streets across the Gaza Strip, denouncing the killing of six Palestinians by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus early on Tuesday, Al Jazeera reported.

The demonstrations were held across the besieged Palestinian enclave, including the governorates of Rafah, Khan Yunis and Gaza City on Tuesday.

Palestinian officials said at least six Palestinians were killed and 21 wounded after Israeli forces raided several areas in the occupied West Bank.

Government and commercial offices were closed to observe a general strike called by Palestinian factions to mourn the dead, among whom were two unarmed barbers.

It coincided with massive protests in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem (al-Quds) in the wake of the killings. Thousands of people attended the funerals of those killed.

Protesters in Gaza's public squares chanted slogans denouncing the "crime of the occupation", and called on the Palestinian resistance to respond.

Tensions have been running high in the occupied West Bank for the past few months, with near-daily Israeli raids.

Israeli forces have killed 184 Palestinians since the start of the year, including 51 in Gaza, according to the Palestinian health ministry. At least three Israeli soldiers have been killed in the past month in attacks carried out by Palestinians.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani has condemned the Zionist regime's violence against Palestinian people in the West Bank city of Nablus.

In a statement on Tuesday, Kanaani denounced the continuation of the Israeli crimes and acts of terrorism in the West Bank, including besieging and attacking Nablus, calling on the international community to take action to stop and condemn the Zionist regime's genocide in Palestine.

Report

Iranian shooter Rostamian happy to win Olympics' quota

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN - Hanieh Rostamian, Iranian sports shooter, is delighted to obtain Iran's first berth for the 2024 Parsi Olympics.

The Iranian woman, taking part in the World Shooting Championships in Egypt, managed to win the country's first quota for the 2024 Olympics.

"I'm so happy for being able to represent my country once again in a prestigious tournament like the Olympics," Rostamian said in her exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

"The ISSF World Shooting Championships is one of the best shooting competitions after the Olympic Games, and the shooters take part in this tournament with complete preparation," she added.

"Both the number and the quality of the participants were high, and it was tough to win.

Rostamian won the Olympics quota in women's 25-meter air pistol. She was also a member of the Iranian women in the 10-meter rifle match alongside Golnoosh Sebghatollahi and Mina Ghorbani. They beat Mongolia 14-16 to win the world championship's bronze medal.

"Fortunately, I could break my record and the national record in the 25-meter air pistol. I also managed to win a bronze medal in mixed 10-meter air pistol with Javad Foroughi," added the 24-year-old shooter.

Speaking about her Olympics berth, Rostamian said: "Actually, getting the Olympics quota was not among the plans of the federation and the national team's head coach before this tournament. However, I did my best, and fortunately, I could get the quota for my country very soon.

"It's a great honor for me to represent Iran in another Olympics, and I will try to take advantage of my experiences and get the best results in Paris," Rostamian concluded.

The Cairo competitions began on Oct. 12 and ended on Oct. 25. The tournament also served as a qualification event for the 2024 Summer Olympic Games.

13 martyred in terrorist attack on Shiraz shrine

TEHRAN – At least 13 pilgrims were martyred and 40 others wounded late on Wednesday in a terrorist attack targeting a holy shrine in the south-central Iranian city of Shiraz.

According to witnesses, three armed terrorists broke into the Shah-e Cheragh shrine precinct and opened fires at the pilgrims.

Two of the Takfiri assailants were arrested and a big manhunt for the third is underway, security forces said. However, Fars Province's police chief said there was only one attacker.

Nour News, a news outlet close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said the assailants were foreign nationals.

The attack took place at the Maghrib prayer time.

The United Nations condemned the terrorist attack.

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Fishing season starts in northern Iran

Fishermen in the northern Mazandaran province are preparing a large net to be launched into the Caspian Sea as the hunting season started a couple of days ago.

The fishing season starts routinely in mid-October and lasts for about six months. Roughly four thousand people in the coastal provinces of Mazandaran and Gilan are engaged in fishing during the period.

Some 1,627 tons of bony fish were caught last year, a decrease of 34 percent year on year.

1,870 Iranians among world's top 2% most-cited researchers

TEHRAN – Stanford University listed 1,870 Iranian researchers among the top 2 percent of the most-cited scientists in the world, which has grown significantly compared to past years.

Stanford University has recently published an update of the list of the top 2% of most widely cited scientists in different disciplines. Globally, 200,409 scientists fall in the top 2 percent worldwide.

This ranking, considered the most prestigious worldwide, is based on the bibliometric information contained in the Scopus database and includes more than 200,000 researchers from the more than 8 million scientists considered to be active worldwide, with 22 scientific fields and 176 subfields taken into account.

In the latest version of this ranking, with the calculation of citations in 2021, there are 1,870 researchers from Iran, which has grown significantly in the last two years compared to previous years. ▸ Page 7

Iran's "Nomad Girl" to compete in OKO ethnographic film festival

TEHRAN – The Iranian short documentary "Nomad Girl" will be competing in the OKO - International Ethnographic Film Festival.

Due to the outbreak of war on February 24, the third edition of the Ukrainian festival will take place in Torun, Poland from November 13 to 18.

Directed by Ruhollah Akbari, "Nomad Girl" follows the daughter of one of the nomadic tribes, who, despite all the problems caused by the traditions and common beliefs about girls exercising, achieves much success in kickboxing. She tries to persuade the families of the girls in the area to encourage them to attend training classes in a nomad "black tent".

The documentary was also screened at the Kazan International Muslim Film Festival, which took place in September in the capital of Tatarstan, a semi-autonomous region in southwest Russia. ▸ Page 8

Emerging destinations: Maragheh fossil paradise

TEHRAN - Renowned worldwide as a "fossil paradise" in northwest Iran, Maragheh is home to enormous herbivorous fossils such as ones related to Mastodons and Deinotherium (kinds of elephants and rhinos) and other extinct mammals.

The site has been the focus of paleontologists and geologists for many years since Maragheh fauna is considered one of the three most preeminent western Eurasian late Miocene Pikermian faunas, along with Samos and Pikermi in Greece.

Seasons of excavation and paleontological studies have yielded mastodon dentin fossils, upper rhinoceros jaws, carnivorous skulls, horse teeth and jaws, giraffe jaws, and fossils of a primary human. Except for Maragheh, sediments similar to Maragheh are also found in Ahar, Varzeqan, northwest of Tabriz (Evand), and near Mianeh.

Earlier this year, Mikael Fortelius, a professor of Evolutionary Paleontology at the University of Helsinki, told IRNA that archaeologists have unearthed some fossils dating back more than 8 million years in Maragheh that show high potential for further excavations in this region.

If archaeologists can unearth fossils dating back to around 11 or 12 million years ago, the fossil site of Maragheh would become more important than ever, he noted.

There are some fossils of about eight-million-year savanna animals in the fossil site of Maragheh, he said, adding that they were found after a while in Saudi Arabia and Africa. ▸ Page 6

Raisi receives credentials of new Kuwaiti ambassador

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on Wednesday received the credentials of the new Kuwaiti ambassador to Tehran, Badr Abdullah al-Munikh.

Kuwait promoted its diplomatic relations with Iran to the level of ambassador in August after it recalled its ambassador from Tehran following a raid on the Saudi embassy in Tehran in 2016 in protest over the execution of 47 pro-democracy activists, including cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr.

However, relations between Iran and its maritime neighbors in the south has started warming. The UAE ambassador to Tehran, Saif al-Zaabi, also arrived in Tehran to resume his work after six years.

At the meeting with the Kuwaiti ambassador, Raisi said disruptive measures by the enemies will never deter Iran's desire to strengthen regional cooperation.

Raisi also said that the most effective response to challenges is dialogue between neighbors and development of regional cooperation.

"The path of brotherhood and development of regional cooperation is the main agenda of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy, and the obstructive actions of the enemies will not disrupt this process," the president highlighted.

Iran and Kuwait have strong ties that are founded on shared ideologies and cultural norms, Raisi said.

The president stated that Iran has always been a friend to its neighbors in difficult times, and that dialogue between neighbors and the promotion of regional cooperation is the most effective solution to problems.

He added "interference of outsiders in regional issues not only has not solved the problem, but has always caused problems."

Raisi stressed, "Although building trust in bilateral relations is the starting point of all-round regional cooperation, the enemies, who could not disrupt the will created between the governments of the region for effective interaction, are trying to use deceptive tricks to hamper development and consolidation of regional cooperation, which will not succeed."

During the meeting, the new Kuwaiti ambassador, while conveying the greetings of his country's Emir and Crown Prince, told President Raisi that he has come to Tehran with the mission to strengthen relations, and that he intends to open a broader perspective and horizon in the two countries' relations.

Ambassador Badr Abdullah al-Munikh remarked that his country, while embracing Iran's principled stance for dialogue, feels that the ideal way is to tackle regional challenges and promote regional cooperation via conversation.

The ambassador also praised the Iranian president's policy to prioritize dialogue and cooperation with regional countries.

Iran sanctions 12 EU individuals, 8 entities

from page 1 ▸

- Stop the Bomb organization
- Deutsche Welle Persian
- RFI Persian
- France's International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (LICRA)
- Germany's Karl Kolb Co., the provider of chemical weapons to the regime of Saddam Hussein
- Germany's Rhein Bayern Fahrzeugbau Co., the provider of chemical agents to the regime of Saddam Hussein

The following individuals will be on the sanctions list:

- President of the International Committee in Search of Justice Alejo Vidal-Quadras
- Javier Zarzalejos, co-chair of the so-called "Friends of Free Iran" intergroup at the European Parliament
- Milan Azver, co-chair of the so-called "Friends of Free Iran" intergroup at the European Parliament
- Member of the European Parliament Charlier Weimers
- Member of the European Parliament Jan Zahradil
- Member of the European Parliament Helmot Geuking
- Member of the European Parliament Hermann Tertsch
- Meyer Habib, member of the French National Assembly
- Martine Valleton, mayor of Villepinte, France
- Jean Francois Legaret, former mayor of 1st arrondissement of Paris
- Johanned Boie, chief editor of Germany's Bild newspaper
- Alexandra Würzbach, chief editor of Germany's Bild newspaper

The said sanctions include bans on the issuance of visas and bans on the entry of the said individuals to Iran and the confiscation of their properties in territory subject to the jurisdiction of Iran. All institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran will take necessary action to enforce these sanctions as per the ratifications of pertinent authorities.

Reminding the obligations of the European Union and the respective governments of the above individuals and institutions, the Islamic Republic of Iran deems support for, facilitation of, and failure to stop the activities of these individuals and institutions as violations of the international obligations of the European Union and the relevant governments and holds them responsible and accountable. It is obvious that the sanctions action will not exclude the criminal prosecution of individuals for involvement in criminal acts in legal courts with due jurisdiction.

The Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, again, strongly rejects and condemns the move by the Council of the European Union on October 17, 2022 to enforce illegal restrictive measures against Iranian individuals and institutions based on baseless accusations, which is an explicit example of interference in the internal affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

News on radiopharmaceuticals to arrive soon

TEHRAN — Spokesperson for the Atomic Energy Organization said on Tuesday night that there would soon be great news regarding radiopharmaceuticals and nuclear reactors.

Behrouz Kamalvandi also said in terms of vulnerability in the nuclear field, the country has become almost invincible due to various reasons.

"By using different methods, the security has increased, and for our enemies, whose main goal is to attack Iran's nuclear industry and scientists, there is no other option other than diplomacy."

He added that in addition to the provisions of radiopharmaceuticals inside the country, despite all the sanctions, an estimate of 400,000 to 500,000 people are using radiopharmaceuticals abroad.

"This is while we are under heavy sanctions pressure. The fact that the foe's claims that their sanctions have nothing to do with food and medicine is a lie. This issue has been dealt with at the level of the Human Rights Organization, but it is necessary to do something at the international level so that the world knows about the cruel sanctions that include radiopharmaceuticals for the ill," he added.

For example, Kamalvandi said, an Iranian radiopharmaceutical company has been sanctioned though it provides medicine for patients.

The company had been asked to correspond with the U.S. Treasury to urge them to reverse their decision but the call fell on deaf ears, he lamented. "Several letters were written for this purpose, but nothing happened and they refused to remove this company from their sanctions list."

Iran FM warns EU not to repeat mistakes

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Wednesday warned the European Union "not to continue the repeated and failed path of previous years."

Hossein Amir Abdollahian made the remarks in a joint press conference with his Belarussian Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei in Tehran.

"I warn the European Union not to continue the repeated and failed path of previous years," he cautioned, adding that the leaders of a few European countries have "extreme and hasty" views on regional and international developments, while a large part of the European Union members act rationally.

"We strongly reject the baseless accusations of some countries regarding Russia's use of Iranian drones in the war against Ukraine, and we invite the Ukrainian officials to present any documents related to this claim in a bilateral meeting at the level of Iranian and Ukrainian technical experts," he noted.

He then insisted on Tehran's position regarding the Ukraine war, saying it is not Iran's policy to arm any of the warring parties.

"We are against the war in Ukraine," he added.

'U.S. officials make contradictory statements on JCPOA'

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amir Abdollahian said that some American officials are in a hurry to reach an agreement regarding a revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, commonly known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"While some American officials are in a hurry to send confidential diplomatic messages during indirect negotiations to reach an agreement or they repeatedly express their interest by exchanging indirect messages, at the same time, they support terror and chaos in Iran. Their goal is to force us to back down at the negotiating table. Undoubtedly, we will not back down from our red lines in safeguarding the national interests of the Iranian nation."

He then noted that Tehran has received messages from Washington to reach an agreement to restore the JCPOA.

"America's messages to reach an agreement has been received by us. In recent days, we received a message from America in this regard. Diplomacy is going on, and it is going well. However, some American officials make hypocritical statements... in, and that contradicts their diplomatic messages," Iran's top diplomat stated.

He then went on to note that Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko will soon visit Iran to meet his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi.

"Mr. Lukashenko, the President of Belarus, will visit Iran in the near future. Then, the long-term comprehensive agreement between the two countries will be signed in Tehran, along with other documents," he stated.

Belarussian FM: Iran and Belarus are facing economic terrorism

For his part, Makei likened the economic sanctions against Iran and Belarus to economic "terrorism".

"This is not my first trip to Iran, and during the negotiations with the Iranian foreign minister, we discussed a wide range of issues, and all issues were in line with the development of bilateral relations. Very good and constructive agreements were reached in the economic and investment fields and other issues that were of interest to both sides," the top Belarusian diplomat told the joint press conference.

Makei continued his remarks by saying that the approach of Iran and Belarus on regional and international issues is similar, and the two countries have a good and constructive cooperation at international organizations.

"Relations between the two countries are increasing. There is a lot of exchange of delegations between the two countries at different levels, and bilateral, regional and international issues are discussed between the two sides," he added.

The Belarusian foreign minister added, "In order to increase the level of relations between the two countries in various issues that were raised, various documents are under review. The 15th meeting of the joint commission for commercial and economic cooperation and investment was held in Minsk, and we are implementing the agreements reached as a result of the joint commission."

Belarus and Iran are seeing a significant increase in commercial ties, Makei noted. However, he said, the level of commercial and economic cooperation between the two countries is lagging behind political relations.

"We must make efforts to implement the agreements and upgrade the level of relations to a higher level," he opined.

Next year, the two countries will celebrate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations and different programs are being planned for the purpose, the top Belarusian diplomat said, adding that Minsk believes that this will open a new page in cooperation between the two sides.

He also said Belarus is also against unilateral economic and trade sanctions. "We want the implementation of international law and we do not like harming the economy of other countries. An economic terrorism is happening against our countries. We must show appropriate actions in response to the unilateral actions of Western countries."

"The fruitful agreements help increase the level of relations between the two countries. We are moving towards a strategic partnership between the two countries," he concluded.

Prior to the press conference, the two chief diplomats also held talks on developments in Afghanistan, moves to back multilateralism, confronting the unilateral sanctions of the United States and increasing political and specialized consultations in international assemblies and organizations.

This is Makei's first visit to Tehran since Ebrahim Raisi took over as president in August 2021. His last visit to Tehran was in 2014.

During the meeting, the foreign ministers of Iran and Belarus emphasized their will to implement joint agreements and develop and deepen relations as much as possible.

Iranian destroyers to be armed with Abu Mahdi cruise missiles

TEHRAN- Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, the Commander of the Iranian Navy, has announced that the country's destroyers will be equipped with domestically-made Abu Mahdi cruise missiles.

The missile bears the name of the deputy commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), who was assassinated in a U.S. drone attack near Baghdad International Airport in January 2020 together with senior Iranian counterterrorism commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani.

The missile is being installed aboard Iranian military vessels, according to Irani.

He said the opponents are aware of the features and have seen the capabilities of the Abu Mahdi naval cruise missile in action. He revealed that once used in electronic warfare systems, the missile can effectively carry out its missions. The admiral said the missile has gone through multiple testing.

The Navy commander stated, "We have placed larger ranges on our agenda. The combat potential, destructive power, and operating range of the Abu Mahdi cruise missile are noteworthy."

He said that the number of surface-to-surface cruise missiles available to the Iranian Navy had quadrupled, and that for the first time, destroyers from the country will be sent out to sea equipped with eight cruise missiles.

Irani said that the Sahand destroyer has already been loaded with the medium-range surface-to-air missile system Nawab, which was produced locally. The indigenous destroyer has also utilized point-defense weapon systems for spotting and eliminating incoming missiles, as well as hostile aircraft and anti-missile systems.

In addition, he stated that the domestic Damavand destroyer is undergoing final testing and would hopefully join the Navy's fleet on November 28.

The support vessel Shuhada-ye Konarak, he said, has undergone a complete redesign and differs significantly from its forerunner, which was seriously damaged by friendly fire on May 10, 2020, while participating in a naval drill in the Sea of Oman.

The naval commander highlighted, "The new generation of the vessel enjoys advanced and more sophisticated technologies and is going through construction phases. At the same time, various pieces of military equipment are being installed on it. It's worth mentioning that the vessel can fire cruise naval missiles as well."

Iranian military specialists and engineers have achieved great advances in manufacturing a wide range of indigenous weaponry in recent years, allowing the armed services to become self-sufficient.

Judiciary: Investigation on French spies detained in Iran is going on

TEHRAN— The Iranian Judiciary spokesman has said more arrests have been made regarding the French spies in Iran, and the investigation regarding this case is ongoing.

"This case is very important. Its dimensions and angles require more investigation. The investigation is being carried out with precision, speed and accuracy. The subject of the accusations of those arrested in this case is conspiracy, collusion with the intention of disrupting Iran's security, as well as espionage," Massoud Setayeshi said in his weekly press briefing on Tuesday.

Regarding the latest developments surrounding the two French spies detained in Iran, he added an important "strategic" information has been obtained from the accused and investigation into their case is on the agenda of the judiciary officials.

"The investigation continues with adherence to professional and methodological issues," Setayeshi noted.

Therefore, the spokesman said, the fact that the enemies coupled with Western and Zionist intelligence services worked hard to realize their "dreams" to undermine the security of the Iranian people is not just a "theory".

"We have numerous data and information that the sworn enemies of the Islamic Republic are trying to create violence by endangering the security of citizens and mismanaging the emotions of the people through rumors and media operations with preplanned schemes," the Judiciary spokesman underlined.

Setayeshi said information regarding the arrest of the French spies is about to be completed soon.

Europe misunderstands Iran

By Mehran Shamsuddin

TEHRAN – With the European Union heaping sanctions on Iran day by day, Iranian officials have moved to rein in Europe's hostility by reminding it of the need to avoid ill-advised decisions regarding Iran.

Relations between Iran and European Union have been on a slippery slope over the last few weeks due to a series of developments in Iran, Ukraine, and Austria. The hiatus in the Vienna talks over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal together with the Ukraine war and unrest in Iran have added another layer to the already simmering tensions between Iran and Europe.

While the Europeans have sought in the past to avoid getting ahead of the U.S. in imposing sanctions on Iran, the recent wave of unrest, among other issues, prompted them to proactively slap sanctions and put in place restrictive measures against Iran, something that is seen by some in Tehran as another negotiating tactic aimed at extracting further concessions from Iran.

The European Union has imposed sanctions on Iran for the alleged Iranian provision of drones to Russia for use in Ukraine and alleged violation of human rights during the unrest. Iran responded in kind while warning that sanctions can't induce change in Iran's policies.

The Iranian foreign ministry announced a list of new designations targeting several European individuals and entities for their role in violating the human rights of the Iranian people. "The Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as per the ratifications of pertinent authorities and within the framework of relevant regulations and sanctions mechanisms and as reciprocation, places under sanctions the following institutions and individuals in the European Union region for their deliberate acts to support terrorism and terrorist groups, promote and incite terrorism and violence, and engage in hatred-mongering, which have caused rioting, violence, acts of terror, and violations of human rights against the Iranian nation," the ministry said in a statement.

The statement added that new sanctions "include bans on the issuance of visas and bans on the entry of the said individuals to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the confiscation of their properties in territory subject to the jurisdiction of the Islamic Republic of Iran. All institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran will take necessary action to enforce these sanctions as per the ratifications of pertinent authorities."

Meanwhile, Iranian officials warned Europe not to seek concessions through sanctions. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said Wednesday that some European leaders have a failed view of the developments in Iran. He advised the Europeans not to press ahead with the unconstructive and failed path they used to take in the past years.

"It's clear to us that some European leaders have a failed view of the developments," he said, according to IRNA.

Responding to European allegations regarding the alleged Iranian provision of drones to Russia, Amir Abdollahian said, "I would like to emphasize that we reject the baseless accusation of some countries about Russian drones against Ukraine and invite the Ukrainian authorities to present any documents regarding this claim in a bilateral meeting at the level of Iranian and Ukrainian technical experts."

He added, "We are against the war in Ukraine; everyone in America is interested in exchange, but at the same time they support terror and chaos."

Recalling the fact that Iran has received a message from America in recent days, he said, "In our opinion, the diplomatic path continues, but some American officials are speaking in a way that is contradictory."

Also, an Iranian lawmaker has reacted to the European sanctions on Iran. The lawmaker, Abolfazl Amouei, who is the spokesman for the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, told Iran's state news agency IRNA that if Europe thinks it can extract concessions from Iran through imposing sanctions, it has no accurate knowledge of Iran.

Regarding whether Europe can gain concessions from Iran through these sanctions in possible future negotiations, Amouei noted, "If Europe thinks it will succeed in winning concessions from the Islamic Republic with such a performance, it is clear that it does not have a precise understanding of Iran."

Europe can't get concessions from Iran through sanctions: MP

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian lawmaker has said that Europe can't get concessions from Iran in possible future talks.

The lawmaker, Abolfazl Amouei, who is the spokesman for the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, told Iran's state news agency IRNA that if Europe thinks it can extract concessions from Iran through imposing sanctions, it has no accurate knowledge of Iran.

He was commenting on the tense situation of Iran-Europe relations in the wake of Brussel's imposition of sanctions on Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini.

"Officials explained about the death of Ms. Mahsa Amini, and the report of the government, parliament, and medical and law enforcement institutions has also been published. These are internal issues and Western countries have no right to interfere in the affairs of the Islamic Republic," Amouei said.

He added, "In the matter of dealing with riots, the necessary measures were taken to deal with actions that disturb the security of the country, so that the riots will end in order to maintain public security and the conditions of the country will move towards normalization."

Amouei stated that the action of Europe in sanctioning some institutions, officials and individuals causes the destruction of the infrastructure of the bilateral relations between Iran and Europe. He added that the Islamic Republic will show a serious and effective reaction against the recent sanctions.

"Sanctions are definitely not effective because the country's officials have no assets and plans in Europe. But this behavior of theirs creates a negative attitude towards Europe in the eyes of the authorities of our country," he said.

The lawmaker continued, "The Europeans failed to fulfill their obligations under the JCPOA. Europe did not play a constructive role during the negotiations and at times turned itself into a passive actor and this had a significant impact on the negotiation process."

Regarding whether Europe can gain concessions from Iran through these sanctions in possible future negotiations, Amouei noted, "If Europe thinks it will succeed in winning concessions from the Islamic Republic with such a performance, it is clear that it does not have a precise understanding of Iran.

The EU has announced the imposition of sanctions against a number of Iranian individuals and entities allegedly involved in violating human rights, a claim Iran vehemently denied.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani strongly condemned a decision by the Council of Foreign Ministers of the European Union to impose unilateral sanctions against some Iranian officials and institutions, describing it a violation of international law and a clear example of interference in the internal affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The spokesperson added, "It is deeply regrettable that certain political motivations as well as relying on baseless, distorted information and fabricated claims by the enemies of the Iranian nation and the well-known media affiliated with them are the basis of such a wrong and unconstructive decision."

Kanaani evaluated the sanctions decision of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the European Union as an indication of the continuation of a biased approach and exploitation of human rights as a tool to achieve political goals, and called the decision "fundamentally rejected, ineffective and invalid."

On Wednesday, the Iranian foreign ministry announced a batch of sanctions against several European individual and entities for role in supporting terrorism and violence against Iran.

The sanctions targeted entities within the European parliament as well as some media outlets in France and Germany, including the Persian service of Deutsche Welle and RFI.

The new set of sanctions comes after Iran warned Europe not to interfere in Iran's internal affairs in the wake of the death of Mahsa Amini.

Israel standing in the way of WMD-free Mideast: diplomat

TEHRAN – A diplomat with the Iranian mission to the UN has underlined the need for creating a region free of weapons of mass destruction, noting that Israel is standing in the way of that objective.

The diplomat, Heidar Ali Balouji, who is the first counselor at the Iranian mission, said, "The acute need for a region-wide comprehensive solution to the threat of WMD in the Middle East, specifically the creation of a WMD-free zone based on the NPT or UNGA processes, is still facing the impediment of the Israeli regime."

He made the remarks at a UN General Assembly committee for regional security on Tuesday.

"The number of active armed conflicts that have taken place in at least 46 states in 2021 is plainly shocking. Eight of these conflicts alone have erupted in the Middle East. In this day and age, a regional security framework is needed now more than ever in our region. The region is on fire, so to speak, and the presence of extra-regional players as well as interference in the region further exacerbates the situation. Up until this very point in time, our region has since witnessed the scene of several wars, massive foreign military buildups, the ensuing nightmare of extremism and terrorism, the dangerous accumulation of the most sophisticated weaponry as well as aggression and power projections by various actors. In the region itself, excessive military budgets and arms imports by certain States remain alarming. Unsurprisingly, the US is the number one arms seller to some regional countries, including a country that is the largest buyer of such weaponry with military spending," he said.

Balouji added, "In this context, we must not condone the fact that the Israeli regime relies on its military aid from the US as well as the aggressive military establishment it has created which is a chronic source of insecurity in the region and beyond. One of the biggest concerns is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region. The Israeli regime is the only entity in the region that has refused to accede to the NPT, CWC, and BWC. What's worse, it possesses nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, threatens others even with nuclear annihilation while it enjoys the blanket support of the US despite its threats to regional peace and security in the meantime. On the subject of weapons, chemical weapons have been frequently and massively used in the region."

The Iranian diplomat then noted that Israel is an obstacle to creating a WDM-free region.

"International figures, such as the UN Secretary-General, have been requested to hold consultations with Iran and Iraq as well as with other states of the region regarding measures to enhance the security and stability of the region. Iran not only has steadily supported regional security and has offered some proposals to strengthen the security in the region but also is ready to engage in the said future consultations," he said.

Balouji also pointed to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "Regarding the JCPOA, it is crucial to note that the US withdrawal from it in 2018 and the current US Administration's refusal to rejoin it have resulted in tremendous harm to global efforts toward nuclear non-proliferation. However, Iran has continuously upheld its commitments based on the JCPOA as well as the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement and has been cooperative with the IAEA. Our nuclear program is completely peaceful and any allegation or politicized approach on this matter by any country is rejected. The US, with a history of sustained non-compliance with numerous accords, including the JCPOA, lacks any moral ground to raise such unacceptable statements."

He concluded, "We refute any claims that Iran played any role in the war in Ukraine or broke its commitments, and our offer to clarify the issue at the expert level is still on the table. Iran has the right to meet its security and military needs, including its need for missiles, in conformity with international law and as a sovereign member of the international community. By taking a politicized approach, no individual or legal personality can deny us the realization of this right. To conclude Mr. Chair, we need collective efforts by regional countries to establish inclusive dialogue and security networking in this region. To realize a balanced, active, and smart foreign policy, Iran pursues a courteous relationship with its neighbors."

On the same day, Iranian Ambassador to the UN Amir Saeid Iravani condemned the use of chemical weapons. "The Islamic Republic of Iran once again condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances. We reiterate our call that the Chemical Weapons Convention must be implemented fully, effectively, and without discrimination. We believe that politicizing the Convention's application and using the OPCW for political purposes endanger both the legitimacy of the Organization and the Convention," Iravani said, adding, "The OPCW must be able to carry out its responsibilities in an impartial, professional, and objective manner. Furthermore, in order to establish facts and reach evidence-based conclusions, any investigation into the use of chemical weapons must be impartial, professional, credible, and objective, and must strictly adhere to the provisions and procedures outlined in the Convention."

The ambassador said, "We acknowledge the critical importance of the efforts by the Syrian Arab Republic to uphold its Convention obligations. We urge the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic to maintain their contact and interaction."

Iravani made the remarks at a UN Security Council meeting on Syria.

SPORTS

Iran aim for title at 2022 Sitting Volleyball Worlds: Hadi Rezaei

TEHRAN – Iran sitting volleyball head coach Hadi Rezaei says that they are ready to participate in the 2022 Sitting Volleyball World Championships.

The world's most-decorated sitting volleyball team are determined to win the title for the eighth time.

Rezaei shared his thoughts on what measures would be necessary to take his team to the podium of the prestigious event.

Team Melli prepare for the 13th edition of the World Para Volleyball Championship which will be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The men's and women's teams will be competing for the world titles in Sarajevo from Nov. 4 to 11.

"Our team are ready despite failing to hold warm-up matches ahead of the world championships, but it's normal and we are not disappointed. We will travel to Sarajevo to do our best," Rezaei said in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

Bosnia, three-time world champions, are going to take full advantage of their position as the hosts.

Bosnia coach Ifet Mahmutovic has said they should do their best to please their nation since they are playing in their country. Rezaei also said they are waiting for them in the final.

"Iran want to win the title, that's why we will participate in the competition. We hope Bosnia can reach the final to play us, since they have tough opponents ahead on their way to the final. Definitely, the best team will win the title," he added.

"After the 2020 Paralympics, we continued our preparation and are fully prepared for the world championships," Rezaei concluded.

Iran learn AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023 fate

TEHRAN – Iran discovered their rivals at the AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023.

The 16 teams were divided into four groups with the top two from each group to advance to the quarter-finals in the March 1 to 18, 2023 showpiece.

Hosts Uzbekistan were placed in Group A alongside Indonesia, Iraq and Syria.

Group B will see Qatar, Australia, Vietnam and Iran vying for the quarter-final berths while Korea Republic, Tajikistan, Jordan and Oman are the four teams in Group C.

Group D saw defending champions Saudi Arabia, Japan, China PR and Kyrgyz Republic being drawn together.

Besides continental glory, there will be four tickets at stake for the FIFA U20 World Cup 2023, which will return to Asia in Indonesia from May 20 to June 11.

Draw Result

Group A: Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Syria

Group B: Qatar, Australia, Vietnam, IR Iran

Group C: Korea Republic, Tajikistan, Jordan, Oman

Group D: Saudi Arabia, Japan, China PR, Kyrgyz Republic

Sitting volleyball team named for 2022 World Championships

TEHRAN – Iran sitting volleyball coach Hadi Rezaei announced his 13-man team for the 2022 Sitting Volleyball World Championships.

Iran will participate in the 13th edition of the World Para Volleyball Championship which will be held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina from November 4 to 11.

Team Melli has won seven titles out of 12 editions.

Iran squad:

Davoud Alipourian, Sadegh Bigdeli, Hamidreza Abbasi, Mahdi Babadi, Morteza Mehrzad, Majid Lashgari, Ramezan Salehi, Meysam Alipour, Hossein Golestani, Mohammadhossein Hosseini Jed, Mohammad Nemati, Jamal Nazari, Masoud Emami

Departure date of Team Melli announced

TEHRAN – Iran national football team will depart for Doha, Qatar on Nov. 13.

Mehdi Mohammad Nabi, Iran Football Federation's vice-president, had previously said Team Melli will leave Tehran on November 14.

Iran have been drawn in Group B of the 2022 FIFA World Cup along with England, the U.S. and Wales.

Team Melli are scheduled to play England on Nov. 21 in its opening match.

Carlos Queiroz's side will play a friendly match Nicaragua in Tehran and also face Tunisia in Doha ahead of the World Cup.

Ghamari wins CAFA U15 Championship 2022 Special Award

TEHRAN – Samaneh Ghamari of Iran won the Special Award of the CAFA U15 Championship 2022.

She helped Iran finish runners-up in the tournament held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

On Tuesday, Shadi Mahini's girls defeated Tajikistan 1-0 thanks to Tania Jahanshahi's goal in the first half.

Uzbekistan, who drew 2-2 with Iran on Sunday, won the title due to the superior goal difference.

Uzbekistan had defeated Tajikistan 6-0 in its opening match.

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

Lebanon win WAFF U18 Girls Championship

TEHRAN - Lebanon successfully defended their WAFF U18 Girls Championship title after defeating Syria 5-1 in the final at the Fouad Chehab Stadium.

Lebanon maintained their unbeaten run in the competition, having won all three matches in the group stage before cruising past Syria in the final to claim their second consecutive title.

The hosts dominated the final as they finished the first half with a 2-0 lead thanks to goals from Amina Karime and Christy Maalouf.

Hiba Allouch added the third early in the second half before Syria pulled a goal back through Hayat Dayoub. However, Lebanon sealed the big win goals from Karime and substitute Evelina El Haddad.

Jordan won the bronze medal thanks to a 2-1 win against Lebanon B.

Maya Owaisat gave Jordan the lead with Sara Al Tmaizy doubling their advantage from the penalty spot, while Cecile Iskandar scored Lebanon B's consolation in the second half.

Iran's crude steel output up 9.8% in 9 months on year: WSA

TEHRAN - Production of crude steel in Iran rose 9.8 percent in the first nine months of 2022, as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to the latest report released by the World Steel Association (WSA).

The WSA data put the country's nine-month crude steel production at 22.2 million tons, IRNA reported.

The report shows that Iran's crude steel output has also increased by 26.7 percent in September compared to the same month in 2021, reaching 2.7 million tons.

The world's 64 steel producers managed to produce 1,405,200,000 tons of steel in January-September 2022, 4.3 percent less than the figure for the previous year's same period.

Meanwhile, the world's top steel-producing countries produced 151.7 million tons of crude steel in September to register an increase of 3.7 percent compared to the same month last year.

Based on the WSA report, China, India, Japan, the U.S., and Russia were the world's top steel producers respectively.

Iran has maintained its place as the world's 10th biggest steel producer during the mentioned nine months, according to the WSA data.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

The country is expected to climb to seventh place among the world's top steel producers by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

Commodities worth $4.2b exported from Khuzestan in H1

TEHRAN- Commodities valued at $4.2 billion were exported from Khuzestan province in the southwest of Iran during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), a provincial official announced.

Hamidreza Fallah, the acting head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said that petrochemicals accounted for the lion's share (58 percent) of the province's non-oil export in the mentioned six-month period.

Steel accounted for 13 percent, agricultural products for 13 percent, constructional materials for 11 percent, industrial products for three percent, and handicrafts for one percent of the non-oil exports from the province in the first half of the present year, the official added.

The data released by Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) showed that the value of Iran's non-oil export rose 13.3 percent during the first half of the present year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Based on an IRICA report, the country's six-month non-oil exports stood at 51.783 million tons valued at $24.251 billion, with a 12.5-percent decline in weight.

Liquefied propane, methanol, liquefied butane, liquefied natural gas and film grade polyethylene were the main exported products in the said time span, accounting for 25.6 percent of the total value of the exports.

Major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China with $7.842 billion of imports, Iraq with $3.382 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with $3.112 billion, Turkey with $2.626 billion, and India with $904 million.

According to IRICA data, the Islamic Republic has also imported 16.32 million tons of non-oil commodities worth $26.31 billion in the first six months of the present year, with a 13.15-percent growth in value and a 14.72-percent decrease in weight, year on year.

The first five items of goods imported into the country in the first half of this year include rice, wheat, maize, soybeans and mobile phones. The mentioned items accounted for 20.63 percent of the total import value during this period.

The United Arab Emirates with $7.206 billion was the top exporter to Iran in the said period, followed by China with $6.846 billion, Turkey with $2.680 billion, India with $1.380 billion, and Russia with $876 million worth of exports.

Reportedly, the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 13.2 percent during the first six months of the present year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Iran traded 68.103 million tons of non-oil products worth $50.282 billion with other countries in the mentioned period.

90,000 cars to be imported by Mar. 2023

TEHRAN – Several Iranian private companies have been granted licenses to import automobiles and 90,000 cars are going to be imported by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2023), Deputy Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Manouchehr Manteqi announced on Wednesday.

According to Manteqi, the government has allowed 24 companies and institutions to import automobiles, IRNA reported.

"So far, 380 requests have been submitted by the importing companies to the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade among which 24 firms have been selected," the official explained.

TEDPIX falls 26,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 26,022 points to 1.241 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 7.59 billion securities worth 52.947 trillion rials (about $182.6 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index lost 23,484 points, and the second market's index dropped 38,723 points.

TEDPIX lost 9,000 points to 1.31 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

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).

ICCIMA dispatches trade delegation to Pakistan

TEHRAN – A delegation of businessmen and private sector representatives from Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) left Tehran for Pakistan on Tuesday to meet with Pakistani officials and explore avenues of mutual cooperation.

Getting acquainted with Pakistan's trade laws and regulations, familiarizing with the country's business capacities and investment fields as well as exploring ways to increase the level of transit between the two countries are among the major goals of the Iranian delegation's visit to the country, the ICCIMA portal reported.

As reported, the 26-member delegation, including the head of the Iran-Pakistan joint chamber of commerce, the heads of the three provincial chambers of Isfahan, Zanjan, and Zahedan, the secretary general of the ECO chamber of commerce, and some MPs, is due to visit cities of Karachi and Lahore.

According to ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie, who is heading the delegations, the purpose of this trip is also to identify Pakistan's business and investment capacities.

The visit will provide an opportunity for the Iranian private sector representatives to meet their counterparts face-to-face, the official said.

Iran-Pakistan to ink FTA soon

On the second day of their visit to Pakistan, the Iranian delegation attended a business meeting hosted by Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, the president of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI).

ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie (L) and President of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh

In this meeting, the two sides agreed to form a Joint Arbitration Committee to follow up on the negotiations for signing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two countries.

According to Shafeie, the general aspects of the mentioned FTA have been finalized and the agreement will be signed in the near future.

Speaking at the business forum, Shafeie expressed hope for the realization of a five-billion-dollar trade target between the two countries, saying: "We intend to implement a new economic plan and make the most of the friendly relations between the economic and private sectors of the two countries to advance cooperation based on the plans made."

He mentioned the creation of the Iran-Pakistan joint business council as a special opportunity for the expansion of economic relations and invited businessmen of the two countries to become members of this council in order to exchange information and opinions.

According to the ICCIMA head, the complementary nature of the economies of the two countries has provided a unique opportunity for boosting trade exchanges.

"Iran is one of the major suppliers of energy in the world and the country is ready to meet Pakistan's growing needs in the energy sector," he said.

Shafeie further underlined transit as another potential area for economic cooperation between the two countries and said: "During this year, special cooperation has been formed in this field. If the existing minor problems and issues are resolved, an east-west high-speed corridor will be formed that would facilitate transportation."

Referring to the proximity of Chabahar port to Pakistan's ports, including Gwadar, the head of the Iranian Chamber said: "This will help develop regional trade by creating sea transportation lines."

Expanding trade through barter trade, holding exhibitions

Elsewhere in the meeting, Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Ali Hosseini also underlined the upward trend of trade relations between the two countries despite the sanctions against Iran and the pandemic as an indication of the two countries' determination for strengthening economic relations and said: "increasing trade exchanges to the level of five billion dollars is a goal set by the two governments and in this regard, we must support the private sectors of the two sides to be able to get to know each other's capabilities and areas of business and investment."

He emphasized the implementation of a barter trade mechanism, holding specialized exhibitions in different cities of the two countries, and exchanging trade delegations between the two sides as measures that should be taken for the expansion of trade relations and emphasized that the two sides should follow up on the agreements reached during this meeting.

Iran, Belarus discuss co-op in industry sector

TEHRAN – In a meeting between Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) and Belarus' Deputy Industry Minister Haritonchik Dmitry Ivanovich on Tuesday the two sides discuss areas for mutual cooperation including the industrial sector.

As the TPO portal reported, the two sides stressed establishing joint production lines in various industries such as cars, household appliances, medical equipment as well as computers.

Speaking in this meeting, Ivanovich referred to Iran's experiences in economic development in sanction conditions and said: "We should use Iran's experiences and thank the Iranian authorities for providing us with their experiences."

Mentioning his visit to some Iranian factories and production plants, the official said: "Iran's ability to produce advanced medicine is amazing, and when I return to Belarus, I will definitely tell the health authorities about this ability so that they can also visit Iran and explore avenues of cooperation."

He also emphasized the development of a barter trade mechanism between the two countries and added: "In the field of barter trade, we are ready to start the process with several commodities and if necessary to change some regulations to facilitate the process."

TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak (L) and Belarus' Deputy Industry Minister Haritonchik Dmitry Ivanovich

Further in the meeting, Peyman-Pak for his part emphasized Iran's readiness to launch joint production lines of automobiles and household appliances with Belarus and said: "In trade exchanges, the important thing is that the trade balance of the two countries grows proportionally, and in this context, barter trade would be very helpful."

Referring to the capacity of the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), he informed about Iran's readiness for the transit of Belarusian goods through this route and continued: "In the trip that I will have to Belarus in the coming days, a trade delegation including representatives of important Iranian companies and factories will also accompany me to hold face-to-face meetings with their respective companies and factories."

Ivanovich, who visited Tehran on top of a trade delegation, met with Iranian economic officials and attended several business meetings during his stay.

On Monday, the Belarusian delegation attended a business forum hosted by Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) in which the two sides discussed challenges and ways of expanding economic cooperation.

The event was also attended by Belarus' Ambassador to Tehran Dmitry Koltsov, and Head of TCCIMA Industry and Mining Committee Ali Naqib.

During the forum, the two sides emphasized the need for the development of cooperation in the field of industry, especially in the machinery sector, as well as foodstuff, livestock, and agriculture for boosting trade relations between the two countries.

Iran's renewable capacity to exceed 1,000MW by next March

TEHRAN - Iran's renewable power generation capacity is expected to exceed 1,000 megawatts (MW) by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2023), IRNA reported on Wednesday, citing Iranian Energy Ministry's news portal (known as PAVEN).

As reported, the capacity of the country's renewable power plants which stands at 970 MW is going to reach 1,120 MW with new power plants going operational by yearend.

Currently, over 100 large-scale renewable power plants are operating across Iran.

Iranian Energy Ministry plans to add 10,000 MW to the capacity of the country's renewable power plants by the end of the current government's administration (within the next three years).

Earlier this year, the ministry and some of the country's private contractors signed memorandums of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the construction of the mentioned renewable power plants across Iran.

Renewables, including hydropower, account for nearly seven percent of the country's total energy generation, versus natural gas' 90 percent share.

While Iran enjoys some proper conditions for the development of renewable energies, unfortunately, the country's lagging behind its plan in this due.

Based on Iran's Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021), the country was aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

But in the final year of the plan, only less than one-fifth of the figure has been achieved.

Iran was supposed to become a regional hub in the field of energy in the past Iranian calendar decade (March 2011-March 2021), but evidence shows that the country is facing a shortage even in the supply of electricity inside the country, an issue that many believe that could be achieved by developing renewable energy and increasing efficiency of the thermal power plants.

Over 300,000 tons of sponge iron exported in 6 months

TEHRAN- Iran exported 312,000 tons of sponge iron in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA) announced.

Based on the ISPA's report, the six-month sponge iron output indicates 54 percent drop as compared to the production in the first half of the previous year, which was 673,000 tons.

As previously announced by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Iran's export of sponge iron increased 25 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), from the preceding year.

The IMIDRO's data put the country's sponge iron export at 1.055 million tons in 1400, and at 843,000 tons in 1399.

Direct reduced iron (DRI), also called sponge iron, is produced from the direct reduction of iron ore (in the form of lumps, pellets, or fines) into iron by a reducing gas or elemental carbon produced from natural gas or coal. Many ores are suitable for direct reduction.

While Iran is fighting the U.S. severe sanctions on its economy, and the country's different industrial and economic sectors have been affected by the limitations and difficulties caused by the sanctions condition, the country's mining sector is moving forward noticeably, overcoming such barriers.

Among the mining sector's different products, sponge iron is an outstanding example, as the production of this item is rising more and more in the country.

Washington's whoppers on the war in Ukraine

Militant defenders of Ukraine might be surprised by the country's anti-democratic tendencies

U.S. leaders have amassed a long track record of deception about Washington's international objectives and the nature of U.S. foreign clients. Modest or even minor threats and disruptions became supposed existential threats to America's security, as well as threats to regional or world order, in Washington's overwrought propaganda narratives. In addition, multiple administrations routinely whitewashed the record of authoritarian foreign clients. Thus, autocrats such as Nicaragua's Anastasio Somoza Debayle, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, and ugly extremists, such as Syria's Sunni Jihadists, all became honorary members of the "Free World."

Both components are present in Washington's current campaign of disinformation with respect to the Ukraine war. Two deceptive arguments in U.S. propaganda are so egregious that they stand out as gigantic whoppers. The first whopper is that Russia's war against Ukraine was entirely unprovoked; nothing Ukraine, the United States, or NATO did, this story goes, threatened Russia or contributed in the slightest to the current bloody tragedy. The second whopper is that Ukraine is a liberal democratic country whose mere existence as a model in Russia's neighborhood terrifies Vladimir Putin and his inner circle of oligarchs.

In his initial statement from the White House, President Biden stated flatly that Russia's invasion was "unprovoked and unjustified." The following day, he described the attack as a "brutal assault on the people of Ukraine without provocation, without justification, without necessity." The "unprovoked" mantra soon became a staple of the narrative put out by the administration and its allies in the news media and the foreign policy blob.

Criticisms of Russia's military action are entirely justified. The argument that it was utterly unprovoked, however, is misleading at best and an outright falsehood at worst. Respected analysts had warned for more than a quarter century that expanding NATO eastward to Russia's border would turn out badly, no matter who ruled in Moscow, since the move was inherently menacing and intruded on important Russian interests. Yet, multiple U.S. administrations casually spurned those recommendations for caution. Indeed, Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden administration policymakers continued to push for Ukraine's inclusion in NATO, despite the Kremlin's repeated and steadily escalating warnings that such a step would cross a red line and trigger a crisis.

Critics who dare contend that such Western actions constituted unwise provocations and were a major factor in the breakdown of East-West relations have been subjected to a barrage of vilification, led by the Biden administration. The favorite allegation is that they are echoing "Putin's talking points." The historical record, however, contains abundant evidence against such a simplistic smear.

Somewhat more sophisticated proponents of the thesis that the United States and NATO did nothing to provoke Russia, argue that there was no realistic prospect that Ukraine could join the Alliance for many years, if ever, so Putin had no reason to worry. Those arguments conveniently dodge the point that Moscow did not merely object to Ukraine getting a NATO membership card; more fundamentally, Russian leaders objected to Ukraine becoming a NATO military asset, whether formal membership was a feature or not.

It is an important distinction, because Western weaponry poured into the country, U.S. personnel trained Ukrainian military and intelligence forces, and U.S. forces conducted joint war games (military exercises) with Ukrainian military units, as did forces from other NATO countries. There is even credible evidence that U.S. and Ukrainian intelligence operatives conducted joint cyberattacks on Russian targets. To contend that such actions did not constitute a major provocation is profoundly dishonest.

So much for the first whopper. Now on to whopper two. A coordinated barrage of propaganda from the administration and its ideological allies insists that Ukraine is a bastion of freedom and democracy now under assault by a brutal authoritarian neighbor. Former CIA station chief Dan Hoffman contended that "What scares Vladimir Putin at the heart of this conflict is democracy." He added that "Putin couldn't stomach a democracy on his border with a Russian??speaking population and commercial links to Europe."

At best, that argument is only half right. Russia is the aggressor in the current war, and there is no doubt that Russia is a nasty state. Democracy in that country has been dying a slow death for two decades at Putin's hands.

However, the notion that Ukraine is a democracy—much less a liberal democracy—is belied by extensive facts. Even during the early years after the 2014 "Maidan Revolution," there were numerous worrisome features to Kyiv's conduct. The new government under President Petro Poroshenko implemented onerous censorship measures, harassed and even jailed regime critics, shelled civilians in the secessionist Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and continued the systematic corruption that had plagued Ukraine since it became independent in 1991. Those trends have persisted under current President Volodymyr Zelensky.

By the standards of corruption and political freedom alone, Ukraine was not a liberal democracy even before the war with Russia began. The annual report on corruption put out by Transparency International, published in early 2022, should have been extremely sobering to Ukraine's defenders. Transparency evaluated 180 countries, and on a 1 to 180 scale, with 1 being the country with the least corruption. Ukraine ranked 122, just 14 points better than Russia.

In its 2022 annual report on political freedoms, Freedom House rated Ukraine just "partly free," a status similar to that given to countries ruled by such sketchy regimes as Rodrigo Duterte's in the Philippines. Even that was a generous rating at the time, and according to multiple accounts, developments across the board have shown serious deterioration since the war began. Zelensky has outlawed opposition political parties, closed nearly all opposition news outlets, and imprisoned numerous critics and even officials in his own administration, accusing them of being pro-Russian traitors. There are even credible reports of torture being used in political prisons and of pro-regime death squads operating with impunity throughout the country.

Zelensky and his colleagues have no tolerance for critics, domestic or foreign. The willingness to target and attempt to intimidate foreign critics became abundantly clear this summer when his government's Center for Countering Disinformation (partly funded by U.S. taxpayers, no less) published a "blacklist" of such opponents. Numerous prominent Americans were on that list, including University of Chicago Professor (and the dean of foreign policy realists), John Mearsheimer, Fox News host Tucker Carlson, former congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, and Cato Institute Senior Fellow Doug Bandow. The ominous, threatening nature of the blacklist became even clearer in late September, when the CCD issued a revised roster (including addresses) of the top 35 targets in early October. That narrower, high-priority list denounced those critics as "disinformation terrorists" and "war criminals." Such conduct definitely is not consistent with the behavior of a liberal democracy. Yet official Washington and its media echo chamber persist in trying to market that whopper.

Washington's pervasive, dishonest propaganda campaign is certain to continue, aided and abetted by a shamelessly pro-war news media. The more pertinent question is whether the American people will wake up and realize that they've been deceived yet again about a dubious U.S. overseas intervention on behalf of an even more dubious foreign client.

(theamericanconservative.com)

Importance of October 27 in history of Kashmir

The October 27, 1947 day is important in the history of Kashmir, a commentary sent to the Tehran Times by Pakistan's embassy in Iran says.

In part of the long article, the writer, Reza Ali, also gives some figures about the number of people killed or arrested, homes destroyed, as well as the number of women widowed, gang-raped or the children orphaned.

Following is an excerpt of the article:

This day (October 27) endangered peace and security in the region with clear implications of a threat to world peace.

It is therefore, reasonably understandable that on this day Kashmiris look to the world community longingly to come to their help in a big way to rescue them from their plight so that peace and security is ensured in the region, which will certainly be a long-leap forward towards the quest for universal peace.

Such a day will be remembered by over thirteen million Kashmiris.

On this day, 75 years ago, the Indian armed forces landed, for the first time, on Srinagar airport with the assigned task to rob Kashmiris of their birth right of self-determination, in blatant violation of the terms of Partition Plan, the relevant provision of the Indian Independence Act, the UN Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

India trampled the provisions of the UN Charter, which clearly states that "member (states) shall settle their disputes peacefully and refrain from the use or threat of force and interference in territorial unity and political independence of any state".

The universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted on December 10, 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly, mandated that "all human beings are born free and equal. Everyone has the right to the life, liberty and the security of person... No one should be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile and everyone has the right to fair trial. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and the right to leave any country."

The United Nations, in its resolution of January 5, 1949 provided that the Kashmir dispute will be decided through free and impartial plebiscite.

The article reiterated that "it is clear that sustainable peace in South Asia is contingent upon settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people."

Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and across the globe mark October 27.

Now, the Kashmir dispute has become the focus of attention at the global level post August 2019 as India violated the international laws in IIOJK

WORLD HEADLINES

Ukraine war: South Africa refuses to seize sanctioned Russian superyacht

South Africa says it will allow a sanctioned Russian oligarch to dock his superyacht in Cape Town.

The $521m (£472m) vessel, which belongs to Alexei Mordashov - an ally of Russian leader Vladimir Putin - left Hong Kong earlier this week.

South African opposition leaders had urged the government to seize the 465ft long (141m) yacht called The Nord.

But a spokesman for President Cyril Ramaphosa said he saw "no reason" to comply with Western sanctions.

"South Africa has no legal obligation to abide by sanctions imposed by the US and EU," Vincent Magwenya told reporters in Pretoria on Tuesday.

"South Africa's obligations with respect to sanctions relate only to those that are specifically adopted by the United Nations," Magwenya added, noting that Mordashov is not under any UN-sponsored sanctions.

Western countries and their allies have imposed sanctions on more than 1,000 Russian individuals and businesses in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Like many other African countries, Ramaphosa's government has so far avoided directly criticizing Russia, abstaining in several UN votes that have expressly condemned the war. Pretoria has also called for a negotiated settlement to end the conflict.

Biden, Sunak agree to stand by Ukraine in first call

United States President Joe Biden and Britain's new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak have agreed to work together to support Ukraine and stand up to China, the White House said in a statement, in a first phone call hours after Sunak became Britain's third prime minister this year.

The two leaders reaffirmed the "special relationship" that exists between their countries and said they would work together to advance global security and prosperity, the White House said in a read-out of the conversation on Tuesday.

"The leaders agreed on the importance of working together to support Ukraine and hold Russia accountable for its aggression," it said.

Biden and Sunak also agreed to "address the challenges posed by China," which Washington has identified as its top geopolitical and economic rival on the world stage.

Downing Street released its own read-out of the call in which it said the pair "discussed the extent of UK-US cooperation, both bilaterally and in regions such as the Indo-Pacific," as well as the more contentious issue of Northern Ireland.

US, Japan, South Korea vow response if North Korea tests nuclear bomb

US says full military capabilities, including nuclear, will be used to protect its allies South Korea and Japan.

An "unparalleled" scale of response would be warranted if North Korea conducts a seventh test of a nuclear weapon, the United States, Japan, and South Korea have warned.

The warning was issued on Wednesday amid concerns by the US and its regional allies that North Korea could be poised to resume nuclear bomb testing for the first time since 2017.

"We agreed that an unparalleled scale of response would be necessary if North Korea pushes ahead with a seventh nuclear test," South Korean first vice foreign minister Cho Hyun-dong told a news conference in Tokyo.

Cho made his comments alongside Japan's Vice Foreign Minister Takeo Mori and US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman.

North Korea has been carrying out weapons tests at an unprecedented pace this year, firing more than two dozen short and medium-range ballistic missiles in recent weeks, including a missile that overflew Japan.

"We urge (North Korea) to refrain from further provocations," Sherman said, calling the North's actions "reckless" and deeply destabilizing for the region.

Sherman also said that the US will use its full military capabilities, "including nuclear, conventional and missile defence", to protect its allies Japan and South Korea.

North Korea needs to understand that the US commitment to the security of South Korea and Japan is "iron clad", she said.

"And we will use the full range of US defence capabilities to defend our allies, including nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities," she said.

Putin watches first Russian nuclear drill since Ukraine war

Vladimir Putin has overseen annual exercises by Russia's strategic nuclear forces at a time of heightened tensions with the West over his eight-month-long war in Ukraine.

Ballistic and cruise missiles were launched in the Far East and Arctic, the Kremlin said.

The US was told about the drill under the terms of the New Start arms treaty.

The launches took place as Russia makes claims that Ukraine is plotting to use a "dirty bomb".

A "dirty bomb" is an explosive device mixed with radioactive material and the Russian allegations have been widely rejected by Western countries as false.

Kyiv warned the claims indicate Moscow itself could be preparing such an attack.

The last Russian nuclear drill took place five days before it invaded Ukraine.

Nahavand may attract more travelers due to archaeological feats

TEHRAN– Archaeological traces of Seleucid occupation in Nahavad may help turn the ancient Iranian city to be a major destination for cultural tourism, an archaeologist has said.

"The discovery of a tumulus-shaped tomb in the Nagarechi hill will revolutionize the tourism of Nahavand, and we are waiting for funding to start the third season of excavation in this area," Mohsen Khanjan, who led the previous excavation, said on Tuesday.

"So far, the results of these excavations have strengthened the connection between the temple of Laodicea and Naqarachi, and currently it has ended in a tumulus tomb of the Seleucid period, which is the first tumulus tomb discovered in Iran."

Such archaeological surveys can reveal many dark corners of the country's history during the Seleucid period, Khanjan added.

What is achieved in Tepe (the hill of) Naqarechi was noticed by foreign media and this is considered a turning point for attracting foreign tourists to the city, the archaeologist added.

"If credit is provided for the third season of excavation on Naqarechi hill, it will certainly create a special situation in tourism and tourist attraction for Hamedan province, and Nahavand in particular."

Earlier in May, archaeologists said they had discovered what was believed to be the tomb of a Seleucid satrap or general in Hamedan, providing an extraordinary insight into the Hellenistic life in west-central Iran.

The discovery is made in Tepe Naqarechi near what archaeologists have long been tracing to unearth the Seleucid Laodicea Temple under the modern town of Nahavand in Hamedan province.

Naqarechi is a circular hill with a height of about eight meters situated among orchards in the southeast of Nahavand," Khanjan said.

"Nahavand was one of the towns that Seleucids built during their Iran rule over occupied Iran, using their artisans, teachers, artists, historians, traders, ... to Greekize Iranian land."

The archaeologist said the recent discovery might be a clue about the detection of Seleucid burial rituals in Iran or even their inspirations from Iranians of the time. "Due to the scarcity of the so-far discovered Seleucid works in Iran, we do not know much about the architecture of Greek dwellings and their burial customs."

Khanjan believes the discovery can be of great help to archaeologists in illuminating the dark corners of the Seleucid period on the Iranian plateau.

Over the past couple of years, Khanjan has led several archaeological seasons to possibly unearth the Laodicea Temple believed to be placed beneath the Dokhaharan's sanctuary.

As mentioned by him, in addition to a Greek inscription, other significant objects such as bronze statues of Greek gods, a stone altar, a column head, a column shaft, a column base, and pottery pieces had been discovered in the Dokhaharan neighborhood.

"Regarding those findings, we concluded that the history of the city of Nahavand goes far back in prehistoric times, contrary to what previously believed it only dates back to the Seleucid period."

In 1943, archaeologists discovered an 85x36 centimeter ancient inscription of 30 lines written in Greek calling on the people of Nahavand to obey the laws of the government. The inscription indicated the existence of the Laodicea Temple, which had been built by the Seleucid king who ruled Asia Minor, Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC), for his wife Queen Laodicea.

Two of the inscriptions as well as four bronze statuettes unearthed at the site are on display in the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran. And, column capitals and bases are currently being used as decorations in Nahavand's Hajian Bazaar and several other parts of the city.

The Seleucid Empire was a Hellenistic state ruled by the Seleucid dynasty, which existed from 312 BC to 63 BC; Seleucus I Nicator founded it following the division of the Macedonian Empire, vastly expanded by Alexander the Great. Seleucus received Babylonia (321 BC) and from there expanded his dominions to include much of Alexander's near-eastern territories. At the height of its power, the Empire included central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

Fars province to host gastronomy events

TEHRAN–The southern province of Fars will be hosting three gastronomy events during the second half of the current Iranian year, which ends on March 20, 2023, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Two festivals and a conference on food tourism are scheduled to be held in the province by the end of the year, Ebrahim Bakhtiari explained on Wednesday.

Local food of the province needs to be introduced and promoted properly, and this can only be achieved through events such as conferences and festivals, in close collaboration with the private sector, the official added.

Private companies have entered into Fars's local cuisine industry for almost a year and a half now, offering foreign tourists local cuisine education tours, he noted.

Travel packages, including local food and drinks, are also designed for foreign trippers, he mentioned.

Iran is the paradise of foodies. Every province and even every city of Iran has its specific delectable dishes. So, one can enjoy a wide range of foods here in Iran and Kermanshah is one of the most popular places among foodies.

The cornerstone of every Persian meal is rice or Polo. Persian cuisine is, above all, about balance — of tastes and flavors, textures and temperatures. In every meal, even on every plate, you'll find both sweet and sour, soft and crunchy, cooked and raw, hot and cold.

No Persian meal is complete without an abundance of herbs. Every table is set with sabzi-khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten raw and by the handful, often tucked into a piece of fresh flatbread with a bite of feta, cucumber, or walnuts.

Experts believe that food tourism has become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism and, at the same time, has naturally positioned itself as an element of diversification of tourism with a high impact on the promotion of sustainable development at the regional and local levels.

In 2020, Iran joined an online campaign launched by the UNWTO to promote gastronomy as an essential part of tourism. Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

Emerging destinations: Maragheh fossil paradise

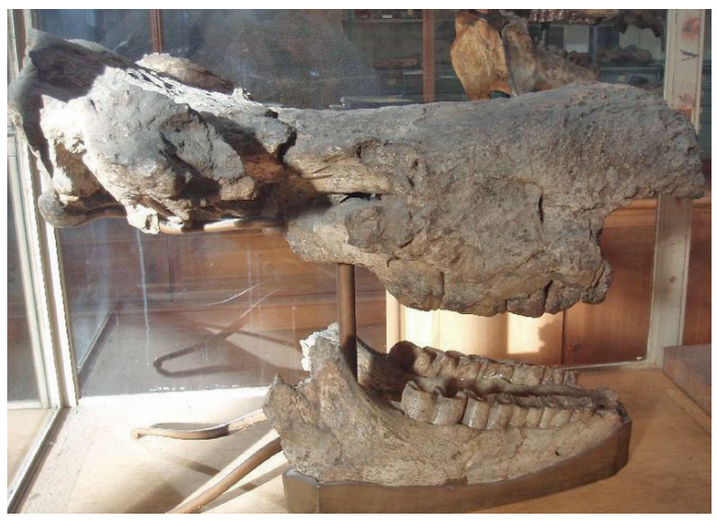
from page 1 ▸ Abbas Qaderi, who presides over the Iranian Paleontological Society, said in April that the fossil site should be designated as a geopark. "The Maragheh fossil site is among the five most important and valuable vertebrate fossil sites in the world and it has the potential to be designated an international geopark," Qaderi said.

"This valuable capacity, which is unmatched in other countries in the region and is rare in other parts of the world, calls for further study, introduction, and creation of various geosites as part of an important global geopark," Qaderi explained.

According to an article authored jointly by Majid Mirzaie Ataabadi, Raymond L. Bernor, Dimitris S. Kostopoulos, Dominik Wolf, and several other international archaeologists, the site is unique amongst the three classical Pikermian faunas in its clear stratigraphic display and layer-cake stratigraphy with several, laterally continuous volcanic ashes that are readily amenable to radioisotopic dating.

As with Pikermi and Samos, Maragheh is a true "Lagerstatte" because of the sheer abundance and diversity of its fauna.

A Russian explorer, Khanikoff has been credited with first finding the Maragheh site in 1840



and sending a small collection to Dorpat University (now the University of Tartu, Estonia). The Maragheh fauna was initially studied in the latter half of the 19th century.

These early works provided data on Maragheh's similarity to Pikermi. The Austrian paleontologist Pohlig was invited by a merchant from the nearby city of Tabriz to visit the locality in 1884, and it was Pohlig that made the first comprehensive collection and geological study of Maragheh.

Pohlig explored extensively across the Maragheh basin and would appear to have sampled fossils from nearly all if not all the Maragheh section. The Pohlig collection in the Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien, is extraordinary as an early collection because much of it preserves locality information which facilitates understanding of its stratigraphic provenance.

Two other Austrian paleontologists, Rodler and Kittl, visited Maragheh and made an extensive collection of fossils which were later published by Kittl (1887), Rodler (1890), Rodler and Weithofer (1890), and Schlesinger (1917).

Damon, from the British Museum of Natural History, London, made a small collection briefly communicated by Lydekker in 1886.

In 1897, the French paleontologist Marcellin Boule secured permission to conduct a paleontological expedition to Maragheh in 1904. The 1904 French expedition to Maragheh was organized at a very grand scale for this time in paleontology.

In addition, a group of French paleontologists assisted by 12 local laborers excavated a large sample of Maragheh fossils from Kingir, Kopran, Shollevend, and Kermedjawa.

More than 50 years elapsed before other reported expeditions occurred at Maragheh. Takai from Tokyo University collected Maragheh fossils from Kerjabad. Robert Savage of Bristol University also visited Maragheh in 1958 and collected fossils. Tobien, from Johannes-Gutenberg University, Mainz made important excavations of the middle portion of the Maragheh sequence in the 1960s. Moreover, many studies conducted in the 1970s yielded important outcomes as well.

After decades of excavation activities in the Maragheh basin, Iran's Department of Environment and the National Museum of Natural History unveiled a new initiative and sponsored new excavations in the area which resulted in the nomination of ten square km of Maragheh fossiliferous area as a national protected zone. Moreover, their efforts resulted in the establishment of a field museum and a research station nearby.

Khorasan Razavi to expand health tourism

TEHRAN –The Khorasan Razavi tourism directorate plans to facilitate health tourism development to attract more Iraqi travelers.

To attract more health tourists from Najaf to the northeastern province, necessary conditions will be put in place, the provincial tourism chief has said.

"With the cooperation of tourism organizations, we are prepared to facilitate the conditions needed to attract health tourists from Najaf," Seyyed Javad Mousavi said on Sunday.

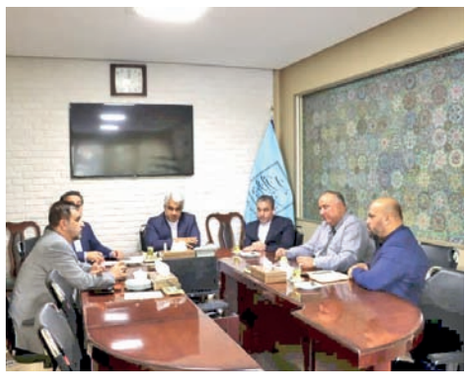
He made the remarks in a meeting with Najaf's tourism chief Abd al-Karim Tahir in Mashhad.

A network of travel agencies and tourist companies will be established in Khorasan Razavi and Najaf provinces to assist pilgrims, Mousavi added.

The largest and best accommodation centers in the country can be found in Mashhad, where pilgrims and tourists have access to the cheapest services, he noted.

For his part, Tahir said that in addition to having good relations with the people of Mashhad, Najaf citizens are very interested in pilgrimage and health care services in Mashhad.

It is hoped that with cooperation between



the tourism directorates of both provinces, the conditions for traveling to Mashhad will be facilitated, he added.

Mashhad, the provincial capital, is Iran's holiest and second-largest city. Its raison d'être and main sight is the striking massive shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam.

Dozens of five-star hotels and hostels are dotted across Mashhad. The city has also the highest concentration of water parks in the country, and it also embraces a variety of cultural and historical sites that are generally crowded. The metropolis is also a good place to buy top handwoven rugs and carpets, and it's a staging post for travel to Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and little-touristic Khorasan regions.

According to available data, Iran hosts an average of one million medical tourists each year. "About one million medical tourists, mainly from the neighboring countries, arrive in Iran annually," Mohammadreza Tarjoman, who presides over the Health Ministry's tourism office, said in April.

"The majority of inbound medical passengers come from the neighboring countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan," the official said. Talking about hospitals and clinics, he said a selection of 200 Iranian medical centers have permission to accept foreign patients.

Experts believe medical tourism in Iran is a win-win opportunity both for the country and foreign patients, as they are offered affordable yet quality treatment services and the country gains considerable foreign currency. Amongst Iran's trump cards are the presence of credible surgeons and physicians, cutting-edge medical technologies, high-tech medicine and diverse specializations, super affordable procedures, and finally its hospitable people.

Iran seeks to exceed its yearly medical travelers to around two million in [calendar year] 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

Qasr-e Shirin linked Babylon to Iranian heartland, survey suggests

TEHRAN—New evidence suggests that Qasr-e Shirin in western Iran was once a bridge between Babylon and the Iranian heartland during ancient times.

"A recent survey indicates that Qasr-e Shirin played a vital role in connecting Babylon (Mesopotamia) to the inner and eastern regions of Iran from the Median to Sassanid eras, said Yadollah Heidari Babakamal, who led the archaeological survey," CHTN reported on Wednesday.

Archaeologists recently completed the survey at Saheli Street of the Qasr-e Shirin in the western Kermanshah province, the report said.

The greatest importance of Qasr-e Shirin during the Sassanid era can be attributed to the presence of King Khosrow Parviz, who built a complex of palaces, castles, religious buildings, and a water supply system in the area, he noted.

Though it appears that these buildings were used during the

early Islamic centuries (Umayyad and Abbasid eras), Qasr-e Shirin's architectural and historical remains go beyond the mentioned periods, he added.

The remains of the architecture and clay pieces discovered during the excavation suggest that these works are not related to one building and are likely to be related to several buildings that served a variety of purposes during the Sassanid period as well as the late Islamic era, he explained.

Earlier this month, the provincial tourism chief Mohammadreza Soheili announced that the underway archaeological survey in Qasr-e Shirin aims to study and explore the antiquity of the city and the relics discovered during previous excavations.

A budget of 3.1 billion rials ($11,000) has been allocated to the project, the official added.

The ancient city of Qasr-e Shirin has always played a pivotal role because of its strategic geographical position and its location on the Silk Road; as a crossroads, it connected ancient Persia's plateau from East, including Rey, Hamadan, and Kermanshah to Western civilizations such as Chaledea and Babel.

The city was a metropolitan during the Sassanid era (226-651 CE). Qasr-e Shirin, a city with over 2000 years of history, was famous for being the city of love. Khosrow II, known as Khosrow Parviz (590 to 628 CE), the twenty-second Sassanid king, built a castle for his lifelong beloved Shirin in the city. The folklore has it that Shirin was the daughter of the Queen of Armenia who fell in love with the Sassanid king. Shirin followed her love to Khosrow and settled in Qasr-e Shirin, before sending a messenger to the King in Ctesiphon informing him of her move.

The king, who was engaged in a battle with the invading Arabs, decided to build a palace for his beloved Shirin. The story of this love has become the most famous classics in Kurdish and Persian literature, and the great poet Nizami Ganjavi has created his epic tragedies 'Khosrow and Shirin' and 'Shirin and Farhad' based on the two different versions of the story.

The rivalry between the powerful king who was victorious in his wars with the Byzantine Empire and Farhad, a master stone carver, who carved the palace of Shirin on the hard rocks of Mount Bisotun and fell in love with the queen provides a pretext for Nizami to explore various psychological, spiritual, and philosophical aspects of the human being. The discourse between Khosrow and Farhad is considered one of the literary masterpieces of the world.

Iran, Uzbekistan sign technological cooperation agreement

TEHRAN – Iran's trade and technology delegation signed a technological cooperation agreement with the public and private sectors of Uzbekistan worth $5.5 million.

The Iranian delegation has traveled to Uzbekistan to participate in the International Week of Innovative Ideas "InnoWeek 2022" held on October 17-21, where 30 Iranian knowledge-based companies presented their products to Uzbek officials and investors from 18 countries.

On the sidelines of the event, 15 technological cooperation memorandums worth $6.5 million were inked between knowledge-based companies of the two countries.

In this meeting, Marzieh Shaverdi, empowerment manager of the Innovation and Prosperity Fund proposed the establishment of a joint fund to finance innovative projects of the two countries.

Also, it was decided that the two sides would present their proposals in the two areas of financing projects and establishing a joint fund for their implementation.

Also, before this meeting, Shaverdi met Roman Shaikhutdinov, Uzbek Minister of Innovative Development.

Shaikhutdinov also thanked the Iran Innovation Fund for supporting the presence of Iranian knowledge-based companies in the Uzbekistan Innovation Week exhibition and proposed the creation of a joint credit line to facilitate the entry of Iranian knowledge-based companies into the Uzbek market.

According to the Global Innovation Index (GII 2022) report, Iran ranks second and Uzbekistan ranks third in the Central and South Asian region.

Innovation development in 5 years

Knowledge-based companies and creative startups have grown over the past five years, and Iran has risen 45 places in the Global Innovation Index, according to the UNESCO 2021 Report.

The Global Innovation Index in Iran from 2015 to 2019 has risen from 106 to 61 with continuous improvement, showing 45 steps of growth.

The development of accelerators and innovation centers over the last five years has led to a rapid increase in startups and knowledge-based companies.

Between 2014 and 2017, exports of knowledge-based goods grew by a factor of five, before slumping in 2018 after the U.S. withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015), commonly referred to as the nuclear deal, and re-imposed sanctions.

The report states that innovation in Iran has developed rapidly over the past five years, and by the end of last year, 49 accelerators and 113 innovation centers had provided services to start-ups with the participation of the private sector.

Over the few past years, with the support of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the Iranian house of innovation has been set up in several countries to develop the global market for knowledge-based products.

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

Mehdi Ghalehnoei, an official with the vice presidency for science and technology, said in February that in the past Iranian calendar year which ended on March 20, knowledge-based companies gained about $800 million in revenue from export, and in the current year, the figure seems to reach up to $2 billion.

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

> Knowledge-based companies of the two countries inked 15 technological cooperation memorandums worth $6.5 million.

Iran shook with over 600 earthquakes in a month

TEHRAN – Some 603 earthquakes have been recorded across the country over the past calendar month (September 23- October 22), according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Of the total 603 quakes, 11 were more than 4 on the Richter scale, the largest of which occurred on October 5, with a magnitude of 5.4 in Khoy, West Azerbaijan.

Statistically, 530 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, and 62 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 to 4 have occurred. At least 9 earthquakes with a magnitude of 4.5 to 5 have occurred in the country.

Among the provinces of the country, West Azerbaijan with 178 earthquakes, Khorasan Razavi and Kerman with 73 and 53 earthquakes, respectively, recorded the highest number of earthquakes in the country.

One quake was also recorded in Tehran province, which was in Pishva, Varamin county with a magnitude of 1.9 on the Richter scale.

> At least 9 earthquakes with a magnitude of 4.5 to 5 have occurred in the country.

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

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

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

IRANIAN LANGUAGES AND SCRIPTS

Part 23

Local Persian from other areas: Smirnova (1978: Isfahan), Waziri (1364 SH./1985: Shushtar), Afshar (1368 SH./1989: Tabriz), Kalbasi (1370 SH./1991: Isfahan), Gorusin (1370 SH./1991: Hamadan), Pur-Hosayni (1370 SH./1991: Kerman area), Baqai (1370 SH./1991: Kermani, proverbs), Nayyer (1370 SH./1991: Shiraz), Babak (1375 SH./1996: Zarand, grammatical sketch, sample sentences, glossary), Said (1375 SH./1996: Bardsir, Kerman province, glossary), Rezai (1377 SH./1998, ed. Rafii, 1381 SH./2002: Birjand), Ghiathi Golpayagani (1378 SH./1999: Golpayagan), Asadi Guki (1379 SH./2000: Golbaf, Kerman province, glossary of unusual words, proverbs, dobaytis), Elmdari (1379 SH./2000: Damavand), Malekzada (1380 SH./2001: Zarqan in Fars, glossary), Sadeqi (1380 SH./2001: Qom), Saryazdi (1380 SH./2001: Sirjan), Ali-Naqi Behruzi (1348 SH./1969: Kazerun), Mohammad-Jawad Behruzi (1381 SH./2002: Kazerun, poetry with Persian translation, short glossary), Aina-negini (1381 SH./2002: Raborbaft, Kerman area, glossary of words and idioms, some dobaytis), Mohseni (1381 SH./2002: Sirjan), Farhadi Rad (1382 SH./2003: Baft, Kerman area, etymological glossary), Anjom Shoa (1381 SH./2002: Kerman), Mohseni (1381 SH./2002: Sirjan).

From Baluchistan there is a brief description of Dehvari Persian spoken in Saravan by Denis Bray (Census of Baluchistan for 1911, cited by Grierson in Linguistic Survey of India X, pp. 452-53).

Grierson also included specimens of Badakhshani Persian in the Linguistic Survey (pp. 527-30), and D. L. R. Lorimer studied the phonology of Badakhshani and Madaglashti Persian spoken in Afghanistan with text specimens (1922). More recent is Rozenfel'd's (1971) study.

Ivanow published Anvari's Tabaqat in the local Persian of Herat (1923). Kabuli Persian texts were published by Farhadi (1955). Of Hazaragi Persian there are a few specimens in Efimov (1965) and Dulling (1973).

Grammars and glossaries of Afghan Dari include Hamidi (1347 SH./1968), Kiseleva (1985: grammar), Kiseleva and Mikolaichik (1986: dictionary), and Fekrat (1364 SH./1997: Herati, grammatical sketch, glossary, text samples, Heravi words in older literature).

Among early publications on Central Asian Tajik are Semenov (1900-01), Koilakov's (1906) Bukharan Judeo-Tajik dictionary with grammatical notes, and Zarubin's description of Judeo-Tajik from Samarqand with text samples (1928).

More recently, Tajik and its dialects have been studied especially by Khromov (1962), Rozenfel'd, and Rastorgueva. Rozenfel'd (1982) is a dictionary of Tajik dialects; Wei (1962) a comparative study of Tehrani, Kabuli, and Tajik Persian; Kalbasi (1374 Š./1995) a comparative study of Persian and Tajik grammar and vocabulary; Rustamov and Ghafforov (1985) a grammar of modern literary Tajik; and Soper (1996) a comparison of the verb systems of Tajik, Uzbek, and Qashqai (typological characteristics, Turkic influence on Tajik, Tajik influence on Turkic).

Introductions to Tajik include Rastorgueva (1963), Rzehak (1999), and Nabiev (1992). Hadizadeh (1382 Š./2003) is a glossary of uncommon words in Samarqandi Persian.

Persian has been written in various scripts: Arabic, Avestan (so-called Pazand), Hebrew (Judeo-Persian), Syriac, Manichean, and Cyrillic (Tajik).

Southeastern Iran

There are four main groups of dialects in southeastern Iran: Larestani; dialects spoken from Jiroft and Kahnuj to Bandar-e Abbas (with Hormoz); Bashkardi (q.v.), North and South. Kumzari, once spoken on the Musandam peninsula across the Strait of Hormoz, appears to be intermediate between the Fars and Larestani-Bandari dialects.

The dialects of the island of Qeshm and along the coast north of Bandar-e Abbas have not yet been investigated.

The earliest studies were of Larestani (Mann, 1909: specimens from Garrash and Lar) and of Kumzari (Jayakar, 1902; Thomas, 1930). Bashkardi words were first recorded by Floyer (1882).

Since the publication of the CLI, numerous articles and books on these dialects have appeared, among them Sadeqi (1364 Š./1985: Lari and Garmsiri words in a medical manuscript from 893/1487-88), Wosuqi (1369 Š./1990: Larestani), Niknafas Dehqani (1377 Š./1998: dialects of Jiroft and Kahnuj), Pelevin (1377 Š./1998: Bandari), Khonji (1378 Š./1999: Larestani, Khonji dialect, grammar, text samples, glossary), Raf'ati (1379 Š./2000: Jiroft, riddles), Najibi Fini (1381 Š./2003: Fini), Sangbar (1383 Š./2004: Bandari).

Minabi and Bashkardi are currently being studied by Gerardo Barbera. Work has also begun on Ilya Gershevitch's Bashkardi material, now in the Ancient India-Iran Trust in Cambridge, UK.

To be continued

Source: Iranica

1,870 Iranians among world's top 2% most-cited researchers

From page 1 ▸ From 1996 to 2021, 715 researchers from Iran were listed, out of the total number of 195,506 international researchers.

Science diplomacy

Despite U.S. sanctions, the international activities of Iranian scientists have increased year by year, so that more than 35 percent of Iranian articles in Scopus have been multi-national projects, the deputy science minister, Peyman Salehi, has said.

Science diplomacy is the use of scientific collaborations among nations to address common problems and build constructive international partnerships.

In 2021, Iranian scientists published more than 77,000 scientific articles in the Scopus database, ranking 15th worldwide.

The country also ranked 15th and 16th in the world in terms of scientific references.

Academic quality

Fifty-eight universities from Iran were listed among the top universities in Asia, according to the 2022 Asia University Rankings of the Times Higher Education.

The 2022 edition of the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, based on universities' contributions to delivering the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), listed 27 Iranian universities.

The Webometrics Ranking of World Universities 2022 has ranked 694 Iranian institutions among 30,000 top universities across the world.

Also, 59 Iranian universities have been listed among the top 3,000 institutions in the world in terms of academic quality, according to the 2021-2022 report released by University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP).

The Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Graduate Employability Rankings 2022 list has been released, which included three Iranian universities out of a total of 550 institutes worldwide that highlighted graduate employment processes.

Meanwhile, 41 Iranian universities in engineering sciences and 12 universities in computer sciences have made a place among the top 1,188 universities in the world with the announcement of Higher Education World University Rankings 2022 by subject.

> From 1996 to 2021, 715 researchers from Iran were listed, out of the total number of 195,506 international researchers.

It also has introduced 59 Iranian universities among the top institutions in World University Rankings 2022.

The THE Education Young University Rankings 2021 listed 26 Iranian institutions among the world's best universities that are 50 years old or younger.

Moreover, 34 Iranian universities and institutions were listed among the top 1,000 in the world, according to Shanghai Ranking's Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2021.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Families with multiple births to receive monthly allowances

In line with population growth policies, families with triplets or more will receive monthly allowances of up to 5 million rials (nearly $120 at the official rate of 42,000 rials), head of Welfare Organization has announced.

The allowances would be paid when the children are born till the age of 6, IRNA quoted Vahid Ghobadi Dana as saying on Saturday.

Some 17,000 households with three or above births will receive the government support across the country, he stated.

He went on to say that since the Iranian calendar year 1393 (March 2014-March 2015) till 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), nearly 1.5 million births were registered in the country per year, 3 percent of which have been twins and 0.5 percent triplets or more.

خانواده‌های دارای چندقلو کمک ماهانه معیشتی می‌گیرند

در راستای سیاست های افزایش جمعیت، به خانواده‌های دارای سه قلو به بالا ۵۰۰ هزار تومان به صورت ماهانه به عنوان کمک هزینه معیشتی پرداخت می‌شود.

به گزارش ایرنا، وحید قبادی دانا، رییس سازمان بهزیستی روز جمعه با بیان این که کمک هزینه از ابتدای تولد تا ۶ سالگی پرداخت می شود، ادامه داد: تعداد خانواده های دارای فرزند سه قلو به بالا نیازمند کمک معیشتی دولت، ۱۷ هزار خانوار در کل کشور هستند.

قبادی دانا اظهارداشت از سال ۹۳ تا ۹۷ هر سال تقریبا یک میلیون و ۵۰۰ هزار نفر تولد ثبت شد، و بیش از ۳ درصد این تولدها دوقلو به بالا و حدود نیم درصد از آن سه قلو به بالاتر بود.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON OCTOBER 26

New cases	170
New deaths	4
Total cases	7,557,024
Total deaths	144,559
New hospitalized patients	130
Patients in critical condition	134
Total recovered patients	7,331,045
Diagnostic tests conducted	54,325,891
Doses of vaccine injected	154,954,745

TEHRAN TIMES

www.tehrantimes.com

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Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran **P.o. Box:** 14155-4843 **Zip Code:** 1599814713

OCTOBER 27, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Patience is of two kinds: patience over what pains you, and patience against what you covet.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:48 Evening: 17:33 Dawn: 4:58 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:22 (tomorrow)

The Shahnameh as a historical source

Part 4

Its scattered references to events and personalities of the Samanid and the Ghaznavid period have been used as corroborating evidence in historical scholarship.

But more importantly, a great deal of cultural details, pertaining to the Sassanid administrative practices, are included in the poem's various parts.

These are ubiquitous in the ascension speeches of the kings and in the texts of the royal decrees addressed to princes and subjects alike.

Khaleghi-Motlagh has provided a long list of such pieces with their analogues in Persian and Arabic sources.

Iranian dynasties in the Shahnameh

The information provided by the Shahnameh about Iranian dynasties before the Sassanids is overlaid with lore and legend.

Very little from the earlier dynasty of the Achaemenids is preserved in the poem or its ancillary texts except for such that is taken from accounts in Syriac, Greek or other languages.

Nöldeke claims that even the title of derazdast, "long of reach/arms," for King Bahman, son of Esfandiar, who is usually identified with Artaxerxes I Longimanus (r. 465-64 to 424-23 BCE), and who is considered the ancestor of the Sassanids, is not mentioned in the Shahnameh.

The fact is that both the title, and even an explanation for it, are clearly referred to in the Shahnameh where we are told that Bahman was called Ardashir and also that he had such long arms that cho bar pay budi sar-angosht-e u // ze zanu foru tar bodi mosht-e u, "while standing, his fingertips reaches the length of a fist below his knees".

Muslim historians knew the names of some Achaemenid kings, whom they mention in their works. However, the Shahnameh refers only to Bahman, his daughter and successor Homay Chehrzad, her son Darab, and the king who was defeated by Alexander, Dara.

Of these, the rule of Darab, whose name is also shortened to Dara in the Shahnameh and is usually referred to as Dara I by scholars, has certain similarities with the rule of Darius I, especially in his establishment of the post.

Both Bahman and his son, Darab must have entered Iran's literary and folk epic traditions relatively early. We have an epic poem in over ten thousand verses about Bahman and two long prose epics about the adventures of Darab and his children in addition to the Shahnameh.

The stories of Darab, however, are intertwined with that of Alexander, both in the Shahnameh and in other folk and literary sources.

As far as the enemies of Iran are concerned, two remarkable changes happened in the Shahnameh account: the role of Turan became more important than that of Rum, possibly a result of the disastrous invasions of Hepthalites and Turks; and, the pseudo-callisthenic Alexander in Iranian shape supplemented the Alexander as destroyer of Iranian greatness that appears to have been translated into Middle Persian towards the end of the Sassanid period.

Parts of the story, especially the account of Alexander's pilgrimage to Mecca must have been grafted on to the narrative after Islam, and must have entered Ferdowsi's prose archetype from the Muslim version.

The Seleucid period of Iranian history is completely bypassed in the Shahnameh, and from the Parthian rulers, only the last, namely, Ardavan IV, is mentioned in any detail.

However, information about him is placed in the context of the early adventures of Ardashir I. The other Parthian kings are only named in a brief list.

Some scholars believe that the scantiness of reference to the Parthians resulted from a conscious effort by the Sassanid aristocrats to eliminate all reference to the dynasty that they replaced and others are of the opinion that Ferdowsi has summarized the little information about them that existed in his prose archetype.

However, drawing on the reading of two manuscripts in the verse often quoted in this regard, Omidsalar believes that Ferdowsi's archetype included only the names of the Parthian kings rather than any details about them whatsoever: az ira joz az nam nahsnideh am // ke dar name-ye khosravan dideh am ("For this reason, I have not heard but names of them that I have seen in the Book of Kings"), and that he did not interfere with the wording of his prose archetype.

The last section of the Shahnameh, namely the part that deals with the history of the Sassanids is largely a literary recreation of this dynasty's rule.

It is full of such detail that cannot fall in the domain of history proper. An example is the account of the life of Shapur II which is a mixture of the wars of his time and those of the time of Shapur I.

However, because such detail must have been obtained from Sassanid literary sources, it can function as a window into the cultural history and ideals of the Sassanids.

For instance, the ascension speeches that begin the reigns of each of these monarchs, even if not representative of how specific kings may have ruled, characterize how the society expected ideal kings to behave.

Other bits of information about the Sassanids, such as those pertaining to the relationship of the nobility with the common folk (e.g., the story of Bahram Gur), of kings with priests, and of various classes of people with one another, may also be adduced from the Shahnameh.

This is valuable because all but a very small part of the poem is based on literary pre-Islamic sources, and this information helps us deduce certain trends and tendencies of the upper classes of that society.

The final part of the poem, namely the account of Iran's fall to the Muslim armies must have been added after the fall of the Sassanid empire.

This section which includes the details of the fate of Yazdegerd III and the apocalyptic letter of the Sassanid general, Rustam ibn Farrokh-Hormozd to his brother, is a later insertion to the Xwaday-namag after the fall of the Sassanids.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

Concluded.

Persian sci-fi tale illustrates Eartheaters' invasion in 2323

By Mostafa Mousavi Sabet

TEHRAN – A newly-published Persian science fiction story portrays microorganisms named Eatheaters invading the Earth in 2323 in the wake of human's disregard of the environment.

The Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon is the publisher of the novel "Escape from the Zero Year" by Hossein Qorbanzadeh, the acclaimed writer of "Water and Chain".

It is the first installment of the science fiction trilogy "Eartheaters", which is for young adults aged 15 and above.

In a press release published by Kanoon on Tuesday, Qorbanzadeh described the world in 2323 as fast-changing.

"Some of the changes are general and some are really dangerous; undoubtedly, there would be significant developments in knowledge and technology; a character in 'Escape from the Zero Year' says, 'Nothing is unclear up there, space is our backyard.' Therefore, it is likely that space has been conquered by humans and nothing remains unknown for mankind in space," he said.

Would the Earth tolerate humans' deep contempt and the licentious changes? Would mankind find a viable alternative to the Earth?

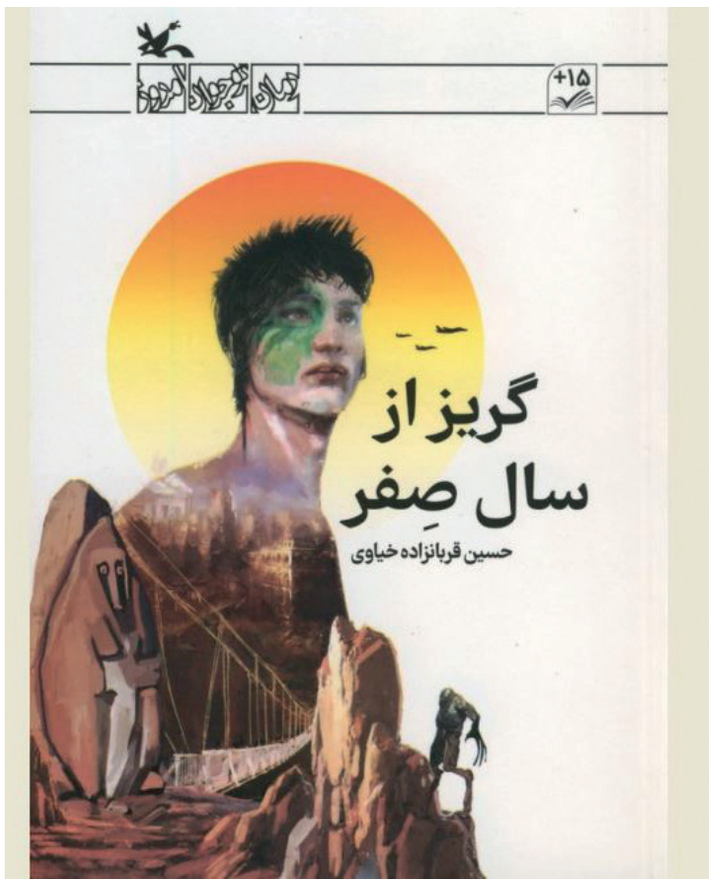
"Escape from the Zero Year" answers, "No". In the novel, the Earth has not endured well beyond man's insults and has been demolished; shocking atomic wars, man's nonchalance and abuse of the environment have ruined a great deal of water and as a result, forests have been destroyed and oxygen-depleted.

Mankind is still in existence, but neither trees nor other plants grow. People use air tanks to live and it seems that there is no problem and, as usual, they are satisfied. However, microorganisms, which were benign, have now become so powerful and malevolent that humans are no longer able to cope with them.

This book also introduces a microorganism, namely "Eartheaters", which will appear in the next two parts of the trilogy.

"The Eartheaters, which are vulnerable to water and oxygen now intend to capture the Earth; they are such powerful microorganisms that people must return to their humane beliefs to fight against the microbes," Qorbanzadeh said.

"In this novel, there is no war; people are tired of and have an aversion to wars, which have threatened their existence. They have lost everything but retain a belief in peaceful coexistence. Weapons of mass destruction now are kept in arsenals. However, catastrophic mistakes cost them dearly, rendering nature no longer able to help people," he added.



Front cover of the science fiction novel "Escape from the Zero Year".

"Aiqar Awakening" and "Mystery of the Hatch" are other parts of the trilogy. Qorbanzadeh holds literary courses at the Kanoon branch in the northwestern Iranian city of Ardebil.

Iran's "Nomad Girl" to compete in OKO ethnographic film festival

Frome Page **1** ▸ The OKO ethnographic film festival will be organized with the support of Poland's EnergaCAMERIMAGE International Film Festival.

The organizers have also initiated the program "OKO Travels", screening Ukrainian films that reflect various aspects of the OKO homeland, its rich culture and history in Helsinki, Sofia and, finally, in Bolgrad, the home to the festival.

This program will be organized with the motto "Look at Ukraine with New Eyes!"

"If you cannot come to Ukraine now and see everything with your own eyes, then Ukraine will come to you," Tetyana Staneva, the director of the festival said.

"With films, stories, culture, pain and joy, so that you have the opportunity to look at Ukraine with different eyes," she added.

She noted that the program aims to strengthen the voice of Ukraine, embody the ideas of cultural diplomacy and demonstrate the power of media resistance.

"Our culture is our weapon, and movies are our ammunition. This is what Ukraine is fighting for and what it is fighting for on the cultural front. The Ukrainian films of our program, our 'cartridges', hit straight to the heart and show the documented truth about the history of Ukraine, its present and hopes for the future," Staneva said.

A scene from "Nomad Girl" directed by Ruhollah Akbari.

Iranian bookstores selling "Russia without Putin"

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of Tony Wood's book "Russia without Putin: Money, Power and the Myths of the New Cold War" has come to Iranian bookstores.

Jahan-e Ketab is the publisher of the book rendered by Piruz Ashraf.

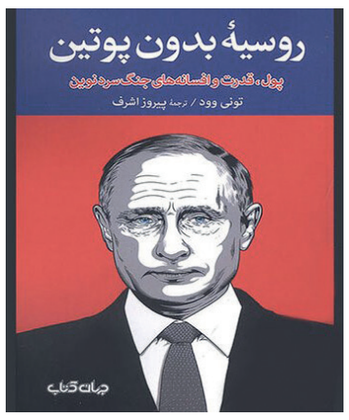
This book shows how the West's obsession with Vladimir Putin prevents it from understanding Russia.

It is impossible to think of Russia today without thinking of Vladimir Putin. More than any other major national leader, he personifies his country in the eyes of the world, and dominates Western media coverage.

In Russia itself, he is likewise the center of attention both for his supporters and his detractors. But, as Tony Wood argues, this focus on Russia's president gets in the way of any real understanding of the country. The West needs to shake off its obsession with Putin and look beyond the Kremlin walls.

In this timely and provocative analysis, Wood explores the profound changes Russia has undergone since 1991. In the process, he challenges several common assumptions made about contemporary Russia.

Against the idea that Putin represents a return to Soviet authoritarianism, Wood argues that his rule should be seen as a continuation of Yeltsin's in the 1990s. The core features of Putinism – a predatory elite presiding over a vastly unequal society – are in fact integral to the system set in place after the fall of Communism.



Front cover of the Persian edition of Tony Wood's book "Russia without Putin".

Wood also overturns the standard view of Russia's foreign policy, identifying the fundamental loss of power and influence that has underpinned recent clashes with the West. Russia without Putin concludes by assessing the current regime's prospects, and looks ahead to what the future may hold for the country.

A strange story of the reunion of an Iranian and an Iraqi soldier on the Arbaeen walk

An interview with Hussain Zahmatkesh

The book "Rumi-e Rum" by Hussain Zahmatkesh, has such a great plot that caused it to be sold extremely well within two months of its publication.

It is an interwoven story of two characters named "Haj Arsalan," the Iranian soldier, and "Barzan Al-Khazarji," the Iraqi soldier, who were both present in the biggest classic war in modern history, and now they meet again and remember each other in the Arbaeen walk.

*** What were your requirements to write this book?**

We should consider that"Rumi-e Rum" is just a novel, not based on history or documentary. There are some standards and requirements in storytelling that a writer should consider, and by requirements, I mean when the author feels that he cannot convey his message to the audience except in the form of a story, and it's the same in this book.

I think it is interesting that the two sides of the story's challenge face each other again after many years in the Arbaeen walk; one Iranian and one Iraqi; One host and one guest.

*** Where did you get the inspiration of writing this book?**

The glory of the Arbaeen pilgrimage formed the idea in my mind. When I saw the beauty of it in the media, and the enthusiasm among the people of all countries for this great ritual, I said to myself that this huge event should not be ignored.

People with all tastes and with all the differences they have in appearance, skin color, language, and culture, side by side, go and return an eighty-kilometer route. There, there is no difference between rich and poor and Iraqis are really good hosts for pilgrims. But during all these years that the Arbaeen walk is held, the question of what really happens between the two countries of Iran and Iraq has always occupied my mind and I decided to write about it.

*** How much did you pay attention to the formal and technical elements of story writing in writing your book?**

It's impossible to write a novel without considering the technical elements! Also, I believe that story and religion can create a good novel at the highest point, and a religious novel should not leave any questions unanswered.

*** Considering the fact that a novel is mostly based on imagination, how much did you use real facts or documents?**

Many of the events in this novel, such as the Mersad operation, are based on documents and reality, and I have tried my best to pay attention to the temporal and spatial setting in its narration.

*** What feedback have you received from the audience so far?**

Only two months after the publication of the book, it became a bestseller! And, I saw good feedback on social media as well.