

Nouri Court Mirror of Western Human Rights

► Page 2

Report

Ankara's ties with Damascus: From overthrow to interaction

The Arab Spring movement, which started in Tunisia, quickly affected all the Arab countries of North Africa and some in West Asia.

Immediately after the beginning of the unrest, the president of Tunisia handed over the power, and then, Mubarak in Egypt and Gaddafi in Libya. Mubarak gave up power so that the so-called democracy could develop in the Middle East.

After the developments in North Africa caused fundamental changes, some countries in West Asia and beyond concluded that they are able to manage similar scenarios for some countries in the region. ► Page 5

Indians praise General Soleimani's heroism on his martyrdom anniversary

Thousands of miles away from Iran and other countries in the Middle East, dozens of people from civil society and media organizations gathered in the Indian capital New Delhi to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of General Qassem Soleimani, a revered military figure who commanded the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). ► Page 5

Iran planning to extend area of operation to Panama Canal: Navy chief

TEHRAN - Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said on Wednesday that Iran is planning to extend its area of operation to the Panama Canal that divides South and North America.

Speaking at a navy ceremony on Wednesday, Irani said, "Today, we have a great opportunity in the sea area for the development of the country, and we can turn this gift from an economic capacity into a civilizational capacity by using the maritime capacity properly. Today, the use of the sea is a geopolitical advantage for us, and those who do not have this capacity are suffering from a geopolitical suffocation."

The Iranian navy is planning to expand its scope of operations, he said. ► Page 3

Iran to meet Chile in World Handball C'ship opener

TEHRAN - Iran will open the 2023 IHF World Men's Handball Championship on Thursday with a match against Chile at the Tauron Arena in Krakow, Poland.

Iran are drawn in Group A along with Spain, Chile and Montenegro.

Team Melli are also scheduled to play Montenegro and Spain on Jan. 14 and 16, respectively.

"Most of Iranian players have never experienced a great tournament and anything can happen. But we will do our best to get the best possible results," Iran coach Veselin Vujovic had already said. ► Page 3



© Mehr / Saeedreza Razavi

TEHRAN - A number of Iranian students and ordinary people gathered in front of the French embassy in Tehran in protest over outrageous caricatures published by the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo.

The protest took place on Wednesday afternoon in Tehran in freezing snowy weather.

Protesters chanted the following slogans:

All this army has come out of love of the Leader, Macron betrays and the West shows support, the blood flowing in our vessels is a gift to our Leader, etc.

The people and students present in the rally condemned the insult to sanctities and asked the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take the necessary follow-up to deal with the perpetrators of this insult and asked the officials to ► Page 3

Alireza Akbari sentenced to death on spying for UK

TEHRAN- Alireza Akbari, arrested some time ago on espionage charges, has been sentenced to death over disrupting Iran's internal and external security through the transmission of information to the UK.

It is worth noting that the Supreme Court has also confirmed the verdict.

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Intelligence on Wednesday, it emphasized that Akbari considered as a leading agent working for the British spy service (MI6), collecting sensitive information from Iran in a bid to provide it to the service.

Akbari had worked in various positions since 1360s (1980s), including the deputy

minister of defense under the presidency of Mohammad Khatami.

During the process of obtaining a visa from the British embassy in Tehran, he was flagged by the intelligence agents stationed there and then became a full-fledged employee for the British spy agency.

Vaccination of foreign nationals well underway

TEHRAN - A senior official with the Ministry of Health has said a plan for the vaccination of foreign nationals against three contagious diseases is progressing according to the schedule.

The plan was started on December 31, 2022, ISNA quoted Mohsen Zahraei, the head of the preventable diseases department of the Ministry of Health, as saying.

According to the previous announcement, the program was started in 27 universities of medical sciences in the country, and fortunately, the work has progressed well and has been welcomed by the target community, he added.

According to the latest statistics, some 426,000 people under the age of 15 referred to get the vaccines, 92 percent of whom were non-Iranian nationals, Zahraei noted. ► Page 7



© ISNA / Morteza Zangane

Raisi submits \$131.5b budget bill to Majlis

TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi submitted the administration's draft of the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1402, which starts on March 21, to the Majlis on Wednesday.

The president mentioned stable economic growth, people's livelihood, observing justice, and efficiency of the government system as the main ► Page 4

Unprecedented 7% growth in Scopus-indexed medical publications

TEHRAN - Publications in Scopus-indexed international journals have experienced an unprecedented growth of seven percent.

Since the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi took office in August 2021, more than 45 scientific and research journals have been indexed by Scopus, the deputy health minister Younes Panahi has said.

The growth in Scopus-indexed publications

has been unprecedented, he said, adding that before the administration took office, 135 publications had been indexed by Scopus, while the figure is currently 180.

In 2021, a number of 27,800 articles have been registered by medical science researchers of the country in the Scopus database, he added.

Over the past year, 18 articles published by Iranian researchers have been cited by Scopus International Citation Database, compared with a total of 101 during the past 40 years, the deputy science minister Peyman Salehi said in September 2022.

International citation indexes include Web of Science, Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports, Web of Knowledge, and Scopus. ► Page 7

From Inside

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Tehran Papers

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

9 warnings to the Republic of Azerbaijan

Arman-e Emrooz has criticized appeasing Baku. Some advices on how to deal with the hostile policies of the Republic of Azerbaijan. To warn Baku to stop anti-Iran procedures, the following approaches can be used: ► Page 2

Raisi, Putin hold phone talks

TEHRAN - The presidents of Iran and Russia spoke over the phone on Wednesday to discuss a variety of bilateral issues, according to a statement by the Kremlin.

According to the statement, President Vladimir Putin and President Ebrahim Raisi discussed expanding bilateral cooperation in the energy, transportation, and logistics sectors.

They also discussed the situation in Syria, the Kremlin said. The two sides agreed to continue high-level contact.

The call came days after Iranian President Raisi received a copy of the credentials of the new Russian ambassador to Iran, Alexey Dedov. In his meeting with Dedov, Raisi described Tehran-Moscow relations as strategic.

"Iran and Russia have good grounds for cooperation in the bilateral, regional and international fields," he said. He also 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.

Ammar festival announces winners of sideline sections

TEHRAN - Winners of the sidelines sections at the 13th Ammar Popular Film Festival were announced on Tuesday evening.

Top works in the categories of poetry, music, cartoon, illustration and poster were honored in a special ceremony at Tehran's Felestin Cinema.

The Lantern for best poetry was awarded to a work by Mehdi Jahandar, while a piece by Mojtaba Allahverdi won the Lantern for best music.

"Berlin", a cartoon by Peyman Alishahi, and Mahnaz Saberpur's illustration "Iran's Daughter" were awarded.

"A Partner in Blood" by Amin Taqizadeh was selected as best poster.

The Ammar festival was established in 2010 by a number of Iranian revolutionary figures to honor film and art products promoting ► Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

9 warnings to the Republic of Azerbaijan

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

from page 1 ► - More use of the alternative route of the sea corridor to Russia by strengthening the fleet of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Caspian Sea, building various types of vessels and completing the Rasht railway to the Caspian Free Zone.

- Completion of Chabahar to Zahedan railway
- Supporting oppressed groups in Turkey and Baku, such as Tالشis and Lezgis in the Republic of Azerbaijan and Kurds and Alevis in Turkey, and providing a ground for establishment of their representative offices in Tehran (as Turkey and Baku have done)
- More serious support for the Hussainiun and taking advantage of their extensive cultural, scientific, and religious capacities
- Establishing the Consulate of the Republic of Armenia in Tabriz as soon as possible
- Active diplomacy with Russia and Armenia to sign a tripartite defense and economic agreement
- Establishing a wider economic cooperation with Georgia (as a bridge for Iran-Armenia to connect with Europe) and defining some kind of common political-security and economic-commercial interests between Iran and Georgia
- Increasing economic, political, and cultural relations with former Soviet republics that have Muslim population Muslim in the Chechen area, focusing on the threat of NATO through the Republic of Baku.
- Serious strengthening of Iran's public diplomacy in Central Asia and the Caucasus

Kayhan: Mad government in Israel

In its editorial, Kayhan analyzed the situation and prospects of the new Israeli government and wrote: "Some political and security observers have said that the security situation is messed up and the growing political divisions in Israel will inevitably lead the army to enter into a conflict beyond the borders.

From inside the government, and especially the security cabinet of the Israeli regime, there have been statements that indicate increase in possibility of Israeli conflicts outside borders. But what is the reality?

In his speech, Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah used the word "mad" to describe some of the new Israeli government members. Some concluded that the Secretary General of Hezbollah was referring to the possibility of the Israeli army's actions abroad.

There is no doubt that the Zionist regime does not have a calm situation inside, and the parties and government bodies are in dispute, and this is the first prerequisite for entering the phase of wider military measures.

Now, even if Netanyahu takes military action against one of the sides of the resistance front, he is not able to bring consensus among his serious opponents.

Although a "mad" can do anything and the resistance movement must be conscious, all the evidence indicates the entry of the Zionist regime into the phase of escalation will further destroy its position and make it more vulnerable against the resistance forces. Netanyahu remembers the words of Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah who said that "if a war starts, it will be the last war in the region."

Farihkhtegan: Nuclear deal will not be revived

Alireza Kohken, an advisor to the foreign minister on the nuclear negotiations, tells Farihkhtegan that "with IR9 centrifuges, nuclear breakout has no meaning anymore."

Talking about the prospect of negotiations, the adviser says: "The agreement will not be signed because we were supposed to sign the agreement early last year, the U.S. representative in the nuclear talks returned to

Washington and when he returned to the talks again, he said the president believes that 'the agreement is finished (dead) and should not be signed.'

Washington demanded changes in some clauses of the deal.

In the middle of the current year, the Americans claimed that some parts that we had agreed on has been disclosed, and that is why that public opinion is putting pressure on Biden and we cannot sign.

Iran told them that when the agreement has not yet been reached, you claim that you are under pressure and cannot fulfill your obligations. Nothing has happened yet. You behave so! What else if we agree. America only signs a document on the paper, but we have to do things to limit the activities on the ground.

Everyone saw the film that Mr. Trump signed a paper again and said that he did not care about the previous signature.

For America, the signature is on a piece of paper, but for us it is a technical measure. They are not the same."

Javan: Stupid opposition

Javan discussed Hamed Esmailion's recent positions and wrote: "Hamed Esmailion, the hope of the foreign opposition, is not so stupid as to come to Iran, but not so stupid as not to say the same thing!" He told the 'Saudi' International TV network (a sarcastic name for Iran International) about his various scenarios if he comes to Iran, I am not stupid. I sit and think about different scenarios."

Of course, he defined a scenario as follows: "[If they went to Iran] I would shout from Azadi Square to Enghelab Square!"

For several months, Esmailion has been encouraging some people inside Iran to riot and kill security officers and set fire to public property, and have caused the deaths of officers and rioters, but about his travel to Iran, he says, "I am not a fool to go to Iran", in exactly the same sense. Why should he come to Iran? In Iran, there is no huge money that the CIA and Mossad give him.

In Iran, some rioters, under the leadership of Esmailion, kill people and set fire to properties. These are not things he is looking for. Overthrowing is his business, to make money, not to make trouble."

Ham-Mihan: A surge in Iran-Russia relations

Ham-Mihan has discussed the relations between Tehran and Moscow and raised the question, what should be done in this situation?

The daily writes: "The fact is that today we are facing a surge in Iran-Russia relations. For the first time, we reached military cooperation with Russia, and this time we (are not mere buyers); we are also sellers of weapons to Russia. At the same time, we have a surge in trade relations with Russia.

The reason for the jump is sanctions of Russia.

The third issue is the activation of the North-South corridor.

The construction of the corridor was agreed 22 years ago. All along, the Russians had been indifferent to the project. Because it was Iran under sanctions and Russians did not want to put themselves in trouble.

Now Russia itself is under sanctions; it is looking for the revival of the project. Because it is the best way to Russia to connect with the world. But it should be noted that the surge in the ties of Tehran-Moscow is not the result of Raisi's "look to the East" policy, but the result of the Ukraine war.

Even if Rouhani's government was at office, this leap would have happened.

ing serious about reaching a deal. Iran rejects the accusation. Also, the war in Ukraine has cast a long shadow on the JCPOA talks, with the West criticizing Iran for selling drones to Russia.

This is despite the fact that Iran had sold a limited number of drones to Russia before the Russian army invaded Ukraine in February 2020.

Ulyanov has recently criticized the West for putting the Vienna talks over reviving the JCPOA on hold under the pretext of Iran's alleged provision of drones to Russia.

Ulyanov was commenting on an Al-Monitor report saying that Iran's alleged support of Russia in the Ukraine war has taken a toll on the Vienna talks aimed at reviving the multilateral deal.

TEHRAN- Former Iranian judicial officer Hamid Nouri, 61, who has been unlawfully jailed in Sweden, has criticized a new trial that has been initiated against him, asserting that he would not participate in the "unfair" process as long as his issues are unresolved.

A fresh set of trial hearings for Nouri, who was detained upon his arrival at Stockholm Airport three years ago, started on Wednesday in a Swedish court.

Authorities in Sweden claimed that he had participated in the execution and torture of Mujahe-din-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) members in 1988.

Such spurious claims have been vigorously denied by Nouri.

The Swedish court system framed his case based on allegations made by the terrorist MKO organization, which claimed that Nouri was a prison guard for the MKO operatives in the jail.

Nouri declared at the outset of the fresh trial session that "I believe this tribunal is unjust, and I will not join the court as long as my concerns are not allayed."

The court had switched off Nouri's microphone, but he still spoke loudly, stating, "I do not have access to an ophthalmologist; consequently, I am unable to read the materials in my case."

He went on to underscore, "I have spent the last three years and two months in solitary confinement. Although the judge has ruled that my limitations are no longer in effect, my contacts are still banned."

Nouri was given a life sentence by a Swedish court last year. He has frequently complained about



Nouri court mirror of Western human rights

being abused and tortured in custody.

Nouri was given no assistance, not even a translator, to learn the details of the judgment before the Swedish court sentenced him to life in jail.

Not legally permitted to defend himself

On Sunday, Majid Nouri, Hamid Nouri's son, spoke about his father's horrible conditions in jail.

He also said that the judge wrote him in an email a couple of months ago that the restrictions had been lifted.

Unfortunately, prison guards continue to restrict his father in spite of the fact that the judge ordered the lifting of limitations, so he is still being kept in a solitary confinement and cannot have

any visit or contact with his family members, the son explained.

Hamid Nouri's son expressed concern about his father's health in November 2022, citing three years of abuse and solitary incarceration.

"The process of arresting my father commences with lies. According to Swedish law, a person must enter Sweden of his own volition, but they duped my father into bringing him to Sweden, where he was jailed," he pointed out.

Hamid Nouri's son, while pointing to Sweden's failures in the process of his father's case, said that the Swedish officials have even changed the internal laws to complicate the case.

Reports say that the Swedish

judicial system has not observed the initial human rights standards when it came to the Iranian citizen.

The treatment of the Swedish judicial system is an example of European countries' claim of support for human rights. This is while that the Nordic states, and Sweden in particular, are claimed to greatly value human rights more than other countries in Western Europe.

Despite such unfair and illegal behavior toward Nouri, European countries have been harshly criticizing Iran for its human rights record. They have been slapping repetitive sanctions on the Islamic Republic under the pretext of human rights violations. Though they are fully aware that the chief victims of their sanctions are ordinary people, they continue to impose new bans on Iran.

The Nouri case is an example that there is a gulf between what the Europeans lecture and what they do in action.

Sweden changes rules to exacerbate the Nouri case

Hossein Jafari, the lawyer representing Hamid Nouri, also underlined that "I tried my best to provide evidence and documentation against the false accusations made against Hamid Nouri."

According to the lawyer, 8 sessions of the appeals court will be held in public, of which the first two sessions will be for prosecutors to present their statements and evidence.

Jafari also emphasized that the whole process of the court will probably linger until the fall of next year.

France needs to remain aware of Rushdi's fate: IRGC chief

TEHRAN- The chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) on Wednesday called on the French government to respect other nations' religious views by taking a lesson from the fate of Salman Rushdie.

"Don't play with Muslims. Salman Rushdie insulted the Quran and the Prophet of Islam thirty years ago and fled to perilous hiding places," warned Major General Hossein Salami in reference to the current offensive caricatures of the French magazine Charlie Hebdo against Iran's religious and political figures.

"Now that you have also made this serious error, Muslims will exact their vengeance at some point, even if the assassins (cartoonists) are captured," Salami said, warning that Iran's revenge will be "tough".

They should learn from this that no one, anywhere in the world, has the temerity to



disparage the Muslims' fundamental beliefs, Salami said.

In a recent cartoon contest, the French magazine disrespected

"Enemies utilize sacrilege to undermine Muslims' composure"

'Maximum pressure' on Iran led to U.S. 'maximum failure': diplomat

TEHRAN- Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanaani, stressed on Tuesday that Washington's animosity toward the Islamic Republic is nothing unusual, noting that successive administrations have adopted a strategy of "maximum pressure" against the country.

Kanaani asserted in a string of tweets that the legal and international accountability of past U.S. administrations' hostile activities towards Iran is irrefutable.

Under the false pretense of promoting democracy and human rights in Iran, "maximum pressure" against Iran has always been on the agenda of American presidents, he maintained.

"But all they have done is maximum failure," Kanaani emphasized.

"Why don't the Americans learn from all the scandals brought on by their reliance on false and hypocritical Israeli advisors?" he stated.



The Foreign Ministry spokesman said despite all these pressures Iran remains "strong" and "independent".

Kanaani's comments come a day after Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei revealed that he had obtained a recently declassified document stating that former U.S. president Jimmy Carter had directed the CIA to topple the Islamic Republic in December 1979.

"This indicates that they have had this goal since the Revolution's beginning. In the document, propaganda is mentioned as a means of overthrowing the

Revolution," Ayatollah Khamenei declared in post on his Twitter account on Monday.

Iran succeeded to overthrow the U.S.-backed Pahlavi regime in February 1979 and Carter's order to the CIA chief to topple the Islamic Revolution was issued 10 months later.

Since 1980, there have been no diplomatic ties between the U.S. and the Islamic Republic. The U.S. has also largely restricted commerce with Iran since 1995.

In May 2018, the United States began unilaterally imposing sanctions on Iran after withdrawing from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

In what it referred to as a campaign of "maximum pressure" against Iran at the time, the U.S. administration under president Donald Trump imposed the "toughest ever" sanctions on the country.

FM recounts Qalibaf's accomplishments during journey to Turkey

TEHRAN- Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has praised the Iranian Parliament speaker's participation in the trilateral parliamentary conference of Iran, Turkey, and the Republic of Azerbaijan which yielded fruitful results in clearing up misunderstandings between Tehran and Baku.

Speaking more specifically on the speaker's

attendance at the 13th Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), particularly at its summit meeting, Amir Abdollahian said on Tuesday that it provided an excellent opportunity.

The speaker's trip to Turkey and attendance at the APA conference contributed to better understanding through parliamentary diplomacy, the top diplomat remarked.

The Iranian foreign minister mentioned another accomplishment by Qalibaf during his trip to Turkey, stating that the events in the Caucasus were also a big issue.

"I think all of them are extremely outstanding parliamentary accomplishments at the highest level, and I applaud Mr. Qalibaf for all of them," Amir Abdollahian continued.

Iranian, Russian diplomats meet in Vienna

TEHRAN - Diplomats from Iran and Russia held a meeting in the Austrian capital Vienna on Wednesday to discuss issues of common interest.

The meeting was announced on Twitter by Permanent Representative of Russia to international organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov.

"Visited today the Permanent Mission of #Iran to international organizations in Vienna," Ulyanov said. "Had a productive conversation with Ambassador Mohsen Naziri Asl on topics of common interest"

Vienna has been the venue of talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Talks over the JCPOA came to a standstill months ago, with the West accusing Iran of not be-

Iran planning to extend area of operation to Panama Canal: Navy chief

From Page 1 ▶ “So far, we have been present in all the strategic straits of the world and we have not been present in only two straits, in one of which we will be present this year and we are planning to be present in the Panama Canal,” he said, according to Fars News.

He added, “The actions taken today in the Navy would not have been possible without the support of the elite society, knowledge-based companies and the Ministry of Defense. Today, this capacity is at the service of the country’s progress.”

The Navy said Iran started voyage in the sea much earlier than the Europeans.

“We started seafaring much earlier than the Europeans, and this maritime civilization can be revived. Today we need to strengthen our maritime presence and today we can say that there is no problem in the scientific field to grow in this field. But most of this capacity is used in the military field and other sectors should also make more efforts in this field.”

He stated, “Today, if my comrades are approaching the shores of the American continent, they are showing signs of the authority of dear Iran. As a showcase for the dear people of our country, we appeared in the Pacific Ocean for the first time. Of course, along this route, Australia and the French created threats for us and tried to violate the laws they had approved to cross their coasts. But

Iran summons Iraqi ambassador over use of ‘fake name’ for Persian Gulf

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian announced Wednesday that Iran had summoned the Iraqi ambassador to Iran over Iraq’s use of a fake name for the Persian Gulf.

“In the wake of Iraqi authorities’ use of a fake name for the Persian Gulf, we summoned the ambassador of Iraq to the Foreign Ministry and informed the Iraqi side of the great Iranian nation’s sensitivity regarding the use of the accurate and complete phrase of Persian Gulf,” Amir Abdollahian said, according to Iran’s official news website IRNA.

He also said that Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad al-Sudani has redressed his mistake of using another word for the Persian Gulf on social media platforms.

“We communicated our protest in this regard despite having strategic, brotherly, and deep relations with Iraq,” the Iranian foreign minister said.

Iraqi officials used the word Arabian for the Persian Gulf during the Persian Gulf Cup 25 that is being held in Basra, southern Iraq.

Despite tensions over the nomenclature of the Persian Gulf, Iran and Iraq enjoy close relations. Prime Minister al-Sudani said on



we answered them with authority and according to the law.”

The top military official also said Iran has established command centers for the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

“We have formed three oceanic commands, including the Indian Ocean Command, the Pacific Ocean Command, and the Atlantic Ocean Command. Today we are present in the Indian and Atlantic oceans and soon we will be present in the Pacific Ocean. The equipment that will join the Navy in the future is in line with the mission of these three commands,” Irani explained.

Irani underlines need for going on the defensive

Based on the remarks made by the commander of the Iranian Army Navy, Tehran has no choice

but to protect its faith and engage the foes from a defensive stance in order to preserve Iran’s place in the geometry of strength and enable the 1,400-year-old strong tree to stand magnificently.

Speaking on Tuesday evening at the first Navy Round-the-Clock Quranic School’s opening ceremony for memorization and familiarization with the sacred ideas of the Glorious Quran in the Navy’s First District, Irani reaffirmed, “What counts in the geometry of power is that those who stand tall in the power field, as somehow hit.”

He continued by saying that the enemy today does not only rely on its facilities but also works to instill stronger beliefs among its troops.

“In other words, the enemy today has more than just its facilities

because those facilities are used to exploit personnel, which is why instilling stronger beliefs is so crucial,” he added.

The navy commander underscored that it is not true that a U.S. soldier, pilot, of sailor has travelled some 10,000 miles to reach the Sea of Oman and the Persian Gulf and wants to get involved in a military operation with a blank mind.”

The First Navy District’s opening of this first Quranic school is a step in the correct direction, according to the Navy commander, who highlighted that there is no question that the enemies are attempting to shape the ideas of their people and employees, even though “their beliefs differ from ours.”

“On the one hand, shaping up the society is in mind, which will eventually lead to the building of the Islamic civilization, and is mentioned in seven or eight articles of the Second Step Statement,” he continued. “On the other hand, Quranic studies are among the demands of the Commander of Armed Forces, that the Navy’s Ideological and Political Organization has taken the right step in that path.”

“Our fellow soldiers are currently conducting their tasks in remote regions of the Atlantic Ocean on a large scale, waving the flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as a consequence of the sufferings accepted by the Navy’s Ideological, Political Organization,” he stated.

al-Sudani expressed his thanks to the Islamic Republic for its support and assistance to Iraq in the war on terrorism.

He also highlighted the importance of sustaining bilateral relations between the two countries in various fields, according to a statement at the time by the prime minister’s office.

The Iraqi prime minister affirmed that his government has placed the economy and services at the top of its priorities and expressed wishes that close relations with Iran would contribute to addressing these priorities.

During his visit to Tehran, al-Sudani also had a meeting with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi. “The relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq are different and top-tier, and the strengthening and deepening of bilateral relations should lead to the development and improvement of the level of regional and international interactions in order to establish as much peace and stability in the region and the world as possible,” Raisi said in the meeting.

He noted, “Iran seeks to develop exchanges with Iraq in various commercial and energy fields, and holding regular meetings of the Cooperation Commission of the two countries can play an effective role in realizing this goal.”

in the South Caucasus region, saying Iran will not accept any changes in that regard.

Velayati and Baburin discussed a number of issues. As regards the situation in the South Caucasus region, Velayati echoed remarks by Ayatollah Khamenei, saying, “The Islamic Republic of Iran would not accept any change in the current boundaries. Undoubtedly, the regional security must be maintained.”

In a July meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said that Iran will not “tolerate” any change in the Iran-Armenia borders.

“The Islamic Republic will not tolerate policies or plans that lead to the closing of the Iran-Armenia border,” he said at the time.

Sepahan advance to 2023 Hazfi Cup Round of 16

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team defeated first-tier Saipa 3-0 in Iran’s Hazfi Cup Round pf 32 on Wednesday.

Shahriar Moghanlou made a hat-trick in the seventh, 47th and 58th minutes at the Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium in Isfahan for the Yellows.

- Nassaj are the defending champions.
- *Arman Gohar Sirjan 1 - 3 Esteghlal Mollasani
 - *Malavan 1 - 3 Naft Masjed Soleyman
 - *Pars Jonoubi Jam 1 - 0 Iman Sabz Shiraz
 - *Mes Rafsanjan 1 - 0 Zob Ahan
 - *Paykan 1 - 0 Esteghlal Khuzestan
 - *Nassaji Mazandaran 2 - 1 Fajr Sepasi Shiraz
 - *Sepahan 3 - 0 Saipa
 - *Shahrdari Hamedan 1 (7) – 1 (8) Darya Caspian Babol
- Thursday:**
- *Esteghlal v Tractor
 - *Mes Kerman v Sanat Naft Abadan

Iran U20 to play Jordan in two friendlies

TEHRAN – Iran U20 football team will play Jordan U20 in two friendly matches in Jordan.

The first match will be held on Jan. 19 at the at the Petra Stadium in Al-Hussein Youth City and the second match will take place in the same stadium three days later.

The matches will be held as part of the preparation for the AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023, which will be held in March 2023 in Uzbekistan.

Samad Marfavi’s boys are drawn in Group C along with Qatar, Vietnam, and Australia.

Taremi voted best player of Primeira Liga in November, December

TEHRAN – Porto forward Mehdi Taremi was elected the Best Player of the Primeira Liga for the months of November and December by the SJPF (Professional Football Players Union).

The Iranian international gathered 16.78% of the votes, beating Ricardo Horta (12.98%) from SC Braga and Pedro Porro (12.55%) from Sporting.

The League’s Best Player of the month is found through the average value of the scores given by the sports dailies A Bola, O Jogo and Record in the period corresponding to the vote and the choices of a Technical Committee appointed by the Union, formed by former players Anselmo, João Oliveira Pinto, João Paulo, José Carlos, Rebelo, Tiago Pereira and Tozé.

In the three games played during the period, the Porto No.9 scored four goals and had one assist.

Iran to know rivals at Women’s Asian Qualifiers: Paris 2024

TEHRAN – The contest for the two Asian places in the Paris 2024 women’s football tournament starts on Thursday with the official draw for the Asian Qualifiers Round One and Iran will discover their opponents.

Asia’s best performances since women’s football was added to the Olympic program at Atlanta 1996 has come in the form of silver medals won by China in that year and Japan in 2012.

Both those teams are among the five top seeds who will await the five Round One qualifiers for the next stage.

The Round One draw, which will take place at the Asian Football Confederation House in Kuala Lumpur, will involve 26 teams ranked between sixth and 30th, with one non-ranked team also involved, Insiderthegames.biz reported.

The names will be drawn from four seeding pots based on the latest rankings listed on December 22.

In the first pot are the teams ranked six to 12 – Vietnam, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, Philippines and India.

The second will comprise teams ranked 13 to 19 – Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia.

Pot three contains teams ranked 20th to 26th – Palestine, Singapore, Turkmenistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Tajikistan and Timor-Leste.

Pot four involves teams ranked 27th to 30th and one non-ranked team – Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan, Bhutan and Afghanistan.

The teams will be divided into five groups of four and two groups of three, competing in a one-round league format in a centralized venue from April 3 to 11.

The winners of each group in this round will then advance to Round Two where they will be joined by the five highest seeded teams – North Korea, Japan, Australia, China and South Korea.

Four teams from Round Two – three group winners and the best-ranked runners-up – then face off in Round Three where they play two pairs of home and away matches with the two eventual winners qualifying for the Women’s Olympic Football Tournament in Paris in 2024.

Three Iranians secure spots at WTTC

TEHRAN – Nima Alamian, Amir Hossein Hodaie and Amin Ahmadian secured their place at the World Table Tennis Championships (WTTC) Finals.

Hodaie defeated Ali Al Khadrawi from Saudi Arabia 4-0 (11-5, 11-9, 11-2, 14-12) on Wednesday in the WTTC Asia Continental Stage underway in Doha.

Ahmadian also beat Singapore’s Zhe Yu Clarence Chew 4-2 (10-12, 6-11, 11-7, 12-10, 11-6, 11-6).

On Tuesday, Nima Alamian defeated South Korean player Sangsu Lee 4-2 (11-9, 6-11, 11-4, 11-8, 4-11, 11-9) to secure his place at the World Table Tennis Championships (WTTC) Finals.

The competition is being held at the Lusail Sports Complex in Doha, Qatar, from Jan. 7 to 13.

United World Wrestling hails Iranian star

TEHRAN – United World Wrestling, in its latest Instagram post, has lauded Iranian freestyle wrestler Hassan Yazdani.

The UWW has released a video clip on the Iranian wrestling star.

The footage shows Yazdani when he returns to Iran after winning a world championship.

The governing body on wrestling has termed the Iranian successful athlete as “the Greatest”.

Being an Olympic and world champion wrestler, Hassan Yazdani is considered one of the top wrestling stars in Iranian sporting history due to gaining colorful medals and having a popular personality.

Iran football sends condolence over death of Al-Mohannadi

TEHRAN – President of Iran Football Federation Mehdi Taj has sent a message of condolence to Qatar Football Association

Vice-President of the Qatar Football Association and AFC Vice-Chair for West Asia, Saoud bin Abdulaziz Al-Mohannadi passed away on Tuesday after a long struggle with illness.

He was also elected as a member of the FIFA Council. Al-Mohannadi is named among the distinguished Qatari sports cadres at the various local, Asian and international levels.

Iran to meet Chile in World Handball C’ship opener

From Page 1 ▶ “I cannot promise medal about the competition but I can assure you we will play our heart out to get the best possible results,” he added.

The 28th edition of the IHF Men’s World Championship is being held in Poland and Sweden from Jan. 11 to 29.

Iran envoy meets Russian security official

TEHRAN – Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali has met with Alexander Venediktov, the deputy secretary of Russia’s national security council.

In their meeting, they discussed ways to strengthen and boost bilateral relations, according to Al Alam.

The meeting also touched upon the issue of following up on the results of the recent visit of Russian Security Council Secretary Patrushev to Iran.

They discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations in various fields, especially in economic exchange and the issue of the North-South Corridor, and the follow-up of the implementation of previously concluded agreements of understanding, as well as

consultations on the latest developments at the regional and international levels.

The two sides agreed to continue the consultations on a regular basis.

Iranian President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi has recently hailed Iran-Russia ties as strategic. Speaking in a meeting with the new Ambassador of the Russian Federation Alexey Dedov while receiving his letter of credence, Ayatollah Raisi described Tehran-Moscow relations as “strategic” and emphasized, “Iran and Russia have good grounds for cooperation in bilateral, regional and international fields.”

In this meeting, President Raisi 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, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

In the meeting, Ambassador Dedov stated that the continuous increase of all-round economic cooperation is one of the priorities of his mission. He added, “The strategic economic cooperation between Iran and Russia has caused Western countries to despair of the sanctions policy.”

Sergey Nikolayevich Baburin, a former member of the Russian State Duma, recently paid a visit to Iran where he met with Ali Akbar Velayati, who is advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on international affairs.

In the meeting, Velayati underlined the need to protect regional borders

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

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.



Protesters demand revocation of the credentials of the French ambassador

From Page 1 ▶ revoke the credentials of the French ambassador in Iran, Mehr News reported.

The protestors asked the Foreign Ministry officials to revoke the credentials of the French ambassador in Iran.

This is the second gathering in front of the French embassy in less than a week. Earlier on Sunday, a group of people in Tehran gathered in front of the French embassy to protest the publication of the outrageous cartoons.

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

Protest outside French embassy in Tehran:

Over 545,000kg of honey produced in Hashtroud county since last March

TEHRAN- More than 545,000 kilograms of honey has been produced in Hashtroud county, in the northwestern East Azarbaijan province, since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022), the head of the county's Agriculture Department announced.

Majid Ahmadi said that the mentioned amount of honey has been produced by 741 beekeepers in the country.

Referring to the census of traditional and modern beehives in Hashtroud apiaries, he said in the census, the total number of traditional and modern beehives was 52,944, of which 8,947 are traditional and 43,997 are modern.

As announced by an official with Agriculture Ministry, the honey consumption per capita in Iran is one of the highest ones in the world, because the consumption per capita in the world is about 500 grams, while in Iran it is more than one kilogram.

Hossein Damavandi-Nejad, the deputy minister for livestock products, said, "The production of 120 million tons of agricultural products in the country and standing at the eighth place in the world in this field, has the footprints of honey bees in it, and some products in gardens and farms are up to 100 percent dependent on bees and without bees they will not be able to pollinate by wind and other insects".

"In some countries, the gardener must pay up to 100 dollars to the beekeeper for the beekeeper to establish his bee colony in the garden for a while, but in our country, in addition to the gardener taking a fee from the beekeeper for establishing the colony, with some unannounced pesticides spraying, they bring damages to beekeepers", he lamented.

Damavandi-Nejad considered the most important service of honeybees to be related to horticulture and agriculture and restated: "Our honey consumption per capita is one of the highest ones in the world, despite the fact that the cost of honey production in our country is high, and it is a promising issue."

Based on the data released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Iran is the third-largest producer of honey in the world.

Last August, the director of the Agriculture Ministry's beekeeping development program



had said the country's annual honey production is expected to reach 115,000 tons in the current Iranian calendar year 1401 (ends on March 20).

Touraj Saremi noted that Agriculture Ministry has defined a five-year development plan to reform the structure of the country's apiaries and increase the quantity and quality of honey production during the Iranian calendar year 1401 to 1405 (begins in March 2026).

"The implementation of this program requires the necessary support for providing inputs, implementing educational-training programs, and providing facilities to beekeepers. It is also required to provide apiaries with insurance coverage to reduce the risks and to ensure sustainable production," he said.

The official noted that the ministry is also pursuing opening a credit line to be able to meet part of the needs of producers in this sector within the framework of rules and regulations.

Iranian beekeepers managed to produce 112,000 tons of honey in the previous Iranian calendar year.

Due to the high quality of Iranian honey, the product is exported to many countries including China, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Iraq, and Lebanon.

Back in March 2020, the former director of the Iranian Agriculture Ministry's beekeeping development plan had said the country's beekeeping industry was planned to become the leading agricultural sector in the country, the leading honey producer in the region, and a strong player in the world markets.

"Benefiting from up-to-date knowledge, and technology, the industry is going to provide reliable, high-quality products with greater value-added," Farhad Moshir Qafari said.

Modern irrigation systems established in 35,000 ha of farmlands

TEHRAN - The project manager of Iranian Agriculture Ministry's modern irrigation systems development program said 35,000 hectares of the country's farmlands have been equipped with modern irrigation systems in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21, 2022).

Fariborz Abbasi stated that the total irrigated lands that have been equipped with modern irrigation systems since the beginning of the implementation of this project are 2.6 million hectares.

Stating that the development of irrigation systems with high efficiency is the main priority of the Agriculture Ministry's Water and Soil Department, he said: "In the next stage, irrigation machines that have higher efficiency and uniformity of water distribution are among our development priorities."

"According to the existing development capacities in the field of technical and engineering services, manufacturing of equipment and instruments, competent contractors and consultants, if the credits are provided on time, we can establish modern irrigation systems in up to 400,000 hectares of the lands in the country", the official added.

He considered technological development in

the field of modern irrigation systems as one of the other priorities of his department and said: "We are trying to have the latest technologies in the field of modern irrigation systems in terms of equipment and supplies with the help of domestic knowledge-based companies and manufacturers."

He mentioned increasing yield, rising irrigation efficiency and reducing irrigation water consumption among the benefits of developing new irrigation systems.

Abbasi, who is the head of the Agriculture Ministry's Water and Soil Department, has previously announced that his ministry is planning to establish modern irrigation systems for 50,000 hectares of farmlands in the current year.

He pointed to the supply and production of equipment for modern irrigation systems inside the country and said: "With the cooperation and help of domestic knowledge-based companies, we have reached self-sufficiency in the production of equipment and supplies for these systems."

The purpose of implementing the plan of modern irrigation systems is to increase the productivity and sustainability of water and soil resources in the country to ensure the sustainable production of agricultural products.

TEDPIX falls 16,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 16,091 points to 1.652 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 21.825 billion securities worth 103.106 trillion rials (about \$257.76 million) were

traded at the TSE.

The first market's index dropped 17,359 points, and the second market's index lost 15,193 points.

TEDPIX lost 68,000 points to 1.579 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

Iranian economy to expand 2.2% in 2023: WB

TEHRAN - The World Bank, in its latest Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report released on Tuesday, sees the Iranian economy growing by 2.2 percent in 2023, despite a sharp, long-lasting slowdown in the global economy.

"Our latest forecasts indicate a sharp, long-lasting slowdown, with global growth declining to 1.7 percent in 2023 from 3.0 percent expected just six months ago," the report reads.

Following the global economy, the Islamic Republic of Iran's economic growth in 2023 has also been revised down by 0.5 percentage points, to 2.2 percent, on account of slower growth in key trading partners.

Domestic demand in Iran is also likely to be curbed by the effects of high inflation on real incomes, which is expected to average 44 percent in 2023/24, the report stated.



Based on the report, the deterioration in the global economy is broad-based in virtually all regions of the world, and per-capita income growth will

be slower than it was during the decade before COVID-19.

According to the forecast of the World Bank, developed countries will approach economic

stagnation in 2023 and will grow by only 0.5 percent this year.

The economic growth of the Eurozone which has decreased from 5.3 percent in 2021 to 3.3 percent in 2022, is also expected to fall to zero this year as the region enters recession in 2023.

World Bank, in its latest economic report on the MENA region, published in October 2022, forecasted the Iranian economy to grow by 2.9 percent in 2022 and 2.7 percent in 2023.

"Iran's GDP is forecast to grow 2.9 percent in 2022. In 2023, the average growth for developing oil exporters is expected to fall back to 2.7 percent," the bank said in the report.

The bank expected the Islamic Republic's Account Balance to improve in 2022 reaching 3.8 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The figure stood at 3.5 percent last year.

Economic progress, people's livelihood pivots of next year's budget

Raisi submits \$131.5b budget bill to Majlis

from page 1 ► approaches of the budget bill and stated: "In this bill, the establishment of a progress and justice fund in all provinces is foreseen so that the development credits of the provinces are paid systematically."

Raisi also said, "We have included the important points considered by the Leader in the general policies of the Seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026) in the drafting of the 1402 budget bill."

As reported, reforming the budget structure, creating transparency, attracting governmental and private sector investments for completing semi-finished projects, and implementing the government's integrated financial management system are highlighted in the budget bill for the next

year.

The proposed budget amounted to about 52.616 quadrillion rials (about \$131.54 billion at the free market rate of 400,000 rials), with a 40 percent rise from the current year's budget.

The bill has estimated the government's budget at 21.64 quadrillion rials (about \$54.1 billion).

Public resources are estimated at 19.84 quadrillion rials (about \$49.6 billion).

The crude oil income is predicted to be 6.03 quadrillion rials (about \$15.075 billion), and oil sales are estimated at 1.4 million barrels per day at an average price of \$85.

Like the current year's budget, the next year's proposed budget requires the government to pay 40

percent of its oil, gas, and gas condensate revenues to National Development Fund (NDF).

Tax revenues are predicted to be 8.386 quadrillion rials (about \$20.965 billion).

The budget bill for the year 1402 is printed and distributed among the members of the parliament after its presentation and they will have 10 days to submit their proposals and reviews on the budget to relevant specialized committees.

Specialized committees will also have 15 days to submit their reviews to the parliament ad hoc budget review committee (known as Talfiq Committee).

Talfiq Committee is a body consisting of MPs from different committees which is established each year to study the national budget bill.

Iran's annual saffron production rises 20%

TEHRAN - Saffron production in Iran has increased by 20 percent in the current crop year as compared to the previous year, Head of Iran's Union of Sellers and

Exporters of saffron Gholamreza Miri said.

Miri, however, noted that the exports of the mentioned product have been on a downward trend

over the past year, IRIB reported.

Iran is one of the world's top saffron producers and over 90 percent of its production is exported to foreign destinations.

In September 2022, the Islamic Republic signed a \$300-million deal with Qatar to cooperate in distributing Iranian saffron in the global markets.

CBI governor visiting UAE to facilitate banking relations

TEHRAN - Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mohammadreza Farzin is visiting the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as his second foreign destination since he took office in December, aiming to facilitate the monetary and banking relations with the country.

As reported by the CBI portal, during this visit, Farzin met with UAE's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Governor of the Central Bank of the UAE (CBUAE) Khaled Mohamed Balama.

The two sides discussed ways of strengthening bilateral relations between Iran and the UAE, especially in the financial and banking fields during the talks.



CBI Governor Mohammadreza Farzin (L) and UAE's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan

German exports to Iran increase 12.7%

TEHRAN - Germany's exports to Iran rose 12.7 percent year-on-year from January to November 2022 to around 1.5 billion euros (\$1.6 billion), data from the country's federal statistics office showed.

That exceeded the full-year volume for 2021 of around 1.4 billion euros, but remains a fraction of total exports from Europe's largest economy, which reached 1.38 trillion euros in 2021.

In a meeting between Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie and Chairman of the Board of the German Federal Association for Economic Development and Foreign Trade (BWA) Michael

Schumann in Tehran in last July, the two sides discussed ways of expanding economic relations between the two countries.

In the meeting, Shafeie criticized German government's restrictions on issuing visa for Iranian businessmen, saying that facilitation of visa issuance is a prerequisite for the expansion of trade ties between the two countries.

Stating that Germany has always been Iran's first trade partner in Europe, the ICCIMA head said: "After the nuclear deal, Germany was the first country to restart relations with Iran and the volume of trade between the two sides increased by 60 percent in a short

time. But after the withdrawal of the U.S. from the JCPOA, the volume of economic exchanges between Iran and Germany decreased by 50 percent."

He further praised Germany's efforts for maintaining economic ties with the Islamic Republic and said: "I hope your visit can help activate the commercial capacities of both sides further. Especially with the new situation and the war in Ukraine, cooperation between Iran and Germany can have good results for our region and Europe."

Shafeie further pointed to the automotive, agriculture, and education sectors as attractive fields for cooperation between the two sides, saying: "We are

becoming the hub of automobile manufacturing in the region and we need new technologies in agriculture due to droughts and limited water resources."

The official noted that ICCIMA is seeking to establish an office in Germany, adding "We are doing our best to increase the volume of trade with Germany. Fortunately, the conditions are better than in the past and it is possible for the delegations to meet in person. I hope that the next meeting of the two countries' joint economic committee will be held as soon as possible to help the development of trade between the two sides."

Renewing road maintenance fleet requires over \$393m: RMTO head

TEHRAN - Head of Iran Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization (RMTO) Dariyoush Amani has said his organization needs at least 150 trillion rials (about \$393.7 million) for the renovation of the country's road maintenance

fleet, IRNA reported.

Amani put the average age of the country's road maintenance machinery at 25 years, saying that this fleet has not been renovated for many years and the machines have only been repaired.

"We are trying to supply the necessary resources from the allocated budget for RMTO as well as the financial assistance from other institutions," the official said.

Ankara's ties with Damascus: From overthrow to interaction

From page 1 ► West Asia, where any changes and developments in it are followed with high sensitivity by regional and global powers, got caught in an unwanted violence.

The Zionist regime, the United States, and some Western countries on one hand, and Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, and several other countries on the other started to implement the model that started in North Africa.

In order to implement the above-mentioned model, they needed a land where the implementation of this model could be tested. They selected Syria, because it was at the forefront of the resistance front, was agreed upon by all parties in the region and outside the region. And on March 15, 2011, the civil war in Syria started with the aim of eliminating the popular government.

The war first started by infiltrating the Syrian army and a group called the Free Syrian Army (FSA) was formed, but when FSA was severely defeated by the Syrian army and its allies, the hostile countries took the strategy of mercenary fighters, or in other words, hired terrorists, to destroy Syria.

The Syrian conflict is one of the worst wars the region has experienced in the last century. By March 2022, it is said that 499,657 to 610,000 people were killed in this long war.

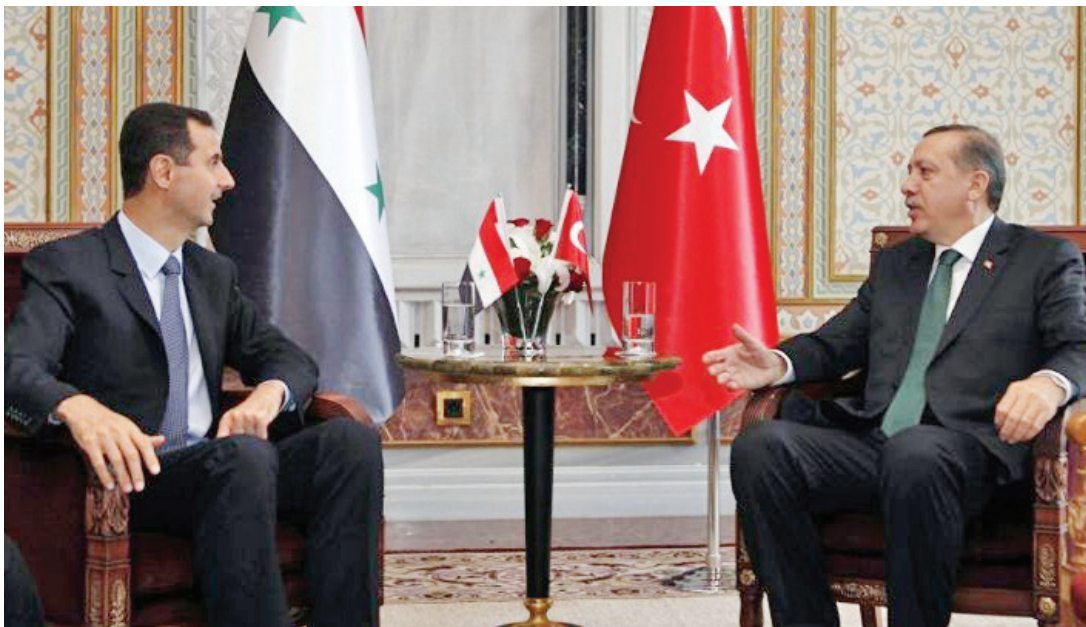
Turkey was one of the main supporters of the war in Syria, but the war did not lead to a result, and Bashar al-Assad remained in power with the support of his allies. Assad's resistance caused the Arab countries to correct their position towards Syria and some of them re-opened their embassies.

But Turkey was in a different situation due to common borders and the concerns that it had in the post-war Syria.

The country continued its hostile actions for a time, but Ankara seems to have reached the same conclusion as its Arab allies.

Accordingly, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announces the "possibility" of his meeting with his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad in the near future.

A week after a meeting between the defense ministers of Turkey and Syria, Erdogan said on Jan. 5, that he



"may" sit down with Assad to foster peace and stability in Syria.

Erdogan's use of the word "may" to meet Assad is because the Syrian president had previously rejected Erdogan's request to meet.

=====Why Erdogan changes strategy

Now the question is that why the Turkish leader changed his strategy.

"Turkey and Syria have mutual interests in the current situation, and Ankara will demand strong guarantees from Syria for the return of refugees to their country," a former Turkish diplomat says.

During the war, many Syrian refugees entered Turkey and this became a challenge for Ankara.

On December 31, 2022, Al Jazeera reported: "After Turkey and Syria cut ties for about 11 years, the defense ministers of the two countries met in Moscow on Wednesday (Dec. 28) in the presence of their Russian counterparts. These ministers agreed to form joint committees of defense and intelligence officials. These committees will begin their meetings at the end of January in Moscow. After that, meetings will be held in Ankara and Damascus."

In this regard, Fikret Ozir, a former Turkish diplomat, said: "Turkey tried to solve the Syrian crisis through the Astana and Geneva processes, and now it is trying to activate the processes that have reached a dead end. Turkey is trying to realize its

internal security and its borders with Syria and the return of Syrian refugees to their country. This issue depends on the current negotiations between Syria and Turkey."

Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar had previously announced: "The return of Syrian refugees should be voluntary and safe. Turkey has declared its readiness to cooperate on that."

Now Erdogan has decided to change his country's hostile relations with Syria. It wants to return to the pre-war condition, but there are some considerations in this way.

Cementing ties is a tool to advance internal goals

Salahuddin Hawa, in an article on Washington Institute writes, talks about the possibility of contact between the Turkish and Syrian sides—including the possibility of a call between the two presidents—will absolutely benefit Ankara.

"The AKP government is working to strip the internal Turkish opposition of the cards it relies on its electoral propaganda in the months leading up to Turkey's June 2023 elections," Hawa stated.

In the past, Turkish opposition has latched onto the problem of Syrian refugees as its explanation for Turkish internal and external crises, and opposition figures have proposed that the normalization of relations with the Syrian regime is the best way to solve it, as the Modon electronic

newspaper reported from the Turkish Deutsche Welle website on August 4.

Hence, many observers interpret Erdogan and Cavusoglu's recent statements as an attempt to prevent the Turkish opposition from benefiting from this card. The statements of Turkish officials about developing a plan to "voluntarily" return one million Syrian refugees to northern Syria can be placed in the same context as extracting the papers of the Turkish opposition with which it will contest the 2023 elections.

Cementing ties, a tool to advance regional and global goals

It seems that Turkey is also looking at softening its relations with Syria as a tool to advance its regional and global goals.

Turkey aims to solve the Kurdish issue in the border area by improving relations with Syria.

Turkey does not have the support of the United States in dealing with the Kurds, and Erdogan wants to end the case with the support of President Assad so that he can use it as a bargaining chip in the upcoming elections.

Erdogan is also trying to finalize the talks with Damascus through the mediation of Moscow, first, to have the upper hand in its military cooperation with Russia, including in future purchases of missile shields, and second play a role in Russia's strategy in the region and the world after the Ukraine war.

WORLD HEADLINES

Jewish settlers protected by soldiers attack Palestinian farmers

The Israeli army on Wednesday ordered two Palestinian residents to remove their properties while Jewish settlers raided and destroyed a local farm in the Masafer Yatta area of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Wafa has reported. The soldiers stormed into the village of Maeen, one of the communities in the Masafer Yatta cluster, and ordered a local resident to remove a caravan; his neighbour was told to take down a metal shack.

According to the coordinator of the Protection and Steadfastness Committees in Masafer Yatta, Fouad Al-Amour, while soldiers ordered local residents to remove their properties, settlers from the illegal settlement of Yacoub Talia attacked farmers who were ploughing their fields around the village of Lasifer, throwing stones and forcing them to leave. The settlers were protected by Israeli soldiers, added Al-Amour.

Masafer Yatta is a community of twelve Palestinian villages to the south of Hebron. Its residents have been suffering from the threat of forced displacement for decades due to the establishment of scores of illegal settlements, outposts and military training zones by the Israeli occupation.

Knife attack in Paris leaves several injured

Six people have been slightly injured by a man wielding a knife at the Gare du Nord station in Paris, French authorities have said.

Police arrested the man at the busy station, which serves as a hub for trains to London and northern Europe, after they opened fire and wounded him, said a police source, who asked not to be named.

"An individual injured several people this morning at the Gare du Nord," the interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, wrote on Twitter. "He was quickly neutralized. Thank you to the police for their effective and courageous response."

The incident has caused major delays to trains at the station in the early-morning rush, according to the live departure board of the operator SNCF.

The motive for the attack was not immediately clear. France remains on a state of heightened security alert after a series of deadly attacks by Islamist radicals since 2015.

Italy, Japan agree to elevate ties to strategic partnership

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and Japan's Fumio Kishida on Tuesday agreed to elevate their countries' "excellent relations" to the level of a strategic partnership.

"We agreed to elevate our relationship to the status of strategic partnership," Meloni said at a joint news conference in Rome.

She said the countries agreed to work on priorities proposed by Tokyo, including protecting the rules-based international order, strengthening economic security, protecting supply chains, and upping the fight against climate change.

They will also continue supporting Ukraine in its war against Russia, she said, according to Italian state-run news agency ANSA.

Meloni said Italy, Japan, and the UK are working to develop a sixth-generation aircraft, referring to the plan first announced in December.

"These are all challenges on which there is a lot of work to be done, we will deepen these issues related to international politics, starting with the consequences of the war in Ukraine," she said.

On bilateral ties, she pointed out that Italy and Japan have a trade volume of €12 billion (\$12.9 billion).

Kishida underlined that Japan and Italy agreed to oppose any attempts to unilaterally alter a status quo by force and nuclear blackmailing.

He said they concurred on the need for G-7 countries to show a "strong resolve" to maintain a rules-based, free, and open international order.

Biden 'surprised' over classified documents at private office

President Joe Biden said Tuesday he was surprised to learn that classified documents were found at a think tank office he once used.

However, Biden said he and his team were cooperating fully with a review into what happened.

Biden told reporters at a joint news conference with the leaders of Mexico and Canada that he takes classified documents seriously. He said he did not know what was in the documents.

"We are cooperating fully with the review, which I hope will be finished soon," Biden said.

A Democrat, Biden has faced criticism from Republicans after his Justice Department launched an investigation last year into Republican former President Donald Trump's handling of classified documents discovered at his Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida.

FAA system outage halts departures of all domestic US flights

Plane departures within the United States were halted until at least 9am EST (14:00GMT) due to a problem with a system used by pilots, according to US authorities.

The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said Wednesday that it was working to restore a system which alerts pilots to hazards and changes to airport facilities and procedures and which had stopped processing updated information, known Notices to Air Missions, or NOTAMs. The glitch has led to hundreds of flight delays in the US.

Indians praise General Soleimani's heroism on his martyrdom anniversary

From page 1 ► The event was organized by the Leaders Media, an independent media outlet in New Delhi.

The speakers at the occasion asserted that General Soleimani and Iraqi Hashd al-Shabi Deputy Commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who were crucial commanders in the battle against Western-backed ISIS, also known as Daesh in its Arabic acronym.

Qamar Agha, a well-known strategic and defense expert highlighted General Soleimani's life as a military figure who did not go to any formal military school but was self-trained in the art of warfare and had emerged as a military leader after the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

"Initially America had given a free hand to ISIS in the entire Middle East region but after the terrorist organization went out of control and became an independent organization, Americans became hostile to it but still wanted it to exist since the terrorist organization was fighting governments in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq who were challenging Western hegemony in the region," Qamar Agha stated.

"During this period America also tolerated



General Qassem Soleimani as it believed that Soleimani would ensure that ISIS did not become stronger. However, Soleimani became intolerable to the U.S. because he was negotiating with the Saudi Arabia's monarchical regime which could minimize the American hegemony in the region. And hence he was killed by the American drones," Agha added.

Others in the gathering also spoke at length about General Soleimani's contribution to strengthening Iran's long-term friendly relationship with India and how he played an instrumental role in the safe return of Indian nurses, who ISIS had kidnapped in

Tikrit in Anbar province in Iraq in 2014.

Sajjad Hussain, a political activist from the Ladakh region of India, recalled how the then Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj praised the Iranian general's role in safely evacuating the Indian nurses.

"Qassem Soleimani played a major role in ensuring that the terrorists belonging to ISIS did not cause any harm to nurses and also safely ensuring their return to India. Sushma Swaraj praised General Soleimani's efforts in negotiating their return," Sajjad said.

"It was not just the Indian nurses. Had Qassem Soleimani not held back ISIS, it would have also made an entry into India. It was for people like Soleimani who ensured neutralization of the terrorist organization so that it could not expand its fangs beyond the Middle East region," Hussain remarked.

Other speakers in the meeting also recalled how several defense experts and people from the Indian military establishment credited Soleimani's role in prioritizing Iran's relations with India over China. And how during his statesmanship, Iran never signed any significant deal with China.

NATO member sending banned cluster bombs to Ukraine – media

Ukraine has been receiving consignments of controversial cluster munitions from Türkiye, Foreign Policy magazine has reported. Kiev had been asking Washington for the Cold-War-era weapons for months.

The shipments have been taking place since November, current and former US and European officials told the outlet. It was unclear how many of the munitions had been received, or whether they had yet

been used on the battlefield.

The weapons in question are called dual-purpose improved conventional munitions, or DPICMs. They were designed during the Cold War era, when NATO was planning to deploy them against a large-scale Soviet invasion of Europe. The rounds are filled with dozens of submunitions, intended to strike personnel and light-armored targets, scattering over a large area for increased lethality.

Like many other cluster munitions, DPICMs tend to produce long-lasting hazards, as some submunitions can fail to detonate and have the potential to maim or kill somebody years after being deployed.

US law prohibits the exportation of any cluster weapons with a failure rate over a certain threshold. The same regulations require guarantees that cluster munitions will not be used in areas where

civilians may be present. Washington has repeatedly rejected requests from Kiev for the supply of DPICMs.

Most European NATO members are signatories of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), which bans this type of weapons. Türkiye is not one of them, but has observer status in the Geneva-based organization that oversees the implementation of the treaty. It has indicated that it abides by the rules, though it's not obliged to.



Nurses and health care workers enter Day 2 of strikes at Montefiore Medical Center and Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City.

More than 7000 American nurses are on strike in New York.

Tourism minister cuts ribbon on tourist complex

TEHRAN – On Tuesday, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ezzatollah Zarghami inaugurated a tourist complex during his visit to the northwestern city of Shabestar in East Azarbaijan province.

A budget of three trillion rials (\$7.5 million) has been allocated for the establishment of the complex, which is set up by the private sector, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Constructed in a piece of land covering 15,000 square meters in area, the complex is expected to generate 60 job opportunities, the report added.

The complex includes accommodation units, a traditional restaurant, a swimming pool, a greenhouse, and several multi-purpose halls.

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



made it their capital. It was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

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

Tabriz was declared a world craft city of carpet weaving by the World Craft in 2016. It also bore the title of the Islamic Tourism Capital in 2018.

Cultural heritage elements in Hamedan added to national list



TEHRAN – A total of four cultural elements, practiced across west-central Hamedan province, have recently been added to the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The skill of cooking Masua Ash (a thick Persian vegetable soup cooked in a wide variety of styles), Dast Chaleh local game, the talent of weaving Charchang carpet and the skill of making halva – a kind of traditional sweet dessert were added to the prestigious list, Mohsen Masoum-Alizadeh explained on Wednesday.

In the field of intangible works such as souvenirs and local foods, Hamadan has a lot to say, the official added.

Both tangible and intangible elements contribute to a city's identity and culture, and they must be preserved, he noted.

UNESCO sites at a glance

Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi
The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, in the town of Yasi, now Turkestan, was built at the time of Timur (Tamerlane), from 1389 to 1405.

In this partly unfinished building, Persian master builders experimented with architectural and structural solutions later used in the construction of Samarkand, the capital of the Timurid Empire. Today, it is one of the largest and best-preserved constructions of the Timurid period.

Rectangular in plan and 38.7 meters in height, the mausoleum is one of the largest and best-preserved examples of Timurid construction.

Timur, himself, is reported to have participated in its construction and skilled Persian craftsmen were employed to work on the project. Its innovative spatial arrangements, vaults, domes, and decoration were prototypes that served as models for other major buildings of the



Timurid period, in particular in Samarkand. It was left unfinished, providing documented evidence of the construction methods at that time and having a unique architectural image.

Considered to be an outstanding example of Timurid design that contributed to the development of Islamic religious architecture, the mausoleum is constructed of fired brick and contains thirty-five rooms that accommodate a range of functions.

TEHRAN–Qasr-e Shirin's tourism chief believes that the Sassanid ruins of the western Iranian city have high potential to be registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

“A Sassanid collection in this city has a very high potential for world (UNESCO) registration, which we are pursuing this important point to introduce these unique works to the whole world,” the tourism chief of the ancient city said on Wednesday.

Within the Sassanid complex of Qasr Shirin, there are four significant traces of the Sassanid period, including Khosrow's mansion, Chahar-Qapi fire temple, Ban fortress, and a water-supply canal, the official explained.

Qasr-e Shirin's ensemble is a part of a Sassanid axis stretched from Iran's Kangavar to ancient Ctesiphon, now situated in Modern Iran, the official said.

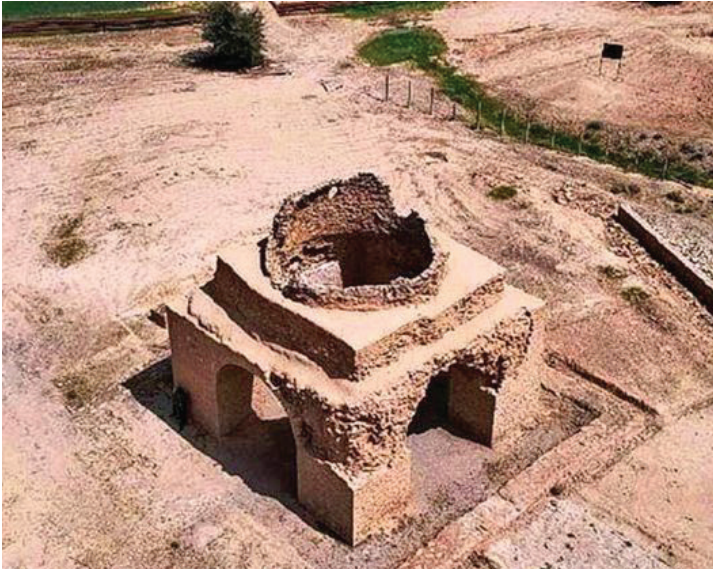
The two neighboring countries seek to introduce this cultural heritage axis by doing their best to have it registered in the UNESCO list of World Heritage, he added.

Last October, a new round of archaeological excavation was commenced in Qasr-e Shirin city to shed new light on its history.

Inscribed in UNESCO's Tentative list of Cultural Heritage, the historical ensemble of Qasr-e Shirin comprises architectural and urban remains from the late Sassanian period and the early Islamic periods such as the palace of Khosrau II, the Chahar-Qapi monument, Ban Qal'eh and the remains of a Safavid caravansary.

The name of the city means “The castle of Shirin” who was the wife of Khosrau II, the Sasanian king (r. 590 – 628).

Qasr-e Shirin has always played a pivotal role because of its strategic



Qasr-e Shirin ruins prospective candidate for UNESCO status

geographical position and its location on the Silk Road; as a crossroads, it connected ancient Persia's plateau from East, including Rey, Hamadan, and Kermanshah to Western civilizations such as Chaledea and Babel.

The palace of Khosrau II is a magnificent example of Sasanian architecture. The main part of the building includes a rectangular hall covered with brick arches. Based on historical facts, the palace was built in a vast garden where wild animals lived because Khosrau was interested to keep animals.

Chahar-Qapi or Chahar Qapu is exactly a Chahartaq, which literally means “four arches,” that is an architectural structure consisting of four arches or short barrel vaults between four corner piers, with a dome on squinches over the central square; this square, the lateral bays under the arches or barrel vaults together constitute a room of cruciform ground plan.

Chahartaq and Iwan are the most important architectural units invented and developed by Iranian architects. The main use of this building was a fireplace to keep the

holy fire of the Zoroastrian religion.

Safavid Caravansary of Qasr-e Shirin comprises large chambers and yards for the ancient caravans. The other name of this monument is Abbasi, which refers to the collection of ‘Abbasi caravansary’ scattered in most of the Iranian cities.

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

Generally, a Sassanid archaeological landscape represents a highly efficient system of land use and strategic utilization of natural topography in the creation of the earliest cultural centers of the Sassanid civilization.

In 2018, an ensemble of Sassanian historical cities in southern Iran, titled “Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region”, was named a UNESCO site. The ensemble comprises eight archaeological sites situated in three geographical parts of Firuzabad, Bishapur, and Sarvestan.

The World Heritage reflects the optimized utilization of natural topography and bears witness to the influence ofAchaemenidand Parthian cultural traditions and of Roman art, which latter had a significant impact on the architecture and artistic styles of the Islamic era.

Apart from architecture, crafts such as metalwork and gem engraving grew highly sophisticated, yet scholarship was encouraged by the state. In those years, works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians.

Cultural heritage, a major strength of Zanjan: official

TEHRAN –The northwestern province of Zanjan has an outstanding cultural heritage because of its rich historical background, the provincial tourism chief has said.

In terms of cultural heritage, Zanjan is one of the top provinces in the country, Seyyed Saeid Safavi explained on Wednesday.

Due to its historical and cultural advancement, Zanjan province is one of the country's leading provinces in this field, and the capabilities of this province need to be more widely known, the official added.

Many cultural heritage capacities of the



province have been neglected so far, but their introduction and promotion can contribute to the

province's development, he noted.

Zanjan is one of the cities founded by Sassanid King Ardashir I (180–242 CE). The province makes a base for wider explorations of the architectural wonder of Soltaniyeh. The subterranean delights of the Katala-Khor caves, colorful mountains, and the UNESCO-registered Takht-e Soleiman ruins are nearby.

In January 2020, Zanjan was designated as a “world city of filigree” by the World Crafts Council after the WCC assessors visited various craft workshops, stores, exhibits, and bazaars of the city in a two-day itinerary in December 2019.

Iron Age jars donated to Mashhad museum

TEHRAN – An Iranian woman has recently donated millennia-year-old clay jars to a cultural heritage museum in Mashhad, situated northeast of the country.

Marzieh Ebrahimpur, who is a cultural heritage enthusiast, has donated two earthen jars to the Great Museum of Khorasan, IRNA quoted the museum's director as saying on Tuesday.

Estimated to date back to the Iron Age, the clay jars are of significant historical value, Ali Safamejad said.

Donating historical works is one of the good traditions that enrich the museum and provide the necessary

grounds for keeping these historical works in proper conditions, the official stated.

Iron Age is the final technological and cultural stage in the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Age sequence. The date of the full Iron Age, in which this metal, for the most part, replaced bronze in implements and weapons, varied geographically, beginning in the Middle East and southeastern Europe about 1200 BC but in China not until about 600 BC, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica.

In Iran, the term Iron Age is employed to identify a cultural change that occurred centuries earlier than the time accorded its use

elsewhere in the Near East, and not to acknowledge the introduction of new metal technology.

As mentioned by Encyclopedia Iranica, Iron artifacts were unknown in Iran until the 9th century BC (the cultural period labeled Iron Age II), centuries after the phase designated as Iron Age I came into existence.

Iranian sites with levels identified as dating to the Iron Age were first excavated in western Iran at Sialk, and later in northwestern Iran around the west, east, and south shores of Lake Urmia, close to the Zagros mountains bordering Mesopotamia and Anatolia. These sites remain to date the best-documented full-range Iron Age sites

in western Iran.

Written sources are rare at Iranian IronAge sites, and locally written texts are non-existent. Indirect historical reference to the region begins in the 9th century BC when Assyrian royal texts first refer to various polities in northwestern and western Iran; these references continued into the 7th century. However, relating the Assyrian-named polities with on-the-ground sites is difficult; in fact, not one excavated Iranian Iron Age site has been conclusively identified by its ancient name—although suggested identifications have been brought forth.

Damghan’s Cheshmeh-Ali to be ceded to private sector

TEHRAN – Cheshmeh-Ali, a popular tourist destination in the city of Damghan, north-central Semnan province, will be temporarily ceded to the private sector in order to receive further care and maintenance, a local tourism official has said.

The historical complex will be handed over to a private investor through a tender process in the near future, Mojtaba Akbarpur explained on Wednesday.

The complex is planned to be repurposed into a tourist complex after being fully restored, the official added.

Over the past couple of years, tens of

historical places and monuments have been temporarily ceded to the private sector under the supervision of the Revitalization and Utilization Fund for Historical Places.

Affiliated with the tourism ministry, the Fund is in charge of concession with the aim of historical sites receiving better maintenance by repurposing them into thriving boutique hotels, eco-lodges, traditional restaurants, or other profitable niches.

The country boasts hundreds of historical sites such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage

list.

The main population centers of Semnan province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza Expressway), linking Rey (Tehran) with Khorasan (Mashhad). While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais (notably Dehnamak and Ahowan), cisterns (the Cafe Aenbar in Garmsar is a special treat), and ruined mud citadels (Padeh is lumpy but fascinating). The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan, and Shahrud (Bastam) all have a small selection of historic buildings and Semnan has a fine old covered bazaar.

Gangs of excavators arrested in northern Iran

TEHRAN – Iranian authorities have recently busted four gangs of illegal diggers in northern Mazandaran province.

Iranian police have smashed four gangs of illegal excavators in various

operations conducted in Galugah county of Mazandaran province, a provincial police commander said on Wednesday.

“Nine suspects have been arrested red-handed while they were illegally

conducting excavations.”

They have been surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation and trial, the commander added.

Mazandaran (also known as

Tabarestan) has long been a cradle of civilization since the beginning of the first millennium BC. According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, it was almost overrun in about 720 CE by the Arab raiders.

Vaccination of foreign nationals well underway

From page 1 ► By referring to health centers and bases, they receive the oral vaccines of polio, double measles, and rubella, he said.

On December 23, 2022, a national specialized workshop for 'risk communication and social participation' was held in order to empower health workers in the supplementary vaccination campaign for the refugee population with the participation of UNICEF.

Considering the Risk Communication and Social Participation Program (RCCE) is one of the most important health promotion programs the program was a combination of information campaigns, health promotion, social mobilization, attracting people participation and other organizations, and establishing effective communication.

In May 2022, it was announced that all foreign immigrants and refugees under the age of five would be vaccinated against polio and measles. Children under the age of five and foreign immigrants will be in-



oculated through door-to-door visits in high-risk areas across the country.

The measles vaccination program in Iran started in 1984 when 34 percent of the population was vaccinated in the first year and 90 to 95 percent of the population after 6 years. Also in 2003, 33 million people were vaccinated with a national program to eradicate measles in the country.

Concerns about the spread of measles in the country are growing as the Afghan popu-

lation grows.

Polio is a highly infectious viral disease that largely affects children under 5 years of age. The virus is transmitted by person-to-person spread mainly through the fecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (e.g. contaminated water or food) and multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and cause paralysis.

Measles is caused by a virus in the paramyxovirus family and it is normally passed through di-

rect contact and through the air. The virus infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body. Measles is a human disease and is not known to occur in animals.

More than 140,000 people died from measles in 2018 – mostly children under the age of 5 years, despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine.

The inhumane sanctions have had devastating effects on the health system and the question is who is responsible for the deaths of some innocent patients due to the lack of essential medicines, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has said.

He made the remarks at the 69th session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, which was held in Egypt on October 10-13, 2022.

Einollahi said in July 2022 that despite the sanctions that have existed since the beginning of the Islamic Revolution to prevent the country from progressing, Iran has the strongest health system in the region.

Unprecedented 7% growth in Scopus-indexed medical publications

From page 1 ► In July last year, Salehi said despite U.S. sanctions, the international activities of Iranian scientists have increased year by year, so that more than 35 percent of Iranian articles in Scopus have been multi-national projects.

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

In 2011, the share of Iranian articles with international participation was about 16.5 percent, which increased to 19.7 percent in 2016 and gradually in the following years, so that in 2020 and 2021, reached 30.5 and 34.2 percent, respectively, he added.

The share of Iranian articles with international participation has had significant growth of 209 percent during an eight-year period (2013-2020), becoming the Islamic world's leading country in science diplomacy, according to the Scopus International Citation Database.

A review of Scopus global ranking in terms of the normalized citation index over the past



10 years shows that Iran has moved up to 16th place in 2020 from 22nd in 2011.

Studies show that in 2021, the number of Iranian scientific articles indexed by the Scopus International Citation Database has reached 77,351. This figure was equal to 71,971 in 2020 and 64,988 in 2019.

While scientific articles and the latest research findings of Iranian researchers in 2019 received about 0.08 percent more than the international average citation, in 2020, it has increased to 14 percent.

Also, research activities resulting from Iran's

international participation in science production were about 27.4 percent in 2019, which has increased to 30.7 percent in 2020.

The share of Iranian articles in the top 1 percent of the world highly cited was 1.2 percent in 2019, which reached 1.3 percent in 2020. This group of articles has the highest number of citations in the world of science.

Moreover, the SCImago ranking system deals separately with the ranking of countries in science production, ranking Iran as 40th in 2021 in terms of h-index. Also, in terms of the number of articles, Iran's index is 376.

The SCImago rankings show that between 1996 and 2020, the United States, China, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Japan are in the top five. Iran also ranked 21st in the world and second in West Asia.

NATURE INDEX also shows that in 2021, considering that the latest update of this international system for science production reports has not been completed yet, Iran's overall ranking is 35th, which was 33 in 2020.

Anzali Wetland revival needs more public participation

TEHRAN – Non-governmental organizations and environmental entities should participate more than in the past for reviving the ecosystem of Anzali Wetland, the governor of Gilan province has said.

Dredging the wetland's waterways will greatly help the revival process, IRNA quoted Asadollah Abbasi as saying.

"Anzali Wetland revival is a collective issue, and all the institutions must carry out operational measures in coordination with the revival working group," he added.

The revival process started in the 1960s. However, it has not been fruitful yet, Abbasi stressed.

Covering more than 19,000 hectares, Anzali Wetland is located near

the northern port city of Bandar Anzali, neighboring the Caspian Sea. The wetland was designated as a Ramsar site on June 23, 1975. It is fed by several rivers and separated from the Caspian Sea by a dune system.

The lagoon is home to submerged and floating vegetation and also extensive reed beds. It bears international importance in terms of breeding, staging, and wintering waterbirds.

While dams have contributed to human development by providing reliable sources of drinking water and irrigation, hydropower, recreation, navigation, and income, they also can cause considerable damage to the rivers, deplete fisheries, and alter

recreational opportunities.

Anzali Wetland has suffered huge sediment and sludge accumulation due to the entrance of domestic and agricultural sewage from five surrounding cities, which resulted in a decrease in the wetland's depth and capacity along with threatening biodiversity.

One of the most important concerns regarding Anzali Wetland is a constant drop in depth which was 11 meters before while shrinking to 1 meter or even 50 centimeters in recent years.

According to a report published by the University of Tehran in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), the amount of



sediment accumulated in Anzali Wetland is usually 1 to 7 millimeters per year.

If the average sedimentation rate is three millimeters, one meter should be reduced from the depth of the wetland every 30 years, while the wetland's depth has decreased by 3 meters in the past 30 years.

Undeniably, human involvement has led to such a situation in Anzali Wetland.

A Look at Iranian Turkmen Clothing

Part 3

Dresses of Turkmen women (Quink)

- Simple design
- Often crimson, red, and violet with or without flower designs. They are stripped with direct designs.
- Features: wide sleeves; its collar is circular.
- They decorate these dresses with brooches.
- The lower parts of these dresses become wider.
- These dresses are usually red and made of silk. They are decorated with needlework at the wrist and collar sections.
- It is comprised of 3 segments: Yeng (sleeve); Yan (side) and skirt (Ashiri).
- Girls wear a kind of belt named Hinji Qoushan.
- Cloak (Jabit or Kourteh)**
- Silk textiles and sometimes velvet and decorated textiles
- Features: it is long; both sides of it are straight and loose; its collar is simple; its sleeves are middle-length; both sides of it have slashes; it is a little loose near the waist.
- On the wrist area of the sleeve, around the collar, on the breast, at the end, and around slashes of the cloak are extensively decorated.

Ichmak

- Winter cover-clothes worn by Turkmen are fur coats which have 3 different forms: Silkmehe Ichmak; Boghaneh Ichmak; and Ishchi Ichmak.

Charqad

- Thread, atlas, wool, and silk textiles.
- It has big in size and square-shaped.
- Checkered or flowered design

Trousers

- Trousers worn by Turkmen ladies are looser than those of Iranian ladies living in other parts of the country.
- Their bottom is tight and usually decorated by skillful needlework.
- Its color and textile are special and its upper part is made of canvas and white fustian.
- Women's trousers are referred to as "Balaq".
- Needle work decorations on the textile of women's trousers are referred to as "Ayaq Oroni".
- Ayaq Oroni: Douyeh Kalleh (Sarshotor); Sekkeh Yarmeh Joijeh (Naqsh-e Joujeh)
- Wakh Arman and Iki Hourman comprise the bottom up to the lower leg.
- In addition, they use designs that are referred to as "Ghochitanat", "Ghoymagh", "Novey Naghsh", and "Boustani"

Hats of Turkmen men

- Hats made of animal skin with relatively long wools named Pakhour Talpak
- Hats are covered with red clothes and decorated with stripes.
- These hats have linings, wool, and envelopes.
- Sometimes, they wear turbans known as Shirshakari.
- Hats are generally classified into two categories: Talpak and Burak

Shirts of Turkmen men

- Their shirts are like those of Qouchani Kurd, Qashqaei, or Bakhtyari men. They have simple and straight linings, normal height, and round



and non-lapel collars. These shirts have buttons near the neck and have slashes on the right side.

- Turkmen men's shirts are very simple, without collars, buttons, and lengthy sleeves.
- Instead of buttons, they use strings which were named Sepp Yagheh.

The Qaba of Turkmen men

- It is simple and without lapel collars; it has straight sleeves with slashes at the end of them and busts.
- two Qabas are put on each other and are kept by strings or a leather belt.
- In the past, they used to mix simple textiles; however, they use ordinary coats nowadays.
- The main clothes of Turkmen is a long cloak entitled Doun. Douns are of 2 types: 1) Qizil Doun (made of red silk); and 2) Tarmadoun (made of light yellow textile).
- On their brim, Qabas are covered and decorated by needlework.
- They wear a shawl-made or silver-made belt over the Doun which is called Shindeh, Chaq, or Turmehshawl.

Fur clothing of Turkmen men

- In winter, they wear a fur item of clothing named Ichmak.
- The best kind of fur for them is Banina Ichmak.
- Other kinds of fur clothing: Silkmehe Ichmak, Ish Ichmak.

• They use camel wool for making a kind of special clothing named Chakmehe. Its high-quality type is referred to as Incheh Chakman. The Chakman which is made of coarse wool is referred to as Boghin Chakman.

Trousers of Turkmen Men

- They have ordinary form and design
- Like Qouchani Kurds, Gilani, and Mazandarani men, their trousers are wide around the leg.
- They use homemade striped textiles for their trousers.

Footwear of Turkmen Men

- In the past, they were interested in a kind of Shoe named Givi.
- Nowadays, they wear ordinary shoes.

• Men's socks: they wear socks weaved by Turkmen women. Sometimes, these socks are made of high-quality silk.

- Men's footwear: Charouq, Chapak or Yalkan

New clothing

- Girls' new clothing: a long dress that covers up to the ankle
- Scarf: thick Charqad covered by Pourchouk in its brims; Yaliq which is thin and is sometimes made of silk.
- They usually wear trousers; compared with the past, however, they are less decorated by needlework.
- Nowadays, old busts, hats, belts, and shoes are no longer used.

• Turkmen rarely use their traditional clothes.

Concluded

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 11

New cases	106
New deaths	3
Total cases	7,562,275
Total deaths	144,720
New hospitalized patients	47
Patients in critical condition	176
Total recovered patients	7,336,575
Diagnostic tests conducted	54,853,366
Doses of vaccine injected	155,274,491

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Over 950 earthquakes rattle Iran in a month

TEHRAN – Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran, recorded more than 950 earthquakes across the country over the past calendar month Ordibehesht (April 21-May 21).

Two earthquakes of more than 4 on the Richter scale have been recorded in the country by the National Seismological Center, the largest of which occurred on May 17, with a magnitude of 5.5 near Sankhast in northeastern North Khorasan province, which left 25 injured.

Statistically, 883 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, and 64 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4, also, 8 quakes with magnitudes 4-5 have occurred.

Also, 3 earthquakes with magnitudes 5-6 shook the country.

ثبت بیش از ۹۵۰ زمین‌لرزه در اردیبهشت‌ماه

شبكة‌های لرزه‌نگاری مرکز لرزه‌نگاری کشوری وابسته به موسسه ژئوفیزیک دانشگاه تهران در اردیبهشت‌ماه ۱۴۰۰ تعداد ۹۵۸ زمین‌لرزه را ثبت کردند. این زمین‌لرزه‌ها در نواحی مختلف ایران و نواحی مرزی رخ داده و توسط شبکه‌های لرزه‌نگاری ثبت و تعیین محل شده‌اند. در اردیبهشت‌ماه ۱۴۰۰ تعداد ۱۱ زمین‌لرزه با بزرگی بیش از ۴.۰ در داخل کشور توسط مرکز لرزه‌نگاری کشوری به ثبت رسیده است که بزرگ‌ترین آن‌ها در تاریخ ۱۴۰۰/۰۲/۲۷ با بزرگی ۵/۵ حوالی سنخواست واقع در استان خراسان شمالی، رخ داده‌است.

از لحاظ آماری ۸۸۳ زمین‌لرزه با بزرگی کوچکتر ۳، تعداد ۶۴ زمین‌لرزه با بزرگی بین ۳ و ۴، تعداد ۸ زمین‌لرزه با بزرگی بین ۴ و ۵ و تعداد ۳ زمین‌لرزه با بزرگی بین ۵ و ۶ بوده‌است.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If a Muslim plants a tree or any plant and a human, bird, or any other animals use it, Allah counts it as an act of charity.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times» Noon:12:12 Evening: 17:31 Dawn: 5:45 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:14 (tomorrow)

Jami and Sufism

Part 4

He nonetheless confessed to an initial inability to grasp certain of Ebn al-Arabi’s writings, and it was not until he had studied the works of Ebn al-Arabi’s foremost pupil, Sadr ad-Din Qonavi/Qunyavi (d. 1234), that matters were clarified for him.

According to Lari, he had vowed that “if this gate be opened for me, I will expound the meanings intended by this group [the Sufis of Ebn al-Arabi’s school] in such a way that people will easily understand them,” and all that he wrote thereafter on that subject was in fulfillment of that vow.

There is indeed an unmistakable pedagogical intent in much of Jami’s writing on Sufi matters. He wrote first a commentary on Naqd al-nosus fi Sharh naqd al-nosus, Ebn al-Arabi’s own digest of the Fosus al-hekam, drawing on both Qonavi and other previous commentators such as Mo’ayyed ad-Din Jandi (d. 1291), Sad ad-Din Farghani (d. ca. 1299-1300), Abd al-Razzaq Kashani (d. 1335) and Da’ud Qaysari (d. 1350), from whose works he includes pages of verbatim quotation.

Far bulkier than the original work, the Naqd al-nosus serves effectively as a general introduction to the mysticism of Ebn al-Arabi, with particular attention to the concept of the “Perfect Man” (al-ensan al-kamel).

Later Jami wrote a commentary on the Fosus al-hekam itself, a relatively modest enterprise in that he restricts himself to elucidating the immediate meaning of each sentence in the original text and shuns theoretical digressions.

The role of Jami in propagating the mysticism of Ebn al-Arabi in the Persian-speaking world was by no means limited to these two commentaries.

More accessible and aesthetically attractive was his Lawayah (“Illuminations”), a series of thirty-six meditations of varying length on metaphysical topics such as the relation of the divine attributes to the Essence (Lawayah), the plurality of the modes of the Essence and their “inclusion” within Its unity, and the connection between degrees of existence and degrees of knowledge.

Here, too, he cites previous authorities, above all Qonavi, as well as Ebn al-Arabi himself. Jami is moved on several occasions in this work to criticize both the Ash’ari theologians and the philosophers (hokama), finding their views inferior to the insights of the Sufis.

He took up the same comparative theme, systematically and in detail but more prosaically, in al-Dorrat al-fakhera fi tahqiq mazhab al-Sufiyya wa’l-Motakallemin wa’l-Hokama al-Motaqaddemin, a work commissioned by Sultan Mehmed Fatih but only completed after his death in 1481.

Eleven principal topics are examined in turn, with the theologians represented by Sharif Jorjani (d. 1413) and Sad ad-Din Taftazani (d. 1390), the philosophers by Nasir ad-Din Tusi (d. 1274), and the Sufis by Qonavi, Molla Fanari (d. 1431), and Da’ud Qaysari, as well as Ebn al-Arabi himself. Not all the copious citations from these authorities are explicitly identified by Jami.

The Lawayah is written in a mixture of rhymed prose and verse, mostly quatrains appended to the end of each section and serving to summarize it.

The relationship between poetry and prose is the exact opposite in the case of his Sharh-e Rubaiyat: here, the quatrains come first, forty-eight in number, and they are each followed by

an average of one page of commentary.

The quatrains express concisely some gnostic or metaphysical theme, which is then developed in greater detail in the commentary.

Similarly compounded of prose and verse are two commentaries Jami wrote on the works of others: Lawame’ (“Gleams”), on the celebrated wine poem of Ebn al-Farez (d. 1235); and Ashe’at al-lama’at (“Rays from the Flashes”), on the Lama’at of Fakhr ad-Din Eraqi (d. 1289). Both of these address themselves primarily to the theme of love (eshq) as articulated by Ebn al-Arabi and his school.

The same topic is frequently encountered in the vast body of ghazals that make up about three quarters of Jami’s three successive divans, later assembled into a single whole.

Many of the poems in question are suffused with homoerotic undertones that were by then conventional in Persian Sufi poetry.

By way of explanation, Jami had recourse to the equally conventional adage that love of the metaphorical—the divine beauty as manifested in a human—serves as a bridge to love of the Real, but it seems that Jami tarried indefinitely on the bridge in question, for he confessed that even in old age he was appreciative of the beauty of young men.

Certain of the ghazals do, however, lend themselves reasonably to allegorical explanation, given the inclusion in them of technical terms of gnosis and metaphysics such as momken and wajeb (contingent and necessary [being]) or mabda’ and ma’ad (the beginning and return [of all things]).

Jami’s most substantial and widely read contribution to the Sufi canon was perhaps his Nafahat al-ons men haza-rat al-qods, a hagiographical compendium that marked the apex of this genre in Persian.

Here as in several of the instances already enumerated, he built carefully and respectfully on the work of his predecessors. The foundation had been laid by Abd al-Rahman Solami (d. 1021) with his Tabaqat al-Sufiya in Arabic.

This book was then rendered by Khajeh Abdollah Ansari (d. 1089), using the same title, into the Persian dialect of Herat; he rearranged much of the contents and added material of his own.

Jami recounts this history in his introduction to the Nafahat; the language used by Ansari, he claimed, had become incomprehensibly archaic and liable to misinterpretation, apart from which Sufis of the four centuries that had elapsed since Ansari had completed his work also deserved to be memorialized.

Hence the Nafahat, a compendium based on the Tabaqat al-Sufiya but incorporating material from other “reputable books;” the final impetus for its composition was supposedly provided by an earnest request from Navai.

Before proceeding thus to update the Tabaqat al-Sufiya in terms of both content and language, Jami takes care to define key concepts relating to the history of Sufism: the meanings of sainthood (walaya) and the saint (wali); the difference between the Sufi (the fully accomplished wayfarer), the motasawwef (the one still striving on the path); the malamati (“the seeker of blame”); various levels of tawhid; and the charismatic feats (karamat) of the saints.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued.

Ammar festival announces winners of sideline sections

From Page 1 ► topics such as resistance, and revolution. It was named after Ammar Yasir, a close companion of the Prophet Muhammad (S).

In a short speech made during the awards ceremony, the festival president Edgardo Robin, who is an Argentinean Muslim cleric, criticized the Western view on celebrities.

“In Argentina, someone is paid \$200 million per month for playing football; this is really horrible. In this situation, intellectuals are considered idiots and football players and musicians are viewed as heroes. That is what the West does,” said Robin, who uses the name Soheil Asaad since his conversion to Shia Islam.

“The West goes in a way that true heroes are forgotten and make-believe persons are changed into heroes, while the Ammar festival seeks to change an ordinary person into a hero and this is highly significant,” he added.

The 13th edition of the Ammar festival opened last Wednesday in Shiraz at Shah Cheragh, the shrine of Ahmad ibn Musa (AS), with a

A poster for the Ammar Popular Film Festival.

tribute to the people, which were killed in an ISIS attack on the Shia site last October.

About 2800 films are competing

in the different sections of the festival, which is being organized at Felestin Cinema.

The winners of the official

competition will be awarded on Friday with a tribute to Nader Talebzadeh, the former president of the festival.

Iranian cineastes on Dhaka Intl. Film Festival juries

A combination photo shows Iranian cineastes Puran Derakhshandeh and Elaheh Tahai.

TEHRAN – Director Puran Derakhshandeh and her fellow Iranian film marketing manager Elaheh Tahai have been selected as members of the juries for different categories at the 21st Dhaka International Film Festival in Bangladesh.

Derakhshandeh will join the jury for the Asian Film Competition, which will be led by American filmmaker Jon Jost.

The London-based Bangladeshi director and producer Mostafa Kamal and Armenian filmmaker Arsen Arakelyan are other members of the jury.

Derakhshandeh is a film directing graduate from the Advanced School of Television and Cinema in Tehran. She started her professional

career by making documentary films for IRIB channels in Kermanshah and Tehran.

She has directed dozens of films, including “Hush! Girls Don’t Scream”, “Under the Smokey Roof”, “Eternal Children” and “Serial Dream”, which have been awarded at several international festivals.

The 2020 Dhaka International Film Festival held a retrospective of Derakhshandeh.

Tahai has been picked for the Interfaith Jury for the Spiritual Films Section. She is the international business and marketing manager of the Sureh Cinema Organization in Tehran.

The jury also includes Greek director

Divine Commander Theater Festival honors winners

TEHRAN – Winners of the 4th edition of the Divine Commander Theater Festival were honored during the closing ceremony on Tuesday at Tehran’s Arasbaran Cultural Center.

Following the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani in 2020, the festival was established by the Association of the Revolution and Sacred Defense Theater and the Revayat Foundation to present the commander’s character, morale and his method of management to provide a role model for the

Actor Farhad Qaemian accepts a lifetime achievement award at the 4th Divine Commander Theater Festival at Tehran’s Arasbaran Cultural Center on January 10, 2023. (Fars/Hadi Hirbodvash)

younger generation.

“The Devotee” by Amir Hosseini, “Shemr to the Power of Ziyad” by Mohammad Adel-Gholami, “This Place Is under CCTV Surveillance” by Arezu Khosravi, “Flashback” by Amir Amini, “Tirmameh” Mehrdad Kavusi-Hosseini and “Nanny Iran’s Lullaby for Her Children” by Hosna Qobadi were awarded at this year’s festival.

The winners subsequently gained entry to the Fajr International Theater Festival, which will be held in late January.

The festival also honored director Azam Borujerdi and actor Farhad Qaemian for their lifetime achievements.

The 4th Divine Commander Theater Festival commenced on January 4 in Kerman at General Soleimani’s grave in the Shohada Cemetery.

The festival was among dozens of cultural events organized to commemorate General Soleimani on the third anniversary of his assassination.

Sheltered by Love

An interview with the author of the most recent the best-selling book

In the book “Sheltered by Love”, a woman makes a vow to marry a veteran after the war. Maryam Basiri is the author of this book, which has thus far been a success.

* What made you write this book?

Five years ago, the Imam Reza International Foundation and the Iranian Poetry and Fiction Foundation collaborated to publish a book of novels in honor of the Razavi Festival. Therefore, it was decided that I would write this novel in 40 days, leaving little time before the books were made available.

* How did you manage to fit in so many characters in the book?

When friends later complained that there were too many veteran characters, I kept the ones I felt were more important and got rid of the others. Initially, there were just 18 veterans in the hospital with 18 distinct

characters, none of whom were similar to one another. Protagonist has a brother and three sisters, all of whom, along with their families, are associated with the protagonist in some capacity.

It is unlikely that the audience will become confused because the primary and supporting characters appear in distinct situations.

* How important do you think it is to approach women from a female perspective and non-cliché way in story writing?

Prior to being a writer, I consider myself a writing instructor, and I have always advised people who write from either a male or female perspective to be realistic. Sometimes writers describe a woman as if they are describing a strange alien from another planet.

* What led you to choose a simple writing style for this book?

Historical literature piques my interest greatly, and historical prose has its own complexity and

traits. However, I also have experience writing plays, so I’m not accustomed to writing in a straightforward manner. However, I believe the circumstances call for you to have a linear and simple narrative style when the book is created for young people from a new generation and has a special religious topic.