

As If I Am Reborn

Exclusive report on women's meeting with Leader ▶ Page 2



TEHRAN - The night before, I was told that my name was not confirmed, and I could not go. My dreams were crushed. I had been day-dreaming in the last two days about this visit. Like someone left from a pilgrimage, I told myself, "I was not fated to go. This is not the first time that I am not invited." An hour later, they

called again and said, "Don't be sad!" It was your day too, you are invited." I was a guest to the Leader's house; now whoever heard the news said "Congratulation, it is like a real pilgrimage."

Burning with enthusiasm

I am sitting on a chair; excited and impa-

tient! I am still far away, but I am very excited that there is no TV or mobile phone screen, nor photo paper, it is a real meeting.

At the most central and farthest point of the Imam Khomeini Hussainiyah, I am agitated like a young child, surrounded by women, police officers, camerapersons and pho-

tographers. I don't feel shy; I raise my right hand as high as possible and wave it enthusiastically.

I feel like someone who sees a member of her family at Imam Khomeini Airport after many years. Although she has had video communication many times or seen ▶ Page 2

Report

America, where natural death is unnatural

Guns and violence have been taking lives in the United States for years, but no one has the ability to deal with them.

Violence in America is so institutionalized that if, in some states, anybody dies of natural causes, in fact, he has died of unnatural death.

In an article in the Washington Post titled "How Gun Violence Shatters Lives, and Our Country's Public Life", Alex Kotlowitz writes: Let me first point out what we already know: It's impossible to think about our nation's gun violence without thinking about the easy availability of guns.

It does seem self-evident that we need to impose some restrictions on guns, restrictions that would make killings and suicides less likely. An assault rifle ban. Or background checks. Or waiting periods for firearm purchases. Or banning the 3D printing of guns. The problem, of course, is that we're so polarized on matters of gun control that it feels almost Sisyphean. ▶ Page 5

Opinion

Unsuccessful Portuguese coaches in Iran football

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN - History has shown that the Portuguese coaches in Iranian football are not the best choices to lead the country's sides.

When it comes to the playing style in world football, Portugal is considered one of the most influential countries in football history. ▶ Page 3

Iran's LPG exports increase 86%

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) export rose 86 percent from the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022) up to December 31, as compared to the same period of time in the past year, data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Ad-

ministration (IRICA) show.

Iran exported \$6.783 billion worth of LPG in the mentioned period to register a new record in the country's gas exports, Fars News Agency reported.

The Islamic Republic had exported \$3.651

billion worth of LPG in the same period of the previous Iranian calendar year.

Iran's LPG exports mostly go to China despite the U.S. sanctions, facilitated by Chinese shipowners who have developed an armada of very large gas carriers since sanctions were imposed on Iran in 2014 and then in 2018. ▶ Page 4

Nanotechnology utilized to remove air pollutants

TEHRAN - A team of Iranian researchers has managed to find a way for using nanotechnology to remove nitrogen dioxide (NO2), a major toxic gaseous pollutant, from the air.

Air pollution is one of the most important problems in many countries, and to solve it, it is necessary to go beyond words and take effective practical steps.

In this regard, a group of researchers in the country have successfully tested the use of nanotechnology in removing important pollutants.

NO2 is associated with respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, leading to respiratory symptoms (such as coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing), hospital admissions, and visits to emergency rooms.

The main source of nitrogen dioxide resulting from human activities is the combustion of fossil fuels (coal, gas, and oil) especially fuel used in cars. ▶ Page 7



Large gathering at Qom against infamous French magazine

TEHRAN - Seminary students as well as citizens held a gathering in the shrine of Hazrat Masoumeh (SA) in Qom on Sunday to condemn the indecent images of the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo. They also expressed support for Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the rule of supreme jurisprudence. ▶ Page 2

Ancient astronomy inscription discovered in Marvdasht

TEHRAN - An ancient inscription has recently been found in Marvdasht, southern Fars province, ILNA reported on Sunday.

Astronomy and chronology are mentioned in a historical inscription found at Naqsh-e Rostam, a must-see travel destination embracing majestic treasures from the Achaemenid and Sassanid eras, researcher Abolhassan Atabaki said.

Other inscriptions have also been found in this region, but this stone inscription is about astronomy and chronology, written in two short lines on the smooth rocks of the mountains in the Pahlavi script, he added.

Based on the script and the way it was written, this inscription was written by scribes from the ancient city of Istakhr or the Naqsh-e Rostam residents in the late Sassa-

nid period (224-651), he explained.

The translation of this inscription has recently been published in the "Research Journal of the Iranian Civilization" of Kerman University, he noted.

One of the wonders of the ancient world, Naqsh-e Rostam, is home to spectacular massive rock-hewn tombs and ▶ Page 6

From Inside

- Tehraners gather in front of French embassy to protest Charlie Hebdo cartoons **P2**
- Tehran determined to set up a joint military working group with Pakistan: top general **P3**
- Export to Africa reaches \$1.094b **P4**
- Desalination plants capacity to be raised by 400,000 cubic meters **P4**
- Cotton production anticipated to rise 20% per annum **P4**
- Lesser-known province to cultivate rural tourism **P6**
- Zanjan ceremony marks indigenous art of knifemaking **P6**
- Iran seeking to get International Solar Alliance membership **P7**
- Knowledge-based companies to help preserve natural resources **P7**
- World War III" actor Mohsen Tanabandeh receives nomination at Asian Film Awards **P8**
- Book on Chinese publishing history published in Persian **P8**

Tehran Papers

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in Yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

Protestors can form their own parties

Manoucher Mottaki, the chairman of the House of Parties, suggests if the protestors are not happy with principlist and reformist factions they can establish their own political parties. ▶ Page 2

Raisi receives credentials of foreign ambassadors

TEHRAN - Iranian President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi received on Sunday a copy of credentials of the new ambassadors of Russia, Mali, Venezuela, and Malaysia to Iran.

Russin Ambassador Alexey Dedov, Malian Ambassador Mohammed Maiga, Malaysian Ambassador Khairi Bin Omar, and Venezuela Ambassador Jose Rafael Silva Aponte all met separately with President Raisi.

In his meeting with the Russian ambassador, Raisi described Tehran-Moscow relations as strategic and emphasized, "Iran and Russia have good grounds for cooperation in the bilateral, regional and international fields," according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

He referred to the increase in diplomatic interactions between the two countries and emphasized the necessity of forming and strengthening strategic economic cooperation between Iran and Russia. ▶ Page 3

Shiraz hosts Fajr Intl. Poetry Festival in memory of ISIS terrorist attack victims

TEHRAN - The 17th edition of the Fajr International Poetry Festival opened in Shiraz on Saturday with a tribute to the victims of the Shah Cheragh terrorist attack.

Several pilgrims visiting Shah Cheragh, the shrine of Ahmad ibn Musa (AS) in the southern Iranian city, were killed in the attack carried out by ISIS last October.

Speaking during the opening ceremony, Ali Ramezani, the director of the Iran Book and Literature House, an organizer of the festival, expressed his happiness over the choice of Shiraz to host the event.

"We initiated the festival in a city that has moved to center stage in the country due to the terrorist attack and now it is a place where the country's poetic saplings will sprout," he said. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

Protestors can form their own parties

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in Yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

from page 1 ► Mottaki says he was representative in the first parliament immediately after the 1979 Islamic revolution. He said in a parliamentary session Mr. (Ahmad) Tavakoli proposed that a place be considered for gathering of opposition newspapers to air their views even though their opinions are against the government and the system. However, this proposal went unnoticed, said Mottaki who was foreign minister in the Ahmadinejad administration.

Now, he said, the Interior Ministry is drafting a plan for protest gatherings and it is a good step that is taking place for the first time in the country. Mottaki said the House of Parties recently asked the three major political groups to attend a meeting on the issue of legal protest gatherings even though the media wrote the Interior Ministry opposes the involvement of the House of Parties. Yet, the interior minister "asked me as the chairman of the House of Parties" to attend the meeting.

He added, "Even though the demands of protestors may be too much and diverse and all them cannot be met, but I believe that their views should be heard."

Javan: Defending Bahais is totally unacceptable

A leading Sunni scholar has said Molavi Abdolhamid's defense of Bahais is "totally unacceptable".

Emad Atieh Abdul Razagh, a graduate of Al-Azhar University who is teaching at Al-Madinah International University in Malaysia, says the Bahai sect holds dangerous ideology and the position of Islam that they are "apostate" is unchangeable.

Molavi Abdolhamid, prayer leader of the Maki Mosque in Zahedan) capital of Sistan-Baluchestan province), said on Friday the Islamic republic should respect the rights of Bahais.

"When we say that Bahais are apostate it means that they were first Muslims and then stood against Islam," the professor says.

Etemad: Charlie Hebdo's indecent cartoons are 'insult against a nation'

Grand Ayatollah Javadi Amoli says the indecent cartoons by the French magazine Charlie Hebdo are "insult against a nation".

However, the grand ayatollah suggested that response to the sacrilege should not be of the same kind. "An indecent move should not be responded in an indecent manner."

A proper way to the insult is to hold protest gatherings because the magazine has insulted an entire nation, the top religious scholar noted.

Jomhuri Eslami: Air pollution in Tehran inherited from long years of inaction

It is clear that the choking air pollution in the metropolis of Tehran is the result of many years of inaction and its resolution entails work by many government bodies for many years.

Warning that breathing air in Tehran is "poisonous", the newspaper said what was more conspicuous this year was that this year inversion lasted longer than the previous years.

The newspaper said 14 million people commute daily in the province of Tehran. Also, about 80,000 trucks are trafficking in the city of Tehran.

from page 1 ► her photos, but now, without the interference of technology, she meets her beloved in person. All the longing and sadness are forgotten. It fills you with joy.

After about three hours of waiting in my chair, I wave my hand sadly. We were in the long queues since around 7 am. Every person who joined the queue saw one or two acquaintances; friend, colleague, family and even neighbor... as if the world has shrunk!

Chatter and laughter can be heard. The most common question is: How many times have you been visiting "Agha"? We have been calling the Leader of the revolution Agha for years; a friendly word, simple, modest but full of respect.

An eye-catching simplicity

After 4 inspections, we reach at the door of Hosseiniyeh. There are some juice and cakes on a table. God damn Corona! inside Hosseiniyeh, the chairs are arranged on the carpet to observe social distance. How impatient we were to sit next to each other and complain from the pressure of the crowd; and say the name of the twelfth imam once or twice to get up and make some space for others. But now these chairs show that Corona is still here. I am looking for a place to sit when I find myself behind the special seat bar, closest to Agha. The simplest table and chair and a microphone stand; humble, modest and friendly. After all these years, this simplicity is for the Leader of a country of 85 million population impressive and eye-catching.

I am in my chair. In this position, I have a bird's-eye view. People are waving their hands and greeting enthusiastically. Agha sits down but the crowd continues with their greeting. I don't have pen and paper. I move towards a special place near the Leader where there are pen but no paper. A few people beside the wall shouts God is great, etc. Now that Agha has come and I have reached near him, I don't want to go back to my seat and stand there watching Agha. God damn Corona. Agha is wearing a mask.

Here it is an honor to be a mother

After a few movements, I am sitting unbelievably on the right side of Agha with a little angle. The chairs don't let me see him. I try to stretch myself up to see him; this is the closest visit to this day. very far, very close.

There is a maxim from Imam Sadeq hung over Agha saying: "The greatest blessing is from women." Quran is read. Commotion decreases but does not stop totally. Baby girls begin to sing a song in group. Agha is reading a note which seems to be the content of the song by the girls. He likes both song and the music.

One person mounts the rostrum; she introduces herself as Nafiseh Moosavi. She includes mother to her other titles. Here it is an honor to be a mother. I look at Hosseiniyeh and see honor in women with child in their arms. The presenter transfers the regards of women who could not come, and he answers back.

In the opening of his speech, Agha would like to have the speeches made by some women to be given to him in written form so that he shares them with some group to study and find solutions for them. Agha's point is about a suggestion by a housewife, named Parichehr Janati, about lack of an Iranian-Islamic house [in the country]. She thinks house

from page 1 ► The Assembly of Experts also issued a statement on Sunday expressing disgust over the sacrilegious cartoons of the infamous magazine.

"The immoral move of the infamous French magazine against the religion of Islam and Marja'at (source of religious imitation) once again demonstrated the ha-

As if I am reborn

Exclusive report on women's meeting with Leader



is the most important trench for a woman and it is more important than educational, social and job security. She complains about houses which are cement cubicle mostly like prison for today's women. She believes this architecture is based on capitalism and is making women to go to kindergartens and parks to find playmates for their children. She wanted a change in architecture to promote the value of house and home.

The second speaker is educated in Germany. She is a lawyer. She is wearing a Monto which is up to her knees and a scarf. There is another gray shawl over her scarf. Her attractive expression overcome the murmurs. She is Maryam Aghashan. Her major is to defend rights and to divulge lies. She says at the heart of Europe she has been defending Iran against the West. Whenever she receives an honor, she says proudly: "I am an Iranian Shia Muslim." She has proved Iranians' power in deed. She stresses that women must make progress without using their gender.

As a person who has been living in Germany, she is ready to testify that the truth of the West is far different from what their media introduces, and their purpose is nothing but to disappoint other nations to exploit their wealth.



A woman sitting beside me repeatedly says bravo and approves Naghashan. She says "wow, see what successful women we have. Bravo. They are shining like moon."

The takbir is heard again. Audience gets ready to listen to Mahdieh Sadat Mehvar. She is a producer and director who complains that policy-making councils do not enjoy the participation of educated women.

When Shahrzad Zadehmodares mounts to rostrum and says that the average age for pregnancy has changed from 28 to 34 years, hums and murmuring go up in the Hosseiniyeh. She is a professor

at Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences and talks about the problems created as the age for marriage and pregnancy has increased. She says this jeopardizes mothers and children and wants this to be on the top of officials' agenda.

The next person is a middle-aged woman in the center of the Hosseiniyeh who speaks loudly in Arabic. No one understands her. But we recognize the name of Haj Qassem in her words and the crowd gets silent. Negin Farahani is waiting at rostrum impatiently but listen to the Arab woman. The woman finally utters a few words in Farsi, "swear to Shalamchek, to Chazabeh, to Khorramshahr, Swear to Haj Qassem "then she continues in Arabic. Yesterday was the third anniversary of General Soleimani.

Finally, Farhani starts her speech. She speaks in teenager voice and talks about the new young generations who are smart and aware and need to be given opportunity.

There is murmur and noise in Hosseiniyeh because of children and mothers. No one complains about it. Women are used to these noises. All the speakers at rostrum request for Agha's well wishes. Some ask for a souvenir. Sara Talebi is the last person giving her speech. She is the mother

The guests are women, and the topics are females' issues. From the very beginning, the Leader of the Revolution emphasizes that we do not have a defensive position with the West regarding the women's issue and our position is demanding; but when he wants to talk about the abuse of women in the West and the capitalist system's attention to gender abuse, he says: "It's hard for me to talk about this, especially in the presence of women! According to the Western perspective, a woman's privilege is to be more attractive to a man, and this story is very sad."

Delicate female fists and fingers

When it came to home and family, he said "a woman is like air in a home; it is not possible to breathe out without her; woman is the source of love and peace in the family." According to him, a woman's homemaker does not mean that she does not have political and social endeavors. But he emphasizes that for a woman and mother, health, faith and raising children are more important than anything else. "Women's role at home", according to the Leader of the Revolution, "is such that with her delicate hands and fingers, she can untie the knots that men cannot handle with their strong hands and strong voices." The audience shout, "God is great" in response to confirm and admire the statements of Agha.

The recent events and the efforts made against the hijab are another part of Agha's speech. He asks the audience twice about this: "In the recent events, who stood against efforts against hijab? The audience answer "women". He says this response is a strong punch to the mouth of those who tried against hijab.

The last point of Agha is about the rules related to the family which makes the women in Hosseiniyeh to adore him even more. The Leader emphasizes that family rules should be so strong and firm that no man dares to use force, oppress, or raise his voice [at home]. The fists go up again with the sound of Takbeer and laughter.

It is over. The meeting is over. It's time to say goodbye. The crowd, without hesitation or doubt, passes the bar of the special place and approach the speech platform. No one prevents women from entering the closest place to the Leader of the Revolution.

Agha exchanges a few words with some women. I am also unconsciously moving forward. I wish I had the courage to push aside the crowd and go closer. But during pilgrimages, I [usually] stand back and watch.

Sadness has cast a shadow on the voices, some people are also crying. The Leader's keffiyeh is being released from his neck again; who is going to win it this time? I do not notice who got it. Agha waves his hand and disappears behind the green curtain that I was so excited to see an hour ago. This is the closest moment of the meeting.

In front of me, a woman with her young child is walking side by side with several other women. They enthusiastically review all the words of Agha. One of them says: "No matter how much we were discouraged all this time, no matter how much we lost our hearts, this meeting was a victory!" I feel reborn..."

By Zeinab Rajaei

Tehraners gather in front of French embassy to protest Charlie Hebdo cartoons



TEHRAN – A group of people in Tehran gathered on Sunday afternoon in front of the French embassy to protest the publication of outrageous cartoons by the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo.

Iran's official news agency IRNA said people from Tehran and seminary students participated in the gathering.

The obscene cartoons were widely considered sacrilegious as they depicted Iranian religious and political officials in a very immoral way.

Iran strongly condemned the cartoons. Iran's response to the French magazine was multi-layered. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian condemned it on Twitter. Then, French Ambassador to Tehran Nicolas Roche was summoned to the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Wednesday.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said France has no right to justify insult to the sanctities of other nations and Islamic countries under the pretext of freedom of speech.

Clerics participating in the gathering carried posters reading "Death to England and Israel" and "If the Leader gives an order, we will sacrifice our souls."

They also chanted, "O France! get ashamed, relinquish enmity."

"Charlie Hebdo has insulted Muslim sanctities several times and this gathering

was staged in Tehran and Qom at the behest of Ayatollah Nouri Hamedani," a cleric at the gathering told IRNA.

The Foreign Ministry has recently condemned the Charlie Hebdo cartoons.

"Iran condemns in the strongest terms the sacrilegious move by a notorious French magazine to trample on recognized moral norms, savagely violate religious sanctities, disrespect the sanctum of the politico-religious authority, and insult the Iranians' state symbols and national values. The Ministry considers the scheme as yet another sign of Zionism's attempts at exercising influence on media in order to promote Islamophobia, spread hatred and create divisions among societies and among humans" the ministry said in a statement.

It added, "The inhumane move by the disrespectful French publication — which, unfortunately, has brazenly used the lofty concept of 'freedom of expression' for long as a pretext and a cover for anti-cultural acts and desecration of human beings, human dignity and sublime moral and religious values — is a continuation of similar activities, including the publishing of sacrilegious cartoons of the Great Prophet (Peace be upon Him) in previous years, which angered Muslims and prompted them to stage holy protests worldwide."

It noted, "The Islamic Republic of Iran deplores the lasting inaction of relevant French authorities in the face of the manifestations of Islamophobia and the racist hate-mongering in French publications, and reminds France's government that it is directly responsible to hold to account the perpetrators and sponsors of such instances of spreading hatred. The Ministry also calls for a serious confrontation against antagonization of Islam and foolish Islamophobia as a symbol of institutionalized racism in this country."

tred and hostility of the foes of Islam and Shia," the assembly said in its statement.

The statement described the derogatory caricatures by Charlie Hebdo as an instance of "cultural barbarism" that shows another face of France in its support for Monafeqin (hypocrites).



Raisi receives credentials of foreign ambassadors

From Page 1 ► In the meeting with the Venezuelan ambassador, Raisi stated that the relations between the two countries are very close and friendly, adding, “During Mr. Maduro’s visit to Tehran, we had constructive discussions that led to fruitful agreements for the development of relations between the two countries”.

Expressing hope that effective steps will be taken in the implementation of these agreements during the mission of the new Venezuelan Ambassador, the President added, “The implementation of these understandings can operationalize the diverse capacities of the two countries in the direction of expanding fields of bilateral cooperation”.

Raisi stated that the independence-seeking spirit of the Venezuelan people has made them a privileged nation in the region, and stated, “Today’s desire of the Americans to be close to Venezuela is not due to friendship, but due to the country’s need for energy resources”.



Raisi praised the relations with Mali in his meeting with the new Malian ambassador. Raisi said, “After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran has pursued the development of relations with African countries”.

While condemning the policy of Western governments towards African countries, Raisi stated that the Westerners did not come to this continent to help, but to

colonize and plunder the wealth of African people, adding, “We believe that African countries, with regard to their rich reserves and resources, as well as human resources, will be able to achieve more development and progress through independence without the interference of Westerners”.

President Raisi stated that the presence of Westerners in different parts of the world does not bring

about security, but also disrupts security, and added, “We hope that the new government of Mali will take great steps towards independence and development with the help of the people of the country”.

In the meeting with the new Malaysian ambassador, Raisi stated that the relations between the two Muslim countries of Iran and Malaysia have been on the path of development, especially after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, adding, “The priority of the Iranian government is the development of economic, cultural and political relations with Muslim countries”.

Raisi stated that despite the sanctions and threats, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken great steps towards development and progress, and stated, “Considering the great capacities available in the two countries, we hope that these capacities will lead to the further development of the cooperation between Iran and Malaysia”.

Tehran determined to set up a joint military working group with Pakistan: top general

TEHRAN – Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri has announced Iran’s determination to establish a joint working group with the Pakistani army.

General Baqeri made the announcement in a phone call with General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, the chairman of t Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) of Pakistan’s army. In the call, the Iranian general congratulated General Mirza on his appointment as the head of the JCSC.

He pointed out the good relations between the armed forces of the two countries from the past to the present and the trend towards the development of defense and security cooperation, especially in enhancing the security of the common border. Major General Baqeri announced the full readiness of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran to speed up the proposal of General Nadeem Raza, the former head of JCSC, to establish a joint military task force between the two countries.

The Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces also evaluated the mutual meetings of high-ranking commanders and the use of training, operational, security and technical capacities of the two sides as a sign of the seriousness of the two countries in developing cooperation within



the framework of national interests.

Shamshad Mirza, while thanking Major General Baqeri for his congratulations and attention, called the common border of the two countries a border of peace and friendship. He announced that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has always supported the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in international forums, especially in the issue of nuclear energy, and there is no obstacle to the expansion of bilateral interaction, according to Iran’s official news agency IRNA.

He considered accelerating the activation of the joint military working group of the two countries as one of the priorities of the Pakistan Army. He appreciated the unwavering support of the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the Kashmir issue.

General Mirza also asked General Baqeri to convey his greetings to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the president of Iran.

Baqeri held a phone conversation with Pakistan’s new army chief, General Asim Munir in December. In this phone conversation, the Iranian general congratulated General Munir on taking charge as Pakistan’s new army chief, Tasnim reported.

Highlighting the impact of cooperation between Iran and Pakistan on the security along the common border, Iran’s highest-ranking military commander called for the expansion of security and defense ties with the neighboring state, according to Tasnim.

Stressing the need to promote defense and security cooperation between Tehran and Islamabad, Major General Baqeri said the expansion of defense relations between the two neighbors will strengthen security along the common border.

The two commanders also weighed plans for continued cooperation between Iran and Pakistan in ensuring border security, the fight against terrorist groups, the expansion of economic activities in the border regions, and turning the common border into the border of friendship and fraternity.

Iran FM holds phone conversations with Algerian, Venezuelan counterparts

TERHAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian spoke over the phone with his Algerian and Venezuelan counterparts.

Amir Abdollahian and Algerian Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra discussed issues of bilateral significance as well as the developments in the region and the Muslim world, including the desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque by the Zionist regime and the insulting move by a French magazine against Islamic values.

During the talks, Amir Abdollahian said ties between the two countries are good and developing, expressing Iran’s readiness for convening a session of the bilateral Joint Economic

Commission in the near future.

He pointed to the desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque by the Zionist regime and the insulting move by a French publication against Islamic values and the religious authority, calling for the creation of an effective international legal mechanism aimed at stopping scornful acts against religious values and holy sites.

The Iranian foreign minister further conveyed President Ebrahim Raisi’s greetings for his Algerian counterpart, inviting the country’s chief executive to visit Iran.

For his part, Lamamra condemned the Zionists’ desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque and the French publication’s insult, stressing the necessity for an enhancement of cooperation among

Muslim countries at international bodies, including the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, to confront such acts.

The chief diplomat also voiced readiness for the holding of political consultations between the two states in the near future.

He also relayed the Algerian president’s greetings for Iran’s high-ranking authorities and invited Amir Abdollahian for a visit to Algeria.

Iran FM extends congratulations to new Venezuelan counterpart

Amir Abdollahian held a phone conversation with his new Venezuelan counterpart, Yvan Gil Pinto, late on Saturday, offering him congratulations on his

appointment to the post. The two sides exchanged views on topics of bilateral importance.

The two sides exchanged views on topics of bilateral importance.

During the talks, Amir Abdollahian expressed hope that ties between the two countries will see a boost in all fields on the back of the two countries’ efforts and cooperation

For his part, the top Venezuelan diplomat thanked Amir Abdollahian for the felicitations, describing Iran and Venezuela as two significant partners on the international stage.

He expressed satisfaction with the successful holding of a session of the two countries’ Joint Economic Commission.

be held in the resort city of Antalya. The Plenary Session of APA will take place at Titanic Mardan Palace Hotel in Antalya, Turkey, from January 7 to 11, according to a Tasnim report.

The meeting will be attended by the parliament speakers from seven countries, namely Turkey, Iran, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Yemen, as well as four deputy speakers, 25 participating members and five participating observers.

The APA was established in 2006 at the Seventh Session of the Association of Asian Parliamentary for Peace (AAPP). It has 42 Member Parliaments and 16 observers.

The assembly has been created as a forum to exchange views, ideas and experiences for developing common strategies and promoting peace in Asia and the world, according to its website.

The APA is comprised of the Plenary, the Executive Council, Bureau of the Assembly, the Committees, and the Secretariat.

IRAN IN FOCUS

JANUARY 9, 2023

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

Sayyadmanesh sidelined for four to six weeks



TEHRAN – Scans have revealed that Allahyar Sayyadmanesh will miss the next four to six weeks.

The Iranian international winger suffered a hamstring injury in the first half of Monday’s 4-1 win at Wigan Athletic.

Sayyadmanesh walked off the DW Stadium pitch clutching his hamstring and subsequently missed Saturday’s 2-0 FA Cup defeat to Fulham at the MKM Stadium, which saw City produce a battling display against the Premier League outfit.

Boss Liam Rosenior admits the news is a blow to both City and the 21-year-old but says the initial prognosis suggested he could be out for longer than what’s actually expected, so things are not as bad as they first feared.

“Allahyar has had a setback,” Rosenior told Hull Live. “It’s not the same injury but it’s the same hamstring.

“He could be out for a month to six weeks depending on how we work with him which is a real blow. At the same time, those things happen in football and we now need to make sure that we manage him and make sure that he stays fit.

“He was really down. To be honest with you, we felt like the injury could have been a lot worse. We got the results of the test back on Friday and they were not as bad as first feared so we’re in a really positive place with him. He’s a great kid, and hopefully he gets back soon,” Rosenior added.

Former Persepolis forward arrested in Dublin

TEHRAN – A former international footballer has been charged after being arrested by Gardai in Dublin following a short car chase with cocaine worth an estimated £4,000 in the glove box.

Anthony Stokes, 34, who played two minutes in a league cup match for Arsenal was detained in Dublin after he and a passenger allegedly attempted to run from the car containing the drugs.

Gardai followed Stokes and his passenger through Dublin’s southside before the pair abandoned the car and tried to escape on foot.

He has also played for Iranian teams Tractor and Persepolis.

Iranian Para-cyclist Bahram Soleymani banned for doping

TEHRAN – Iranian Para-cyclist Bahram Soleyman has been banned for two years for doping.

Iran’s National Anti-Doping Organization (NADO) announced that he has tested positive for the banned substance Triamterene.

Soleyman will be ineligible for competition for two years from Aug. 4, 2022 to Aug. 2, 2024.

Triamterene (trade name Dyrenium among others) is a potassium-sparing diuretic often used in combination with thiazide diuretics for the treatment of high blood pressure or swelling. The combination with hydrochlorothiazide, is known as hydrochlorothiazide/triamterene.

Diabate fit for Zob Ahan match

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team forward Cheick Diabate is fit for the match against Zob Ahan.

The match will take place in Tehran’s Azadi Stadium on January 20.

Persepolis will face the first-tier Van Pars in Hazfi Cup’s Round of 16 on Tuesday.

In this match, the Reds will be without their iconic winger Saeid Sadeghi, who suffered a foot injury against Nassaji on Thursday.

Jahanbakhsh scores against Utrecht

TEHRAN – Feyenoord football team rescued a point in the last minutes to remain at the top of the Eredivisie table for another day.

Jens Toomstra put the host into the lead just three minutes into the match but Iranian winger Alireza Jahanbakhsh equalized the match with a powerful strike in the 90th minute.

Jahanbakhsh came off the bench in the 59th minute as Javairo Dilrosun’s replacement.

Feyenoord lead the table, three points above Ajax.

Unsuccessful Portuguese coaches in Iran football

From Page 1 ► However, most of the Portuguese coaches, who managed teams in Iranian football, have underperformed at both club and national team levels.

Ricardo Sa Pinto, current head coach of Esteghlal club, is the latest unsuccessful Portuguese coach in Iran. Sa Pinto took charge of the Iranian giants in June 2022 but has failed to live up to expectations. He is now on the verge of being sacked by the club directors.

Carlos Queiroz is the most famous name among the Portuguese coaches who have worked in Iran. He led Iran’s national team in two stints, from 2011 to 2019 when he was sacked by the Iranian football federation and then was rehired by Iran ahead of the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

He led Iran to two straight World Cups (2014 and 2018) but in general failed to make splash as Team Melli coach. Iran, under his tutelage, failed to qualify for the group stage in the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, 2018 in Russia, and 2022 in Qatar.

The Portuguese coach also was unsuccessful in two rounds of the 2015 and 2019 AFC Asian Cups in Australia and the UAE.

Queiroz recorded the worst defeat in the history of Iranian football in the 2022 World Cup against England.

Among the Portuguese coaches who have managed Iranian clubs we can refer to these names:

Tony Oliveira (Tractor), Jose Alberto Costa (Sanat Naft), Acácio Casimiro (Sanat Naft, two spells), Manuel Jose (Persepolis), Augusto Inacio (Foolad), Nelo Vingada (Persepolis, Iran U23 team) and Paulo Sergio (Sanat Naft).

Tony Oliviera sat on the bench of tractors at two stints and created good memories for the football fans in Tabriz. He put the Tractor team on the verge of winning the Iran Professional League, but he lost the cup on the last matchday, due to strange events. Oliveira also awarded a Hazfi Cup trophy to Tractor fans to become one of the most popular coaches in Tabriz’s football history.

But most of the above-mentioned coaches had not a successful record in Iranian clubs.

Ricardo Sá Pinto and José Morais were appointed as coaches of Esteghlal and Sepahan respectively at the beginning of this season.

The pair certainly brought a wealth of international experience from their careers. Sá Pinto has worked in Serbia, Greece, Saudi Arabia, Belgium, Poland, Brazil, and Turkey, as well as coaching Sporting, Braga, Belenenses, and Moreirense in his homeland. Sá Pinto only won the Belgian Cup with Standard Liege in 2017/18.

Morais has enjoyed spells as Mourinho’s assistant at Inter Milan, Real Madrid, and Chelsea, while his solo ventures have taken him to Germany, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Yemen, Turkey, Greece, England, Ukraine, and South Korea, where Morais won the K-League back-to-back with Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors. The 56-year-old also won trophies in Saudi Arabia, as well as lifting the Tunisian title with Espérance Tunis in 2009.

Not everyone’s belief in Morais has gone so far in the Sepahan club, but things didn’t go quite as well as expected at Esteghlal for Sa Pinto and he has already been added to the collection of “the unsuccessful Portuguese coaches” in Iran.

Iran's LPG exports increase 86%

from page 1 ► The Islamic Republic's LPG exports could be higher without the restrictions that international shipping and trading firms face due to the sanctions and allow Iranian exporters to resume access to the global markets.

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG or LP gas) is a fuel gas that contains a flammable mixture of hydrocarbon gases, specifically propane, propylene, butylene, isobutane, and n-butane.



Export from Sistan-Baluchestan up 32% in 9 months yr/yr



TEHRAN- The value of non-oil export from Sistan-Baluchestan province, in the southeast of Iran, rose 32 percent in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a provincial official.

Mojtaba Shojaei, the director-general of the province's governorate's office of economic affairs coordination, said 1.165 million tons of products worth \$165 million were exported from Sistan-Baluchestan in the mentioned nine-month period, indicating also 78 percent growth in terms of weight year on year.

He named cement, clinker, travertine stone, coal coke, coal, dates, gas, vegetables, agricultural poison and agricultural products as the main exported items, and Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Indonesia as the major export destinations.

The official further announced that 1,157 tons of commodities valued at \$1184 million were imported to the province in the first nine months of the present year, with 17 percent rise in value, while 26 percent drop in weight, year on year.

He named wheat, rice, cattle corn, cattle oats, mango, banana, sesame, potato, live livestock, fabric, tea, car spare parts, light and heavy car tires, cooling devices, spices, and fish as the main imported items, and Russia,

Pakistan, France, Germany, India, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, China, Thailand and Afghanistan as the major sources of imports during the first nine months of the current year.

Based on the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil export rose 19 percent from the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022) up to December 31, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

According to the IRICA data, Iran exported 97.843 million tons of goods valued at \$43.088 billion in the mentioned period, also registering a two-percent increase in weight

Liquefied natural gas, liquefied propane, methanol, liquefied butane, and film-grade polyethylene were the main exported products in the said time span.

Major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China, Iraq, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and India.

The Islamic Republic has also imported 28.18 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$44.337 billion in the first 286 days of the present year, with a 14.7-percent growth in value and a 10-percent increase in weight, year on year.

The major items of goods imported into the country in the said period include corn, rice, wheat, soybeans, sunflower seed oil, and cell phones, based on the IRICA data.

The United Arab Emirates was the top exporter to Iran in the mentioned period, followed by China, Turkey, India, and Germany.

Reportedly, the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 17 percent during the mentioned period, as compared to the same time span in the past year.

Iran traded more than 126 million tons of non-oil products worth over \$88 billion with other countries in the mentioned period.



According to the official, various plans have been implemented by the government and SEO since last October in three major axes and extensive efforts have been made to achieve the goals set for the market.

Mentioning a support package unveiled by the government, Eshqi noted that 10 strategies were considered in order to protect the rights of investors with an emphasis on long-term benefits, increasing the role of the capital market in the financing of development projects, and improving the effectiveness and smartening of the market's regulatory system.

Iran's stock market has been wrestling with drastic ups and downs over the past two years and the government has been trying many strategies to return calm to the market and make it the attractive investment place it once was.

TEHRAN – Iran exported 2.209 million tons of non-oil products valued at \$1,093,875,996 to the African countries during the period from the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022) up to December 31, the vice president of Iran and Africa Merchants Club Ruhollah Latifi said.

According to Latifi, Iran and Africa traded 2.29 million tons of commodities worth \$1.169 million in the mentioned period, IRIB reported.

The official said 96.5 percent of the total weight of the traded goods was related to the Iranian exports to Africa, while 93.5 percent of the total value was also gained by Iranian exporters.

He named South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana, Sudan, and Nigeria as the main export destinations for Iranian products while Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, and Seychelles were the major sources of imports among the African countries in the period under review.

According to Latifi, following the 13th government's policy of multilateralism and attention to new markets, especially in Asia and Africa, Iran's business relations with African countries have been on the path of growth.

The official noted that last year trade between Iran and Africa reached \$1.250 billion with a 100

Export to Africa reaches \$1.094b



percent growth, and considering the current trend of trade with the African continent the figure is expected to reach \$1.7 billion by the end of the current year (March 20).

Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak has said the country is taking the necessary steps to increase annual trade exchanges with African countries to \$5 billion by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (begins in March 2025).

Peyman-Pak said the trade with the mentioned countries is expected to reach \$2.5 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year.

Referring to the preparation of the country's trade development roadmap at the beginning of the work of the 13th administration, the official said: "In this roadmap, major factors including exports and the share of different sectors are specified, and in the case of Africa, the priorities and targets

for trade with different countries and the requirements for reaching these targets are determined."

Peyman-Pak put the share of African countries in Iran's export basket at \$1.2 billion, saying: "Africa's annual imports amount to about \$580 billion and our share of this figure is still small despite all the efforts. We have managed to export \$1.2 billion to this market."

He further mentioned the capacities of the mentioned continent for the export of technical and engineering services and said: "The total exports of technical and engineering services to Africa is currently \$300 billion; But our share last year, despite a slight increase reached only \$200 million, which is still small."

According to the TPO head, in order to increase the level of trade with Africa certain infrastructure including transportation and direct shipping lines, as well as proper legal, commercial, monetary, and banking relations must be provided, and TPO has been recently focusing on providing such requirements to facilitate trade with Africa.

"To solve the transportation problems, four countries have been selected in East, West, South, and North of Africa, to launch air and shipping lines," he said.

Annual chicken meat production expected to reach 2.65m tons by mid-March

TEHRAN- As announced by an official with Iran's Agriculture Ministry, it is expected that the country's annual chicken meat production reach 2.65 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20).

Hossein Damavandi-Nejad, the deputy minister for livestock products, stated that the production capacity of chicken meat in the country is three million tons and added that the full supply of the country's chicken meat market has been achieved so far.

He also said that egg production is forecast to reach 1.2 million tons in this year, of which 80,000 tons are exported.

"Interventions have caused ups and downs,

but we must pay attention to the logic that the system is a system of supply and demand", the official noted, adding, "Even in addition to fully meeting the domestic needs of poultry, we can respond to the needs of up to 10 million people around the country."

Damavandi-Nejad also pointed out that about nine months have passed since the implementation of the big plan to reform the economic structure, especially in the agricultural sector and the poultry sector of the country, and said: "In the beginning, due to the magnitude of this plan, there were concerns, but with the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture, the issue was managed and



now production and storage of chicken meat, eggs, and other livestock and agricultural products are in suitable conditions."

Banking, monetary issues among main obstacles in way of home appliance exports

TEHRAN – Head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) visited some home appliance production units in Tehran during which the challenges facing the home appliance industry were reviewed.

During the visit, Masoud Khansari met with the managers and members of the board of directors of the mentioned units to discuss some solutions for the raised issues, the TCCIMA portal reported.

According to the owners of the mentioned businesses, banking problems, liquidity shortage and fluctuations in the foreign currency exchange rates are some of the major obstacles in the way of the developing export of Iranian home appliances.

The inefficiency of banks in the optimal allocation of necessary resources and facilities to industrial units and the problems created in granting production licenses to industrial enterprises were also mentioned as other problems faced by home appliance manufacturing units.



Over the past few years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has been one of the pioneers in this regard and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past four years.

Following the government's policy of supporting the manufacturing of home appliances, this industry has had a five-fold growth in output, so that it can meet the maximum

demand of the market.

As an official with Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry has previously stated, the manufacturing of home appliances in Iran is expected to reach 18 million sets in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20).

According to Mohsen Shokrollahi, the director-general of the home appliances office at the ministry, there are currently 220 active home appliance manufacturing units in the country that managed to produce 16.5 million sets of products in the previous year.

Considering the previous year's data, the manufacturing of the said products is expected to increase by 1.5 million sets (about 10 percent) in the current year.

Shokrollahi put the country's total value of home appliances exports in the previous Iranian calendar year at \$300 million, saying: "With the new approach, we will increase last year's exports and provide strong support to the home appliance industry by reducing raw material tariffs."

Cotton production anticipated to rise 20% per annum

TEHRAN – Cotton production in Iran is expected to increase by 20 percent in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20), an official with the Agriculture Ministry said.

According to Ebrahim Hezarjaribi, the director of the ministry's cotton production program, currently, the products from 100,000 hectares of cotton fields across Iran have been collected and considering the current output, a 20-percent increase in total



production is achievable.

"The total cotton production in the country is expected to reach 300,000 tons in the current year, Hezarjaribi was quoted by Tasnim news agency.

Pointing to a 17-percent increase in the area under cotton cultivation this year compared to the previous year, the official said: "Last year, nearly 97,500 hectares of cotton fields were cultivated across the country."

Desalination plants capacity to be raised by 400,000 cubic meters

TEHRAN – The Iranian Energy Ministry is determined to add at least 400,000 cubic meters to the capacity of the country's water desalination plants by the end of the current government

incumbency (2025), the deputy head of National Water and Wastewater Engineering Company said.

According to Hashem Amini,

there are currently 95 water desalination plants with a total capacity of 638,000 cubic meters per day, operational or being constructed across the country, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Amini put the total investment made in the mentioned plants at 38.6 trillion rials (about \$101.3 million) considering the prices at the time of the contracts.

From page 1 ► Even in the wake of recent massacres in Colorado and Virginia, gun-control advocates in Congress have thrown in the towel. One senator conceded, “The blunt, stark fact is that there simply aren’t enough votes.”

Today, those who live in the so-called “American Dream” must also have the constant fear that they may pay a price for this dream.

Today, every man and woman in America is horrified to see the news of shootings in schools and streets.

Every bullet that leaves the barrel of a gun can destroy the dream of an American family.

It is American families who have to pay for the boom in the gun market

Paul Auster in his new book titled ‘Bloodbath Nation’ writes about an epidemic in America; not the covid epidemic, but the epidemic of violence and murder in his country.

Auster wrote this book based on his personal experiences.

Bloodbath Nation focuses on gun violence in America and uses black and white photographs by New York photographer Spencer Ostrander. These photos were taken in the last 2 years and show more than 30 places that have been the site of 30 shootings in recent years in America.

About the author

Like most American boys of his generation, Paul Auster grew up playing with toy six-shooters and mimicking the gun-slinging cowboys in B Westerns. A skilled marksman by the age of ten, he also lived through the traumatic aftermath of the murder of his grandfather by his grandmother when his father was a child and knows, through firsthand experience, how families can be wrecked by a single act of gun violence.

In this short, searing book, Auster traces centuries of America’s use and abuse of guns, from the violent displacement of the native population to the forced enslavement of millions, to the bitter divide between embattled gun control and anti-gun control camps that have developed. Over the past 50 years and the mass shootings



America, where natural death is unnatural

that dominate the news today.

Since 1968, more than one and a half million Americans have been killed by guns. The numbers are so large and so catastrophic that one must ask why.

These crimes are only the tip of the iceberg, says Auster, and American lives are becoming increasingly saturated and disrupted by gun violence. It is not impossible to register all crimes, but it is exhausting.

According to him, gun violence is a personal issue for all Americans, and “Bloodbath Nation” is also rooted in these old traumas.

In this book, Aster goes back in time and clearly shows how the Second Amendment of the American Constitution, which guarantees the freedom to bear arms, came from the 18th century, and there is no reason why a citizen should walk the streets with a loaded gun today.

In the past decades, 228 cases of armed violence have occurred in American schools and colleges alone. A country with more than 300 million

people and about 393 million firearms. Statistics show that about 40,000 Americans die each year from gun violence, which is equal to the number of those who die on the roads.

Mississippi, Louisiana, Wyoming, Missouri, Alabama, and Alaska top the states with the most gun violence in 2022.

Auster’s new book is concise, bitter, and passionately written, but does not offer a solution.

He writes that the situation is getting worse every day, not better.

“Why is America so different—and why are we the most violent country in the Western world?” he asks himself.

Auster himself lives in New York; a city where shootings have soared in the past year. He writes: “The gaps in the United States are steadily turning into great gaps of empty space.”

The book is a request from both sides of the story to find a way to avoid more death and sorrow.

What they say about the book?

An intimate and powerful

rumination on American gun violence by Paul Auster, one of our greatest living writers and “genuine Boston Globe”, in an unforgettable collaboration with photographer Spencer Ostrander “[Bloodbath Nation is] remarkably powerful... Accompanying Auster’s sobering, impassioned plea are haunting black-and-white photographs taken by Spencer Ostrander.”—Alex Kotlowitz, Washington Post

“Auster’s book is exactly what is needed at this time.”—Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, author of Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment

“[A] powerful look at the causes and consequences of gun violence in America... For Auster, who casts doubt on the likelihood of judicial or legislative remedies, the end to the gun debate will only occur when ‘both sides want it, and in order for that to happen, we would first have to conduct an honest, gut-wrenching examination of who we are and who we want to be as a people going forward into the future.’ This trenchant account goes a long way toward making that possible.”—Publishers Weekly (starred review)

“Deft and dogged and entirely too contemplative to be a screed... Accounts of [Auster’s] personal experience with guns merge with sociological observations and a partial inventory of mass shootings in the U.S... Will the message of Bloodbath Nation reverberate outside the echo chamber of Auster’s fellow gun-control advocates? [Auster’s] generally measured tone makes it seem possible!”—Shelf Awareness

“Exceptional in its clarity and arresting in its sense of urgency... A harrowing, haunting reflection on the routine slaughter wrought by guns.”—Kirkus (starred review)

“A rigorous and evocative grappling with mass tragedies in this time of ‘furious discord.”—Booklist

“An anguished cry of bafflement at this country’s obsession for guns... deals with the societal consequences of sacrificing thousands of lives.”—Library Journal

French police attack Yellow Vests protesters in rally against Macron’s economic policies

French police have attacked Yellow Vests protesters, firing tear gas and rubber bullets at thousands of demonstrators, who took to the streets to denounce French President Emmanuel Macron’s economic policies and pension reform.

France’s protest movement, the Yellow Vests (Gilet Jaunes) mobilized in the Paris area from Breteuil Square in the 7th arrondissement in the direction of Bercy Boulevard in the 12th arrondissement, where the Ministry of Finance is located.

The movement protested against the rising inflation and the government’s plans to push forward pension reform starting the Summer of 2023, which will rise the retirement age from 62 to 65.

Footage from the demonstrations showed french forces firing tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the demonstrators.

“We went out today for the sake of all the French who are dying of hunger because of the high prices that they can no longer afford,” Jamal Bouaban, a member of the Yellow Vests movement, said, vowing to organize more demonstrations.

Yellow Vests protesters were also witnessed holding banners reading ‘Climate emergency and

social peace,’ ‘Macron, Resignation,’ and ‘Macron and the CAC 40 want war. Let’s fight’

“Most of these people work, but they are exploited. They are people who can be in precarious situations and who have allowances that do not allow them to survive,” Josiane, one of the protesters, said.

The Yellow Vests movement, which started in France on November 17, 2018, in response to fuel price hikes and deteriorating economic conditions, continues with protests against a range of social and political issues.

Protests are often accompanied by riots and clashes with the police, with French police violence against protesters and journalists occurring on numerous occasions.

Meanwhile, doctors (general practitioners and doctors of other specialties) in France have staged a two-week-long strike to demand an increase in the consultation fee and better working conditions, paralyzing the healthcare delivery system across the country.

The strike has now been extended to January 8 with a protest march set for Thursday in central Paris.

Doctors in France complain about overcrowded hospitals amid epidemics of influenza, coronavirus, and bronchiolitis in the country. The number of patients has increased in emergency departments, causing long waiting times.

The French healthcare system is facing an unprecedented crisis. Last summer, medical workers staged a nationwide strike, demanding higher wages and denouncing the healthcare policies adopted by the government.

The fight with the government for better wages comes as France has been grappling with rising inflation amid worsening economic conditions.

Philippe Martinez, head of the General Confederation of Labour (CGT), France’s leading trade union, has lately warned that France will see a wave of mass strikes in early 2023 if the government does not roll back its pension reform.

Similar strikes have also hit other European countries, including the United Kingdom, in recent months amid a cost-of-living crisis and surging inflation reaching 11 percent.

(Source: Press TV)

Yemen’s Ansarullah says will strike deep inside Saudi Arabia, UAE as no option left

Yemen’s Ansarullah resistance movement says the Saudi-led coalition has exploited a UN-sponsored truce to tighten the brutal blockade against the war-wracked country, stressing that it won’t allow the status quo to persist, and will inevitably launch missile strikes against the Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Ansarullah announced in a statement that even with the six-month truce that expired on October 2 last year and two rounds of negotiations to extend the ceasefire and lift the blockade on commercial airports and entry ports, the Riyadh-led alliance reneged on the terms of the ceasefire and did not honor previous agreements.

“The Saudi-led coalition’s main goal out of the truce was to stop the Houthi Ansarullah forces from carrying out retaliatory military operations against targets deep inside Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the crippling sea, land and air

blockade on Yemen has created a humanitarian disaster in the country,” the statement read.

Ansarullah described the famine and siege as criminal and cruel strategies of the Saudi-led coalition against Yemen, arguing that the practice amounts to mass murder under the United Nations Charter and principles.

“Siege is same as a war, whose primary purpose is to kill as many Yemenis as possible and take revenge on them by destroying people’s livelihood. The Saudi-led coalition’s intention behind the ceasefire was to ramp up the economic blockade against Yemen,” the statement read.

Ansarullah noted, “The Riyadh-led alliance took advantage of the siege as a weapon of war against Yemen. The ceasefire also proved that the Saudi-led coalition was not looking for any measure to reduce the sufferings of the Yemeni nation. It is firmly against payment of salaries to

civil servants and knows no limits to tighten the blockade.”

The Lebanese Arabic-language daily newspaper al-Akhbar has reported that Saudi Arabia’s crown prince and de facto leader is seeking to get himself out of the crisis created in Yemen.

The newspaper wrote that Mohammed bin Salam has suggested that Ansarullah maintain control over Yemen in exchange for security guarantees to the Riyadh regime.

It said the latest round of indirect and behind-the-scenes talks between Ansarullah representatives and Saudi diplomats with Oman, a Persian Gulf country that borders both Yemen and Saudi Arabia, as mediator had more fateful results than the previous ones.

“Riyadh is now showing a lot of flexibility during negotiations. It currently has no concern other than getting security guarantees that strategic facilities deep inside

the country would not be hit. It has abandoned the illusion of turning Yemen into a country under its tutelage, and has instead sufficed for security assurances,” the newspaper wrote.

Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with its Arab allies and with arms and logistics support from the US and other Western states, launched the devastating war on Yemen in March 2015.

The objective was to crush the popular Ansarullah resistance movement, which has been running state affairs in the absence of a functional government in Yemen, and reinstall the Riyadh-friendly regime of Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi.

While the Saudi-led coalition has failed to achieve any of its objectives, the war has killed hundreds of thousands of Yemenis and spawned the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

(Source: Press TV)

INTERNATIONAL

JANUARY 9, 2023

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

5

WORLD HEADLINES

Pakistan’s army chief visits Saudi Arabia amid economic crisis

Pakistan’s new army chief has held talks with top Saudi officials, including the defence minister, on his first official trip to the Gulf kingdom as the South Asian country faces an unprecedented economic crisis.

General Syed Asim Munir, who took charge in November, has followed in the footsteps of his predecessors in visiting Saudi Arabia – a close defence and economic ally – on his maiden overseas trip. He will also visit the United Arab Emirates during the nearly one-week trip.

“The COAS will be meeting the senior leadership of both brotherly countries to discuss matters of mutual interest, military-to-military cooperation and bilateral relations focusing on security-related subjects,” the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military’s media wing, said in a statement on Wednesday.

General Munir discussed military cooperation with Saudi defence minister Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz in the capital Riyadh on Thursday, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

“We emphasised the strategic partnership between our brotherly countries, reviewed the bilateral military and defense relations, and discussed ways of strengthening our cooperation,” Prince Khalid bin Salman tweeted.

The current visit by General Munir came at a time when Pakistan faced a crippling economic crisis as the country’s foreign reserves have depleted to less than \$6bn – its lowest since April 2014 – which can just cover a month of import. Inflation has been skyrocketing while the country is also dealing with the aftermath of last year’s catastrophic floods that resulted in an estimated loss of more than \$30bn.

Foreign aid to Ukraine a money laundering scheme: Chechnya’s Kadyrov

The Western aid to Ukraine is a working money laundering scheme, Head of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov said on his Telegram channel Sunday.

“I see that some are worried about the foreign aid to Ukraine. Do not worry! This is a working money laundering scheme. Western and Ukrainian officials will embezzle these funds, and no more than 15% of the entire aid will reach the trenches,” he said.

Kadyrov also noted that there is no need to worry about hostilities currently happening on Russian territory.

“These are our regions, which opted to join our state for the sake of protection of their people from Satanist actions of Ukrainian and NATO nationalists,” he underscored.

On January 6, the US announced a new aid package to Ukraine worth over \$3 billion. According to the White House, the aid will be provided directly from the Pentagon reserves, and will include Bradley armored vehicles, self-propelled howitzers, MRAP (Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected) vehicles, air defense missiles and other weapons and ammunition.

40 dead, many injured in Senegal bus crash

At least 40 people were killed Sunday and many others seriously injured in a bus crash in central Senegal, according to the country’s president.

“I am deeply saddened by today’s tragic road accident in Gniby, where 40 people died and many were seriously injured. I send my heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and wish the injured a speedy recovery,” President Macky Sall said in a tweet.

The incident involved two buses that collided with one another, according to Radiodiffusion Télévision Sénégalaise (RTS), the country’s public broadcaster.

The western African nation will observe three days of national mourning for the victims, starting on January 9, the president announced.

The reason for the crash is as yet unknown. CNN has reached out to the Senegalese Transport Ministry for comment.

Dakar will also call an inter-ministerial council on January 9 to discuss “firm measures” to ensure transport safety, according to Sall.

Israel revokes travel permits of senior Palestinian officials

The Palestinian foreign minister says Israel has revoked his travel permit, part of a series of punitive steps against the Palestinians that Israel’s new hardline government announced days ago.

Riad al-Malki said in a statement on Sunday that he was returning from the Brazilian president’s inauguration when he was informed that Israel had rescinded his travel permit, which allows top Palestinian officials to travel easily in and out of the occupied West Bank, unlike ordinary Palestinians.

A spokesperson for Israel’s defence ministry confirmed the move to the Reuters news agency, calling it part of the implementation of a government decision taken on Friday to penalise the Palestinians for pushing the United Nations’ highest judicial body to give its opinion on the Israeli occupation.

On Saturday, Israel said it had revoked entry permits for three senior officials from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas’s Fatah party after they visited a Palestinian citizen of Israel recently released from prison.

Mahmud al-Alul, Azzam al-Ahmad and Rawhi Fattouh had visited Karim Younis in his home village of Ara in northern Israel following his release on Thursday after serving a 40-year sentence for killing an Israeli soldier.

“The three men took advantage of their status and entered Israel this morning [Saturday] to travel to the home of the terrorist Karim Younis,” the office of defence minister Yoav Galant said in a statement later on Saturday. Galant ordered their Israeli entry permits be revoked in response, it said.



A funeral ceremony held for Palestinian teenager Amer Abu Zaytoun who was killed by Israeli forces during a raid on the Balata refugee camp in the West Bank city of Nablus.

Ancient astronomy inscription discovered in Marvdasht

From Page 1 ► bas-relief carvings. Moreover, it embraces four tombs where Persian Achaemenid kings are laid to rest, believed to be those of Darius II, Artaxerxes I, Darius I, and Xerxes I (from left to right facing the cliff), although some historians are still debating this.

The Achaemenid necropolis is situated near Persepolis, itself a bustling UNESCO World Heritage site near the southern city of Shiraz. Naqsh-e Rostam, meaning “Picture of Rostam” is named after a mythical Iranian hero which is most celebrated in Shahnameh and Persian mythology. Back in time, natives of the region had erroneously supposed that the carvings below the tombs represent depictions of the mythical hero.

There are stunning bas-relief carvings above the tomb chambers that are similar to those at Persepolis, with the kings standing on thrones supported by figures representing the subject nations below. There are also two similar graves situated on the premises of Persepolis probably belonging to Artaxerxes II and Artaxerxes III.

Beneath the funerary chambers are dotted with seven Sassanian eras (224–651) bas-reliefs cut into the cliff depict vivid scenes of imperial conquests and royal ceremonies;



signboards below each relief give a detailed description in English.

At the foot of Naqsh-e Rostam, in the direction of the cliff face, stands a square building known as Ka'beh-ye Zardusht, meaning Kaaba of Zoroaster. The building, which is roughly 12 meters high and seven meters square, probably was constructed in the first half of the 6th century BC, although it bears a variety of inscriptions from later periods. Though the Ka'beh-ye Zardusht is of great linguistic interest, its original purpose is not clear. It may have been a tomb for Achaemenian royalty or some sort of altar, perhaps to the goddess Anahiti, also called Anahita believed to be associate with royalty, war and fertility.

Car rally marks Woman's Day

TEHRAN –On Friday, a number of Iranian female drivers held a rally on Tehran streets to mark National Woman's Day (also called Mother's Day), which coincides with the birth anniversary of Hazrat Fatemeh (PBUH), the daughter of the holy prophet Mohammad (S).

The rally was held under the motto “Let's Start from Ourselves” to provide women the opportunity to participate in car racing activities, improve their driving skills, create social enthusiasm, and honor women's and mothers' high status, ISNA reported on Sunday.

The participants of this event attended the map reading training class and the briefing session on Thursday, where they learned the rules and regulations of tourism rallies, the

Alborz to host regional handicrafts exhibit

TEHRAN – Alborz province near the capital Tehran will be hosting a regional exhibition of Iranian handicrafts and traditional arts, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Participants from nine provinces, including Tehran, Qazvin, Qom, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Zanjan, will attend the five-day exhibit, which will open on January 30, Yahya Darai explained on Sunday.

It is hoped that prominent artisans and craftspeople will participate actively in the exhibit, the official added.

Alborz province is surrounded by Mazandaran, Tehran, Markazi, and Qazvin provinces. Its name is driven by the Alborz Mountains. A significant part of the mountains is located in the northern part of the province.

Historical resources and documents, as well as archaeological studies, indicate that Alborz has a rich culture dating back to prehistoric

UNESCO sites at a glance



Historic Centre of Krakow

The Historic Centre of Krakow, the former capital of Poland, is situated at the foot of the Royal Wawel Castle.

The 13th-century merchants' town

has Europe's largest market square and numerous historical houses, palaces, and churches with their magnificent interiors.

Further evidence of the town's fascinating history is provided by the remnants of the 14th-century fortifications and the medieval site of Kazimierz with its ancient synagogues in the southern part of town, Jagellonian University, and the Gothic cathedral where the kings of Poland were buried.

The importance of the city is evidenced by its urban layout, its numerous churches and monasteries, its imposing public buildings, the remains of its medieval city walls, and its palaces and townhouses, many designed and built by prominent architects and craftsmen.

TEHRAN – Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, a lesser-known travel destination in southwest Iran, seeks to expand its rural tourism in close collaboration with private investors.

The expansion of rural tourism is high on the agenda, the provincial tourism chief Morteza Mohammadian Dehkordi said on Sunday.

Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari embraces more than 900 villages, each having considerable potential in terms of natural and cultural, the official stated.

“In that regard, we are preparing the ground for the growth of rural tourism in the province that offers visitors over 800 travel attractions.”

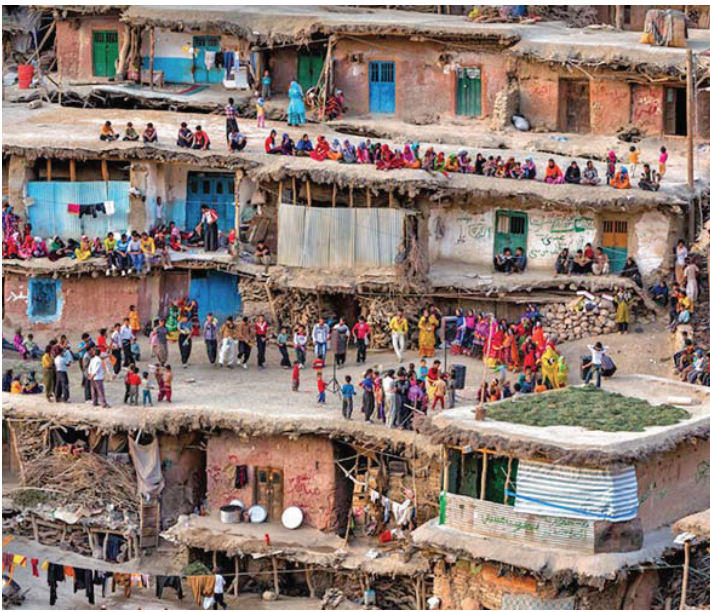
“To gain the needed tourism infrastructure, we are negotiating with the private sector to formulate investment packages,” the official explained.

An off-the-beaten-path tourist destination, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, is the birthplace of various unique traditions and rituals relative to the ‘tribal’ lifestyles.

Experts say the province has considerable potential to become a vibrant tourist attraction because of its changing natural landscape.

Nowadays, an increasing number of travelers are looking for something different, such as spending a day in the tranquil countryside, picking fresh fruits, watching rice grow, fishing by the seaside, eating traditional dishes

Lesser-known province to cultivate rural tourism



or even staying with locals.

To put it in other words, many urban residents tend to choose rural tourism to enjoy a slow-paced lifestyle that resembles something like ‘the Internet + countryside.’

To put it another way, a lot of urban dwellers favor rural travel to take advantage of a relaxed way of life similar to “the Internet countryside.”

In contrast, traditional forms of transportation are typically booked through travel agencies.

As tourists get older, more and more types of travel are welcomed by those looking for undiscovered destinations.

Iran has a lot to offer nature lovers who appreciate pristine, diverse natural resources. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is expected to award the title of “Best Tourism Villages” to many rural locations around the world, and the villages of Kharanaq, Barandaq, and Lark have been nominated.

UNWTO sees rural tourism as

Lorestan home to 700 traditional kilim-weaving workshops

TEHRAN – On Saturday, Lorestan's tourism chief said the western Iranian province is home to some 700 traditional weaving workshops dedicated to kilim carpets.

Currently, over 900 craftspeople are actively engaged in producing Kilims across the province, Ata Hassanpur told reporters.

Kilim is a pileless floor covering handwoven in most places where pile rugs are made. The term is applied both generally and specifically, with the former use referring to virtually any rug-like fabric that does not have a pile.

on average, over 21,000 square meters of kilims are made in Lorestan per annum, the official said.

“In addition, local crafters create the same number of handmade carpets and rugs in a year.”

The kilims are often woven on narrow looms, and two mirror-image pieces are sewn together along the long edge to produce the completed kilim. The vertical color junctions involve a discontinuity of the wefts, the colored yarns that produce the design.

When used specifically the term refers to a more limited number of techniques, including slit tapestry, warp sharing, and various forms of interlocking tapestry weave.

Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and their good quality.



Among Persian carpets, particularly those of the classic period, the medallion may represent an open lotus blossom with 16 petals as seen from above, a complex star form, or a quatrefoil with pointed lobes.

Persian carpets are sought after internationally with the medallion pattern being arguably the most characteristic feature of them all. Weavers spend several months in front of a loom, stringing and knotting thousands of threads. Some practice established patterns, some make their own.

Each Persian carpet is a scene that seems as ageless, a procedure that can take as long as a year, these efforts have long put Iran's carpets among the most complex and labor-intensive handicrafts in the world. When the weaving is finally done, the carpet is cut, washed, and put out in the sun to dry.

Zanjan ceremony marks indigenous art of knifemaking

TEHRAN– On Saturday, a host of indigenous craftspeople and cultural heritage officials in Zanjan hold a special ceremony to mark knifemaking skills passed down from generation to generation in the west-central Iranian city.

According to organizers, the ceremony was aimed at promoting the time-honored craft, samples of which were discovered in an ancient salt mine in Zanjan.

There isn't much information available about the history of this type of handicraft, but it can be inferred from historical records and travel accounts that Zanjan was a city where knives, swords, and daggers were massively produced

beginning in the 17th century, and numerous knife-making workshops were established there.

Experts say Zanjan knives have been the most successful among the handmade products of other Iranian cities due to their design, cut, diversity, and durability.

Iron is the key component in the manufacture of handmade knives. Seashells, wood, fiber, ivory, and other materials are used to make the handle. Usually, the names of the knife makers are engraved into the blade. They embellish their creations with a variety of ornate elements, including ivory, seashell fragments, jewelry, gems, and filigree.

The most important tools used by the cutlers are hammers, sledgehammers, scissors, and kilns. To make a knife, first, the master heats the iron in the kiln. After it reaches the proper degree, it is forged into knife, sword, and dagger blades by the impact of the hammer. Then he skillfully creates the handle using materials like horns or ivory and attaches it to the blade. Finally, the blade is ground and chrome plated.

The knife makers of Zanjan usually carve their names into the blade. Gems, jewelry, filigree, pieces of seashells, and ivory are some of the ornaments they add to their products. From small

a type of activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle, culture, angling, and sightseeing. Such tourism also possesses characteristics such as low population density, a landscape dominated by agriculture and forestry, as well as traditional social structure and lifestyle.

The UN body aims to turn the spotlight on the “uniqueness” of each village to make tourism a means for further development in rural areas. “We want to recognize the uniqueness of each village and showcase the best initiatives to make tourism a means for a better future in rural areas. As we restart tourism, we work to ensure that we leave no one - and no village- behind,” according to UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

Needless to say that the growth of the local economy is the ultimate goal of the rise and development of the rural tourism industry, but in the long run, to enable the long-term development of the rural tourism industry, the health maintenance and growth of environmental capacity are very important.

Consequently, rural tourism is not a magic solution to the problems faced by many rural areas, but it opens up opportunities for economic progress, social and cultural development, and enhancing people's togetherness.

Throughout history, invaders, politicians, and even enemies have left their impact on Iran's carpets. As mentioned by Britannica Encyclopedia, little is known about Persian carpet making before the 15th century, when art was already approaching a peak.

For instance, the Mongol invasion of the 13th century depressed Persia's artistic life, only partially restored by the renaissance under the Mongol Il-Khan dynasty (1256–1353). Although the conquests of Timur (who died in 1405) were in most respects disastrous to Persia, he favored artisans and spared them to work on his great palaces in Samarkand.

Later in the 17th century, there were a growing demand for the production of so many gold- and silver-threaded carpets that were ultimately exported to Europe. Some were made in Kashan, but many of the finest came from Isfahan. With their high-keyed fresh colors and opulence, they have affinities with European Renaissance and Baroque idioms.

In the beginning of the 18th century, nomads and town dwellers were still making carpets using dyes developed over centuries, each group maintaining an authentic tradition. Not made for an impatient Western market, these humbler rugs of the “low school” are frequently beautifully designed and are of good material and technique.

decorative knives that are used as key chains to large swords, a wide range of products are made in the workshops.

The handle provides a chance for the artistry of their makers, who try to add to their beauty and uniqueness as much as possible. Characteristics such as spring-assisted-like opening, high sharpness of the blade, and very good grip are some of the traits of Zanjan knives.

Some cultural heritage fans believe the art of making handmade knives is somehow fallen into oblivion in Zanjan.

Ardabil ski resorts ready to welcome visitors

TEHRAN – Visitors to the northwestern province of Ardabil can enjoy skiing on its slopes, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

There will be a festival of winter games held at the Alvares and Oujor ski resorts in Sarein city this winter, Yahya Najjar-Qabel explained on Sunday.

Moreover, World Snow Day, which is celebrated on the third Sunday in January every year, will be observed in Alvares ski resort with the General Directorate of Sports and Youth, if it continues to snow, the official added.

If there is considerable snowfall, the Ardabil ski

resort in Khalkhal city will host a festival of statues and snowmen, he noted.

The infrastructure of this ski resort is also being completed, and in the future, it will play a greater role in the development of winter tourism, he mentioned.

In 2019, Ardabil along with Sari, the capital of Mazandaran province, was selected as the cultural capitals of the Economic Cooperation Organization for 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Last April, the tourism authorities of the province announced that they have developed extensive plans to draw more tourists during the winter to the

province and make it the winter tourism hub of the country.

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

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

From page 1 ► It is also produced by making nitric acid, welding and using explosives, refining of petrol and metals, commercial manufacturing, and food manufacturing.

In order to control and reduce the emission of nitrogen oxides, different types of materials called catalysts are used. In this regard, scientists have been paying more attention to nano-catalyst materials.

The 2022 update of the World Health Organization's air quality database introduces, for the first time, ground measurements of annual mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, a common urban pollutant, and precursor of particulate matter and ozone.

It also includes measurements of PM10 or PM2.5, both originate mainly from human activities related to fossil fuel combustion.

Sulfur dioxide is also a colorless gas or liquid with a strong, choking odor. It is produced from the burning of fossil fuels (coal and oil) and the smelting of mineral ores (aluminum, copper, zinc, lead, and iron) that contain sulfur.

The hazardous air is putting tens of millions of people at risk — not only in the capital but across the country.

Effects of air pollution on mental

Iran seeking to get International Solar Alliance membership

TEHRAN – The administration has recently sent a bill to the parliament, aiming to get the nod for joining the International Solar Alliance.

According to the Sixth Development Plan (2016-2021), the government should have increased the share of renewables in power generation to at least five percent.

However, the nominal installed capacity of the country's electricity production is currently 90 gigawatts, of which the share of renewable power plants and solar farms is just 970 megawatts, equaling slightly more than 1.1% of the electricity production capacity of the country.

The government is planning to become the main producer of electricity using clean sources of energy by expanding renewable power plants by 13 times.

According to the Ministry of Energy, solar power plants have an annual production of 455.28 megawatts and a share of 50.38 percent of renewable electricity, followed by wind power plants with a share of 34.31 percent.

ISA at a glance

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) is an action-oriented, member-driven, collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies as a means for bringing energy access, ensuring energy security, and driving energy



Nanotechnology utilized to remove air pollutants

health are anxiety, productivity, concentration and focus, mental exhaustion and fatigue, dementia and other mental disorders, mood fluctuations and irritability, and consequences of

air pollution on your physical health.

Particulate matter is capable of penetrating deep into the lungs and entering the bloodstream, causing cardiovascular, cerebrovascular

(stroke), and respiratory impacts. There is emerging evidence that particulate matter impacts other organs and causes other diseases as well.

The nano industry is one of the technological fields that has processed growth and development in Iran, so that, the introduction of these quality products to the world is a necessity.

Iran Nanotechnology Innovation Council has been implementing plans to strengthen the nano sector over the past few years.

Some 270 companies are active in the nanotechnology field and it is predicted that their revenue will reach up to 80 trillion rials (nearly \$310 million), the former Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari, said.

On November 28, 2022, President Ebrahim Raisi declared to implement the “National Document for the Development of Nano Science and Technology”.

Consisting of 7 articles, the ten-year document aims to train human resources and provide infrastructure for the development and commercialization of technology. Priority industrial areas are water and environment, energy, agriculture, health, and construction.



Currently, the ISA has 9 comprehensive programs, each focusing on a distinct application that could help scale the deployment of solar energy solutions.

Activities under the program focus on 4 priority areas – Analytics & Advocacy, Capacity Building, Programmatic Support, and readiness and enabling activities, that help create a favorable environment for solar energy investments to take root in the country.

The ISA was conceived as a joint effort by India and France to mobilize efforts against climate change through the deployment of solar energy solutions. It was conceptualized on the sidelines of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015.

With the amendment of its Framework Agreement in 2020, all member states of the United Nations are now eligible to join the ISA.

Knowledge-based companies to help preserve natural resources

TEHRAN – Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization plans to benefit from the experiences of knowledge-based companies toward preserving natural resources.

Utilizing the capacity of knowledge-based companies in the field of making systems smart, stopping the unauthorized change of use in agricultural lands and natural resources, and implementing projects to revitalize pastures have been considered, Hossein Mir-Rajabi, an official with the Organization, said.

Seven programs namely smart controlling and monitoring of natural resources, formulating and implementing the revitalization plan, enriching pastures, creating a comprehensive natural resource management system, launching

a national dispatching center, manufacturing firefighting equipment domestically, developing the Internet of Things, and smart irrigating of plantations have been prepared in this regard.

The Ministry of Agriculture has allocated 311 billion rials (about \$775,000) to the projects, the official added.

Nature partners

In order to educate, promote and attract people's participation, 215,240 people are trained as 'partners of nature', the Organization's director for education, promotion, and public participation, said in November last year.

Some 83 percent of the lands are presided over by the Organization, including forests and pastures, ISNA quoted Hossein

Mirzaei as saying.

On a large scale, the government is not able to manage these areas alone. Therefore, there is a need for people's participation to preserve natural resources, he added.

Nature partners are people who are mostly present in the field of natural resources, such as farmers, operators, and implementers of natural resources projects, who can help us in the protection department.

A roadmap for environmental protection has been developed, Rouhollah Naqdipour, the secretary of the strategic council of the Department of Environment, has announced.

The document presents 13 national

macro strategies and 46 cross-sectoral measures for five main environmental challenges, he said, IRNA reported.

The 7-chapter book also suggests reforms for systematic purposeful solutions and policies to solve environmental issues including the water crisis, he explained.

He listed the five major environmental challenges of the country as the imbalance between water resources and consumption leading to drought, soil erosion, waste and sand and dust storms, air pollution in metropolises, destruction of biodiversity and genetic resources, and imbalance between the environment and industrial and civil development.

Knowledge-based companies

In December 2022, Reza Asadifar, an

official with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology said currently 7882 knowledge-based firms are operating in the country.

The fields of biotechnology, agriculture, food industries, chemical technologies aircraft maintenance, steel, gas, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and medicine, oil, electronics and telecommunications, information technology, and computer software are among the sectors in which researchers in technology companies are working.

Today, the country's knowledge management ecosystem accounts for more than 3 percent of the GDP. And the figure is projected to reach 5 percent, however, the main goal is to step toward a 10 percent share in GDP, the former vice president for science and technology Sourena Sattari

said in February.

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

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

Strengthening knowledge-based companies are on the agenda, raising hope for reducing obstacles on the path to development.

The Leader has called on all Iranians, including citizens and government officials, to work hard to boost knowledge-based production and create new jobs.

RAMSAR SITES IN IRAN

Part 37

It lies enclosed in a drainage basin of about 29,000 ha in a broad valley between Zagros ranges, and is fed by a number of permanent springs and several seasonal watercourses.

The salinity varies widely according to the size of the lake. At maximum, the lake is almost fresh and covers about 4,200 ha.

During the dry years of the early 1970s, water levels were low, the lake was brackish to saline, marsh vegetation was confined to the western and eastern ends of the lake (near freshwater inflow), and there were large areas of bare saltflats in the south-west bay.

Throughout much of the 1980s and 1990s however, water levels have remained high and the water is now almost fresh.

There are extensive reedbeds in many parts of the lake. The lake has a muddy bottom.

The physiography of the region comprises oligo-miocene limestones that form spectacular escarpments, generally aligned as parallel ridges enclosing broad valleys with open oak woodland.

Ecological features

Dasht-e Arjan is a eutrophic lake. The marshes around it comprise extensive reedbeds of Phragmites and reedmace Typha, with fringing areas of rush and other aquatic plants.

The surrounding flats are usually covered by terrestrial grasses or remain as bare baked mud, but in wet years sedges predominate.

Lake Parishan has is an oligotrophic lake surrounded by eutrophic marshes. It also supports extensive beds of reeds and reedmace, as well as halophytic vegetation.

Large areas of the semi-arid steppe around Lake Parishan have been converted to wheat fields.

Nearby mountain sides are still covered with forests of oak, while the lower slopes are partially covered with steppe forest of almonds, hawthorn and hackberry.

In much of the area, the shrub-like “Arjan” tree is conspicuous.

Noteworthy flora

At Dasht-e Arjan there are extensive areas of reeds Phragmites australis and reedmace Typha sp. With fringing areas of rush Juncus spp. and other aquatic plants.

In wet years the surrounding flats are covered with Carex sp. sedges. Lake Parishan also supports extensive reedbeds of Phragmites and Typha, as well as the halophytic species of Salsola, Kochia, Camphorosma and Halocnemum.

Steppes are covered with oak Quercus brantii, and in much of the area the “Arjan” tree Amygdalus erioclada is growing very well.

Noteworthy fauna

Both Lake Parishan and Dasht-e Arjan are extremely important for wintering waterfowl of a wide variety of species, and are also of considerable importance for breeding waterfowl, notably Dalmatian pelican (Pelecanus crispus), marbled teal (Marmaronetta angustirostris), ferruginous duck (Aythya nyroca) and white-headed duck (Oxyura leucocephala).

The Dalmatian pelican is at the lake all year round and few breed there. Marbled teal breeds at Lake Parishan when conditions are suitable, and large numbers winter at the wetlands.

The ferruginous duck occurs in small numbers all year round, and several pairs breed at Lake Parishan.

The numbers of most other duck and coot Fulica atra have in recent years been well below the numbers in the 1970s, presumably because of increased disturbance by fishermen in motorised boats.

However, improved agriculture to the south of the lake now provides better feeding habitat for greylag goose (Anser anser) and crane (Grus grus), whose numbers have increased substantially.

The extensive reed-beds now support large breeding colonies of herons, egrets, glossy ibis (Plegadis falcinellus), white spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia) and purple swampphen (Porphyrio porphyrio).

Water rail (Rallus aquaticus) and Bailleon's crake (Porzana pusilla) breed in the marshes of Dasht-e Arjan.

In wet years little bittern (Ixobrychus minutus) also breeds at Lake Parishan, as do large mixed heronry and some colonies of terns.

Wintering raptors include white-tailed eagle (Haliaeetus albicilla), marsh harrier (Circus aeruginosus), imperial eagle (Aquila heliaca), saker (Falco cherrug) and barbary falcon (Falco pelegrinoides).

Source: Ramsar.org

To be continued

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

COVID-19: Iran reopens schools under strict health protocols

Over 15 million students attended schools nationwide on Saturday for the new school year under strict health protocols to protect teachers, staff, and students against the coronavirus pandemic.

The opening bell of the new academic year was rung symbolically by President Hassan Rouhani at a girls' high school in downtown Tehran.

The back-to-school ceremony is officially inaugurated by the president each year, as he rings the bells in a symbolic gesture at a chosen school.

Mohsen Haji Mirzaei, Education Minister, symbolically attended the virtual festival. More than 15 million students started the new school year in 116,000 schools across the country, Haji Mirzaei stated.

This year, education is followed in three forms of in-person, virtual, and television-based, but our priority is school attendance, he noted, highlighting, all schools should strictly follow the health regulations so that the students are protected.

Maintaining a shorter duration for classes, the students will sit 35 minutes in each class, he emphasized.

بازگشایی مدارس با پروتکل های سختگیرانه بهداشتی

بیش از ۱۵ میلیون دانش آموز سال تحصیلی جدید را با رعایت پروتکل های سختگیرانه بهداشتی آغاز کردند.

زنگ آغاز سال تحصیلی به صورت ارتباط تصویری در مراسمی به دستور رئیس جمهور در دبیرستانی در تهران نواخته شد.

محسن حاجی میرزایی وزیر آموزش و پرورش در این مراسم گفت: بیش از ۱۵ میلیون دانش آموز سال تحصیلی جدید را در ۱۱۶ هزار مدرسه آغاز کردند.

وزیر آموزش و پرورش در این مراسم گفت: امسال آموزش دانش آموزان به سه شکل حضوری، مجازی، و تلویزیونی دنبال می‌شود، اما اولویت ما آموزش حضوری دانش آموزان است. او افزود: همه مدارس باید شیوه نامه‌های بهداشتی را به طور جدی رعایت کنند تا مشکلی برای دانش آموزان پیش نیاید.

وی تأکید کرد: کلاس‌های مدارس امسال ۳۵ دقیقه‌ای خواهد بود و زمان حضور دانش آموزان در کلاس‌ها به حداقل رسیده است.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 8

New cases	117
New deaths	2
Total cases	7,561,925
Total deaths	144,708
New hospitalized patients	62
Patients in critical condition	157
Total recovered patients	7,336,443
Diagnostic tests conducted	54,826,660
Doses of vaccine injected	155,226,267

