

Allah Will Perfect His Light Although the Disbelievers Dislike it



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Report

9 British crimes against Indians during the colonial era

By Sara Atta

TEHRAN – India celebrates its 74th National Republic Day on the 26th of January, 2023. The constitution of India was adopted on the 26th of November 1949 with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. This date is celebrated as the Constitution Day of India. Since, the constitution came into effect on the 26th January 1950 to commemorate this event, India celebrates the Republic Day every year as a national holiday. India got its own constitution and became a free country breaking all the ties with the British reign. ▶ Page 5

Iran know rivals at Asian Beach Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran are drawn in Group A of the 9th Asian Men's Beach Handball Championship. Iran have been pitted against Qatar, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia and South Korea. Group B consists of Vietnam, Oman, Kuwait, Hong Kong and China. The draw ceremony took place at the Hotel Mercure Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia. The AHF Executive Director, Dr. Ahmad Abu Al-Lail (Kuwait), and the representatives of the participating teams attended the draw ceremony.

The 9th Asian Men's & Women's Beach Handball Championship is scheduled to be held in Bali, Indonesia, from 10th to 19th March 2023.

The winner will qualify for the beach handball competition of the 2nd ANOC World Beach Games, which will be held in Bali, Indonesia, from Aug. 5th to 12th, 2023.

The top two teams will qualify for the 11th IHF Men's Beach Handball World Championships, to be held in June/July 2024.

TEHRAN – Blasphemous acts against the holy Quran have united the Islamic world in their anger against European governments.

The burning of Islam's holy book by an extremist politician in the Swedish capital has sparked outrage in the Islamic world.

Rasmus Paludan, the leader of a far-right

Swedish party, set fire to the Quran during a rally outside the Turkish embassy in Stockholm.

The rally had been given prior approval by Swedish authorities.

In another incident, a copy of the Quran was torn apart during an anti-Islam rally in The Hague, Holland.

It is not the first time that such sacrilegious acts against Islam have taken place in European cities.

There is a tendency in the West to attack Islam and undermine it in the minds and hearts of the public with the Western media and politicians playing a major role in stirring up anti-Muslim sentiments. ▶ Page 5

Iran's 10-month non-oil exports hit new record high

TEHRAN – The value of Iran's non-oil exports rose 17.66 percent during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022-January 20, 2023), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, registering a new record high.

According to Mohammad Rezvani-Far, the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Admin-

istration (IRICA), Iran exported about 103 million tons of non-oil goods valued at \$45.3 billion in the mentioned 10 months, also registering a 2.93-percent increase in weight, IRIB reported.

Liquefied natural gas was the main exported product in the said time span, accounting for 15.4 percent of the total value of the exports.



Tourism minister calls on Treasury of National Jewels to reopen doors to museumgoers

TEHRAN – It is time for the Treasury of National Jewels to open its doors to the public, Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ezzatollah Zarghami has said. ▶ Page 6

Cemeteries as tourist attraction: Ibn Babawayh

TEHRAN – Tramping through the nearby cemetery might not be your first choice when considering enjoyable outings.

However, cemetery tourism is a developing industry today as more tourists pay visits to cemeteries around the globe to reflect on their lives, find the grave of a celebrity, or discover more about their ancestry by visiting the final resting places of loved ones.

Ibn Babawayh, which is situated in the ancient city of Rey, southern Tehran, is a sizable historical cemetery where many notable Iranians have been buried.

Strolling around the graveyard, you can visit the graves of well-known Iranians like Jalal Al-e Ahmad, the contemporary author, Hossein Behzad, the eminent miniaturist, Ali-Akbar Dehkhoda, the well-known linguist,

poet, and scholar, and Gholam-Reza Takhti, and the well-known Olympic gold medal-winning wrestler, to name a few.

Moreover, it was once home to numerous family mausoleums with exquisite historical structures, but many of them have been destroyed as a result of urban development projects. ▶ Page 6

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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.

Neo-Nazis against Iran

Some European governments, including Germany, played a key role in the riots in Iran in the autumn. Recently, a file has been published that reveals the role of this country in the assassination of Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani and his companions. ▶ Page 2

Iran never transferred weapons to Yemen: ambassador

TERHAN – Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations Amir Saëd Iravani has reacted to a recent U.S. accusation that Iran transferred weapons to one of the parties involved in the Yemen conflict.

In letter dated January 23 to the president of the United Nations Security Council, Iravani said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has never transferred weapons to Yemen in violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Iran has always upheld its international obligations and any claim to the contrary is totally rejected."

He added, "As has been stated numerous times, this unproven claim made by the US and certain states is based on false information and serves only to advance their political interests in the Yemen conflict. Therefore, the claim that Iran transferred weapons to one of the parties involved in the Yemeni ▶ Page 3

Syrian cultural delegation meets organizers of Iran's resistance film festival

TEHRAN – A Syrian cultural delegation met the organizers of Iran's International Resistance Film Festival in Tehran on Tuesday to discuss ways to collaborate with the event.

The delegation led by the Syrian Deputy Information Minister, Ahmad Dawa, who is also the director general of the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), held a meeting with the director of the festival, Jalal Ghaffari, and Mohammad Hosseini, the director of the Association of the Revolution and Sacred Defense Cinema, the organizer of the festival.

Cooperation on joint film projects about Islamic resistance and mutual interests in cinema were discussed at the meeting.

"Portraying the Syrian war, which was launched with the aim of terminating the security and civilization in the country, is of crucial importance," Dawa said. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

Neo-Nazis against Iran

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

from page 1 ► On December 30, 2020, Tehran's prosecutor pointed to Germany's role in the assassination of Soleimani and said the U.S. air base in Germany was responsible for directing the drone that targeted Qassem Soleimani.

Yesterday (Monday), however, another file was published in the media in which the effective role of the Germans in the terrorist act was revealed.

The file states: "On January 3, 2020, an American drone armed with guided missiles took off from the German army base and targeted the vehicle of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis."

The report then refers to the role of Germans in the recent riots in Iran to show the enmity of the survivors of Nazism toward the Islamic Republic system.

Referring to the meeting of German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier with Ali Karimi, one of the opposition leaders, whose picture was published on December 21, 2022, the newspaper writes: Now, after Albania, Germany has become one of the main bases for the terrorist organization of the MKO, so many security and sensitive meetings of the grouplet are held under the protection of the German Federal Intelligence Service.

"June 7, 2022, one of the main security meetings against Iran in the German city of Cologne between three members of the CIA, three members of the Mossad, two agents of the MI6, two leaders of the MKO terrorist group, and one member of the Saudi spy service, and one other from Saudi International (a sarcastic name for Iran International) was held. The main agenda of this meeting was to create chaos and insecurity in Iran. These days, it can be said that Germany has placed itself among the enemies of the Islamic Republic, and undoubtedly, the powerful hands of the Iranians will squeeze the throats of these neo-Nazis."

Etemad: Why elite diplomacy is a must

The annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos ended on Friday but no government or non-government representatives from Iran were present, Etemad wrote.

Regardless of whether Iranian's absence was voluntary or not, the absence of official and non-official presence in high international gatherings ends up harming national interests.

Etemad asks why Iran's officials did not attend the Davos 2023 summit.

In the absence of Iran, a meeting titled "Women's Rights in Iran" was held with the presence of Iranian-British actress Nazanin Boniadi, Tirana Hassan from human rights watchdog, and Masih Alinejad. It was conducted by Rima Makkali, head of the Al-Arabiya office in London. At the meeting, Mrs. Boniadi called for more pressure from the European Union and the G7 on Iran, and Alinejad also urged the countries to recall their ambassadors from Iran and expel Iranian diplomats.

The name of Iran was mentioned again in Davos by Faisal Bin Farhan, the Saudi foreign minister. He called Iran an obstacle to diplomacy by claiming that Riyadh is trying to find a way to talk with Iran.

Adel al-Jubeir, the former Saudi foreign minister, also said in the meeting that Iran should abandon its nuclear program. An interesting point was the presence of seven Saudi ministers at the event.

Iran detains financial debtor while trying to flee the country



TEHRAN- Iranian security forces have arrested a person in the south of the country while was fleeing from the sea borders.

Over the past weeks, the anti-revolutionary media outlets claimed that Hassan Firouzi underwent tortures and fell in coma as a result.

Etemad wrote: It should be noted that the important summits' functions at this level are to create controversy at international level. Governments in competition with each other, turn these gatherings into a campaign to present a better image of themselves.

On the sidelines of such events, differences and future cooperation are also discussed. In such meetings, instead of diplomats and politicians, representatives of the private sector and influential non-governmental organizations play the role.

Iran became the loser in this event as neither Iranian diplomats nor Iranian elites were present.

In the absence of representatives from Iran, the opposition restored to Iranophobia project through a media propaganda.

"Etemad" suggested "elite diplomacy" for Iran as a way out of these dilemmas and writes "elite diplomacy" is public diplomacy in foreign policy.

Khorasan: Why did Europe back down?

Finally, Europe gave up putting the IRGC on its terrorist list and just sanctioned it. This action had several reasons:

First, Iran and the United States do not negotiate directly to revive the JCPOA. For nearly two years, all contacts between Tehran and Washington have exchanged by the European Union foreign policy chief as the JCPOA coordinator.

Action against the IRGC could quickly put an end to the JCPOA which is on life support. But this is not still desirable for the Europeans. They are so worried about consequences of Iran's possible withdrawal from the NPT and Tehran's move toward militarization of its nuclear program. They even fear that Russia may change its policy to possible militarization of Iran's nuclear program.

One more thing is the security situation and tensions in West Asia. Since the IRGC is one of the main security forces in the region, Europe's action could worsen the situation.

Another issue is an unwillingness to have a crisis next to the Ukraine war.

the Strait of Hormuz and it is not possible to enter the Persian Gulf without obtaining its permission, will be costly. They are even worried that Iran will change its policy toward the Ukraine war and make the war more difficult for the West by selling all kinds of missiles to Russia.

The last point is that although the Europeans shrugged off taking action against the IRGC with a legal justification, the reality is that Europe is aware of the risks and costs of such a move and wanted to consider the case as closed with a technical and legal justification.

Arman-e-Melli: EU going mad in slapping sanctions

The recent action of the European Union in applying new packages of sanctions against 37 legal and natural Iranian personalities shows that the leaders of the European Union have gone mad in slapping sanction on Iran. With the imposition of new sanctions, the number of Iranian individuals and entities sanctioned in the European Union's sanctions list has reached 173 individuals and 31 entities in recent months, which has been unprecedented in the history of the union.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

They also allegedly said that he is on the verge of execution.

The anti-Iran media outlets published footage and audio files allegedly attributed to him to prove their spurious allegations.

Various strange stories were raised about him, including being tortured and falling into coma or being on the verge of execution!

However, after careful investigations, the Judiciary announced in a notice that he is neither convicted for any charges leveled against him nor has any indictment. Consequently, he is not under arrest or serving a sentence in any of Iran's prisons.

During the interrogation, he said that his intention was to take advantage of the story concocted by the foreign-backed media outlets to camouflage from his own financial crimes.

Iran is fifth-largest producer of radiopharmaceuticals

TEHRAN- Mohammad Eslami, vice president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), announced on Wednesday that Iran is presently one of the top five producers of radiopharmaceuticals in the world.

Regarding Iran's export of radiopharmaceuticals, Eslami remarked that experts in the AEOI have worked hard to make Iran one of the leading manufacturers and distributors of radiopharmaceuticals in the world.

After the COVID-19 epidemic subsided last year, Iran restarted shipments of radiopharmaceuticals, which are mostly used to treat cancer, to nine nations across the globe, he told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

The official continued by stating that Iranian-produced radiopharmaceuticals are more effective



than those made by other multinational brands, and that researchers in the country will keep

working to increase the treatments' effectiveness.

'Nouri verdict is politically motivated'

TEHRAN - On Tuesday, the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee held a meeting to assess the latest situation surrounding the case of Hamid Nouri who is held in Sweden on charges of being involved in prosecuting MKO members.

MP Abbas Golru said the meeting was attended by the committee chairman, other parliamentarians as well as government and judicial officials.

Golru highlighted that as of the time when Hamid Nuri was arrested the Iranian organizations have been pursuing his issue.

He went on to say that a special emphasis has been put on supporting his family and providing facilities for his family to see him.

Based on an arrest warrant issued by a Stockholm prosecutor in Sweden, Hamid Nouri was detained in November 9, 2019.

He underwent a protracted court hearing procedure that spanned several months and resulted in his life sentence.

He was given life sentence on July 14, 2022.

The MP also stressed that Hamid Nouri's detention was unfair, and it is Iran's duty to oppose the procedure and the unfair legal system in Sweden.

"Nouri's attorneys have denied all of the allegations made against him," Golru continued.

Golru said that Hamid Nouri's appeals court was recently conducted in Stockholm and that his lawyers did a commendable job of representing him.

All of the witnesses who testified against Hamid Nouri in that court were members of the terrorist MKO group who also leveled

charges against the Islamic Republic.

Nouri's lawyers also made an effort to explain the terrorist nature of the MKO before the appeals court.

The MP stated that the Swedish prosecutor, who violated noticeable rules of international law in the court, was incapable of initiating investigations into the alleged crimes, and acted solely on allegations raised in reports presented to him in the appeals court.

He went on to add that Tehran has urged the Swedish government and its judiciary system to put an end to this "politically motivated" process.

"Formation of governing body for Iran-Russia ties is essential"

Golru also underscored the need for a bilateral regulatory body to monitor the numerous capacities for collaboration between Iran and Russia at bilateral, regional, and international levels.

The Russian State Duma chairman, Vyacheslav Volodin, led a parliamentary team to Tehran on Sunday and Monday. During his stay Iran and Russia held bilateral parliamentary commission meeting.

MP Golru said in the Tuesday session of the Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee the latest status of bilateral relations between Iran and Russia were assessed.

The meeting was attended by Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali, he said.

He went on to say that bilateral, regional, and international ties between the two countries have expanded significantly, especially as



a result of the president's trip to Moscow and President Putin's subsequent trip to Tehran.

However, he noted that there has not been a significant progress in economic sphere because Iran is not yet fully aware of Russia's capabilities, so the issue needs to be examined and new approaches to a deeper understanding must be found.

According to Golru, the most significant issue in Iran's ties with Russia is land, sea, and air transit routes, and the government must take substantial steps to address shortcomings in transportation and rail sectors.

He also said with careful planning, imports and exports from and to Russia may significantly expand.

Russia is an excellent market for exporting Iranian agricultural goods, building supplies, and many other goods, which might spur changes in various industries, he remarked.

Ambassador Jalali also stated that if all capacities are utilized, the problems caused by sanctions would be greatly resolved, according to Golru.

Abdollahian holds talks with top officials in Tashkent

TEHRAN- Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Foreign Minister of Iran, held separate talks with the other countries' authorities to discuss regional and global issues on the sidelines of the 26th meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in Tashkent on Tuesday.

In a meeting with Amir Abdollahian,

Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of Uzbekistan, whose country was a host to the conference, praised Iran's achievements in science and industry and declared that his country is eager to benefit from Iran's expertise in different technological fields.

They both exchanged views over bilateral relations as well as regional and global concerns.

Amir Abdollahian highlighted the meeting's main topics as the Uzbek president's incoming trip to Iran, the Uzbek parliament speaker's trip to Tehran in the upcoming spring, the second meeting of the Joint Security Cooperation Commission in Tehran, and the 15th meeting of the Joint Economic Cooperation Commission of Iran and Uzbekistan.

Additionally, he called for expanding bilateral trade relations.

During a visit by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to Samarkand, where he attended a session of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in summer, he emphasized the necessity of signing a preferen-

tial trade agreement to foster bilateral ties as well as activating the 18 documents signed between the two states, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry's website.

The president of Uzbekistan welcomed Tehran's official invitation to visit and conveyed greetings to both the Iranian president and Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

He remarked that relations between Iran and Uzbekistan are improving in several areas.

In order to create a roadmap for economic cooperation, the Uzbek president also requested that the foreign ministries of the two nations form a joint committee.

Mirziyoyev also complimented Iran's advancements in science and business despite all the sanctions on the Islamic Republic, stating Uzbekistan is eager to benefit from Iran's priceless experiences in these sectors.

He also stressed the importance of putting the Samarkand agreements into action.

There is a bright future for mutual ties, the Uzbek leader maintained.

Mirziyoyev also stated that the issue of Afghanistan is a shared concern, declaring that the foreign ministers of Afghanistan's neigh-

bors would meet shortly in Tashkent to discuss opinions on the country's condition.

Abdollahian meets his counterparts from Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan

Amir Abdollahian also met his counterparts from Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov and Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov on the sidelines of the ECO meeting on Tuesday.

They talked about bilateral issues while reviewing the latest regional and international developments.

"Iran prepared to host CICA foreign ministers meeting"

In a meeting on Tuesday, Amir Abdollahian also informed Kairat Sarybay, the secretary general of Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), that Iran is prepared to host a meeting of CICA foreign ministers within the next three months.

Tehran places a high value on the CICA, he added.

Amir Abdollahian noted that there has been an increase in bilateral collaboration as seen by the Iranian president's attendance at the Astana Summit and support for the ratification of CICA.

For his part, Sarybay stressed that Iran is a significant member of the group and participates constructively in its decision-making processes.

"No deviation in Iran's nuclear program"

Elsewhere, he pointed to the International Atomic Energy Agency's allegations of "undeclared" nuclear installations and operations in Iran made under Israeli pressure.

"Even though they are aware that the charges are baseless, they nonetheless exploited them to exert pressure on the Islamic Republic. They acknowledged that there is no indication of any deviance in the nuclear program and that interactions with the agency are in place," he added.

"We are engaged in no standstill with the Agency," said the nuclear chief, stressing that preparations are being made for a visit by IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi to Iran next month.

He further stated that the CICA Secretariat accepts the request by Tehran to host a meeting of foreign ministers as an essential step and does so with an open mind.

Iran willing to establish joint ventures in Tajikistan's free trade zones

In a meeting with Sirojiddin Muhriddin, the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Iran's foreign minister also expressed Tehran's willingness to establish joint ventures in Tajikistan's free trade zones and provide the Central Asian country services from knowledge-based firms.

The two top diplomats spoke about regional and global issues of shared interest as well as plans to strengthen bilateral ties.

Amir Abdollahian identified the extensive cultural similarities between the Iranian and Tajik people as the most important foundation for cementing connections and advancing cooperation in all areas.

Additionally, he expressed his delight over rising interactions, particularly in cultural fields.

The senior Tajik diplomat, for his part, noted that bilateral relations are at a very high level and that he was pleased with the two nations' deepening relationship.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iraq will continue to mediate between Tehran, Riyadh: PM

TEHRAN – Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad al-Sudani has once again reiterated his administration's willingness to continue mediatory efforts to bridge the gap between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

In an opinion piece for Le Monde before his trip to France, al-Sudani outlined the agenda of his government in various fields. In foreign policy, he reiterated Iraq's desire to continue mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

"Our government intends to be a major driving force in regional diplomacy and political tracks. This was clearly demonstrated in the Baghdad Conference 2, which was held with the support of President Macron in the Jordanian capital, Amman, recently; since we were keen on Iraq's refusal to use its lands as a springboard to threaten neighboring countries, we demonstrated our rejection at the same time of any encroachments on our lands," the Iraqi prime minister wrote, according to the official Iraqi News Agency (INA).

He added, "Iraq, through its distinguished relations with its regional surroundings, has become a meeting point for the disparate parties to meet, and it seeks to bridge the distances between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran. This is based on our belief that the stability of the region is achieved by overcoming tensions."

Al-Sudani continued, "We will



continue our endeavors to bring closer together the points of view of Tehran and Riyadh, as we believe that dialogue and meetings are the only way to reach common ground, and until those understandings reach an advanced stage in the upcoming meetings and gatherings."

This is the second time the Iraqi prime minister underlines his intention to continue mediation between Tehran and Riyadh in a month. Al-Sudani announced in mid-January the continuation of his country's efforts to build bridges between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

In an interview with the Arabic service of DW, al-Sudani revealed that Baghdad continues its efforts to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

"Balanced relations between Iraq and neighboring countries

according to the principle of mutual respect, common interests and non-interference in internal affairs is the best approach for us as a government," he said.

The prime minister added, "Bringing points of view closer between Iran and the countries of the region, including Saudi Arabia, is an approach that the government has followed and continues to follow, and it will contribute to easing tensions in the region, which will reflect on the security of Iraq and the region."

Al-Sudani said, "We find a response from Iran and Saudi Arabia, and we are continuing with these attempts until we resume the meetings in Baghdad soon."

The Iraqi prime minister also praised the depth of Tehran-Baghdad relations. "There is a distinguished and positive relationship with Iran, and what

connects the two countries are 1,200 km borders, and religious, cultural and social commonalities, as is the case with Iraq's relations and its Arab depth," he noted.

Earlier this month, al-Sudani said Tehran and Baghdad enjoy a historical relationship. "The relationship with Iran is historical, and we have borders that extend for more than 1,200 kilometers, and there are cultural, religious and social commonalities," he said, according to Iran's official news agency IRNA.

He added, "Since the changes in 2003, Iran has been a supporter

of the Iraqi political process and helped Iraq in the fight against the ISIS terrorist group. Relations are positive and within the framework of cooperation and support management, away from interfering in internal affairs," IRNA reported.

The Iraqi prime minister paid a visit to Iran in late November and met almost with all high-ranking Iranian officials, most notably Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

In his meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei, 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.

Iran never transferred weapons to Yemen: ambassador

From Page 1 ► conflict is nothing more than a cynical attempt by the US to cover up its repugnant interference in the Yemen crisis which resulted in a humanitarian blockade and unspeakable suffering for the Yemeni people. Furthermore, this unfounded claim will not deviate from the fact that the US and its allies are prolonging the conflict by exporting and providing massive weapons and military support to the region. In addition, in order to further their political agendas, the US and certain states have consistently and continuously applied pressure on the Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2140 (2014) to include such unverified and unsupported claims against

the Islamic Republic of Iran in its periodic reports. This is done despite the fact that the Panel of Experts is required to carry out its mandates as well as its credible, fact-based, independent assessments and analysis in an objective and impartial manner."

Iravan continued, "The Islamic Republic of Iran's position on the Yemen conflict is clear and has remained unchanged. Iran has long advocated not only for an end to Yemen's war and blockade but also for the urgent need for a peaceful resolution to the Yemen crisis. In this regard, Iran has fully supported the UN's efforts to end the conflict, lift the blockade and provide immediate humanitarian assistance to Yemen, as well as backing the

Truce Agreement and its extension. In addition to efforts for the extension of the truce, the UN's efforts must be focused on lifting the blockade, ending the war, maintaining a nationwide ceasefire, and restarting a political process that can lead to the establishment of an inclusive government in order to bring this eight-year conflict to an end."

He concluded, "Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always pursued a policy of friendship and good neighborliness with all its neighbors based on mutual respect, cooperation, and dialogue as well as the preservation of regional peace and security through the active engagement of all regional States."

Iran raps U.S., imposes sanctions on EU, UK

TEHRAN – Iran criticized the United States on Wednesday for its "hostile measures" and simultaneously imposed sanctions on European Union and British individuals and entities.

"Hostile measures by US regime against Iranians are countless. Different and diverse aspects of US administrations' crimes against Iranian nation expose fake, political human rights gestures US officials and instrumental use of #HumanRights," Nasser Kanaani, spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry, said in a Twitter thread.

He added, "Devising coup d'état, providing support to 8-year imposed war, intentional downing of passenger plane, waging hybrid warfare, sponsoring #MKO terrorists,

imposing bans and maximum pressure against Iranians are only examples of US regime countless crimes against Iranian nation."

He continued, "The reason behind US anger at #IRGC, spread of lies & baseless allegations against it is clear; IRGC is a pillar of Iranian national power, has humiliated apartheid #Zionist regime & disrupted US domineering strategies in the region."

Also, the Iranian foreign ministry slapped new sanctions in EU and UK individuals and entities over "supporting terrorism and terrorist groups, instigating and encouragement to terrorist acts and violence against Iranian people, interference in domestic affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

fomenting violence and unrest in Iran, dissemination of false information about Iran and participation in the escalation of cruel sanctions against Iranian people as an economic terrorism."

In statement on Wednesday, the Iranian foreign ministry added, "The Islamic Republic of Iran meanwhile condemn the act of the EU and UK regime for supporting, facilitating and denying from countering the destructive acts of aforementioned individuals and entities and that is violation of international obligations regarding combatting terrorism, announce that the acts of those on imposing and exacerbating cruel sanctions is obvious violation of fundamental principles of international law set forth in the

United Nations charter."

The statement further said, "All relevant national institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, consistent with the regulations adopted by the related authorities, will take appropriate measures, which are blocking of accounts and transactions in the Iranian financial and banking systems, blocking of assets within the jurisdiction of the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as prohibition of visa issuance and entry to the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for effective implementation of the above-mentioned sanctions."

The new list of sanctions included three European entities and 22 individuals. It also included a UK entity and eight individuals.



He stated, "Designating the IRGC as a terrorist organization would have many unwanted legal and political consequences for all involved parties. This is why it is our conviction that dialogue and diplomacy is the best path forward. Constructive engagement between Iran and Europe is essential for finding sustainable solutions to disagreements and clarifying misunderstandings. Engagement begets more engagement. Threats, on the other hand, will be met by a commensurate reaction."

Iran response prompted EU to retreat on IRGC designation: MP

TEHRAN – An Iranian lawmaker has said that Iran's response to the European Parliament's resolution on the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) caused the EU to back down on the IRGC listing.

The lawmaker, Jalal Rashidi Kouchi, told ICANA that the resolution was met with a serious response from Iran. The European Parliament understood that we will not hesitate to decisively respond to this resolution, Kouchi said.

He was commenting on recent remarks by EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell who said that the EU cannot designate the IRGC as a terrorist group just because they don't like it.

"Iran's reaction to Europe's wrong action regarding calling the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist caused them to reconsider their behavior," the lawmaker said.

He added, "I believe that we should give a firm message to Europe that the cost of such a work will definitely be much higher for Europe than

for Iran. Europe should know that its conditions are different from America. It seems to have understood this difference to some extent"

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has highlighted the risks associated with the IRGC designation for Europe in an opinion piece for Al Jazeera. "Branding the IRGC a 'terrorist organization' would be a colossal mistake on the part of the EU – a mistake Iran cannot be expected to ignore. Such a designation would encroach upon Iran's sovereignty, flouting international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Such a serious escalation would further undermine Europe's trustworthiness in matters related to international security and have profound implications for the interests of European countries in the Middle East region," he wrote. "Therefore, it is of paramount importance that rationality prevails within the European foreign policy establishment to avert another crisis."

IRAN IN FOCUS

JANUARY 26, 2023

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

Zob Ahan beat Beirut Club at WASL West Asia League

TEHRAN – Iranian basketball club Zob Ahan 79-72 defeated Lebanon's Beirut Club in WASL-West Asia on Wednesday night.

Zob Ahan moved up top of Group A with seven points.

Farid Aslani Haji Abadi led Zob Ahan with 16 points, and Ken Horton scored 19 points for Beirut Club.

Zob Ahan had lost to Beirut Club 73-56 in their previous match.

Each Sub-Zone league consists of eight (8) teams divided into two (2) groups of four (4). Each team will play the other team at home and away.

The top team from each group will advance to the Semi-Finals, while the second and third will face off in qualification to Semi-Finals match-ups.

Eventually, the top three teams from WASL West Asia League and WASL Persian Gulf League will qualify for the WASL Final eight, where they will be joined by Champions of South Asia and Central Asia.

The WASL Final eight finalists will qualify for FIBA Asia Champions Cup 2023, on the road to FIBA Intercontinental Cup 2023, FIBA's highest club competition.

The West Asia Super League (WASL) is a basketball competition in Western Asia, Persian Gulf states and India, organized by FIBA. The league exists out of 18 teams, divided in two sub-zones.

The champions and runners-up of each season qualify for the FIBA Asia Champions Cup.

Women's futsal team arrive in Tashkent for CAFA

TEHRAN – Iran's women's futsal team arrived in Tashkent, Uzbekistan Wednesday afternoon to participate at the 2023 CAFA Women's Futsal Championship.

Iran are scheduled to face Kyrgyzstan on Friday in their opener.

Team Melli will also play Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on Saturday and Monday, respectively.

"We will do our best to get good results in CAFA tournament. The team will participate in the competition with a mixture of young talents and experienced players," coach Forouzan Soleymani had said.

The 2023 CAFA Women's Futsal Championship will be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from Jan. 25 to 31.

The Championship will be the second edition of the CAFA Women's Futsal Championship, the annual international futsal championship organized by CAFA for the women's national futsal teams of Central Asia.

Iran are the defending champions, having won the 2022 inaugural edition.

Iranian teams eye Charleroi star Gholizadeh

TEHRAN – Iranian football clubs have reportedly shown an interest in signing Charleroi winger Ali Gholizadeh.

Gholizadeh wants to part ways with the Belgian top-flight side after about five years.

Iranian media reports suggest that Persepolis, Esteghlal and Sepahan are going to sign the player in the January transfer window.

Gholizadeh is reportedly going to return to Iran due to personal reasons.

Emirati club Ittihad Kalba, headed by Farhad Majidi, are also among the clubs showing interest in signing the player.

Kuwaiti forward Fereydoon joins Sanat Naft: IPL

TEHRAN – Kuwait-born Iranian forward Ali Fereydoon joined Sanat Naft football club on Tuesday.

The 31-year-old striker has joined the Abadan-based football club until the end of the season.

Fereydoon started his playing career in Qatari club Al-Shamal and has also played in Al-Sadd, Al-Shahania and Al-Rayyan.

He has most recently played for Kuwaiti club Al-Arabi.

Sanat Naft sit 15th in the Iran Professional League (IPL) 16-team table.

Foolad part ways with Ayanda Patosi

TEHRAN – Iranian football club Foolad terminated contract with South African midfielder Ayanda Patosi.

Patosi looks set to be available on a free transfer after parting ways with the Iranian club.

The 30-year-old was subject to major criticism from his club Foolad as head coach Javad Nekounam questioned his professionalism after arriving back late to camp after the mid-season break.

He's not featured in each of their last five league games in the Iran top-flight, and he's agreed to mutually terminate his contract as the club looked to register a new foreign player Roberto Torres, who left Osasuna after 15 years at the club.

Patosi has previously been linked with a return to the DStv Premiership, where he turned out for Cape Town City over two separate stints, but it remains to be seen whether he will opt to return home or continue his career abroad.

Since graduating from the now-defunct African Soccer Development (ASD) Academy back in 2011, Patosi has played for Lokeren in Belgium, City, Esteghlal, Baniyas, and Foolad.

Despite Patosi being one of their leading performers since his arrival three years ago from UAE Pro League outfit Baniyas, with 18 goals and 10 assists in 82 games and starring in the AFC Champions League, his fallout with Nekounam has seemingly ended his time at the Iranian team.

Genius player shines in table tennis contests in Qatar

TEHRAN – An Iranian table tennis player, Navid Shams, notched up a shock win on the first day of the 2023 contests underway in Qatar.

After beating Darius Movileanu, a world-class table tennis player from Romania, Navid surprised everyone as he defeated another decorated athlete Lee Sangsu from South Korea 3-0.

Being included among top eight players, the genius Iranian table tennis player is planned to compete with a rival from France.

The WTT Feeder Doha 2023 has been underway in Qatar since January 23.

Iran has sent six representatives to the competitions.

Iran chess player ties with top American rival in Tata Steel

TEHRAN – Top Iranian chess player Parham Maghsoodloo succeeded to draw with his prominent American rival Wesley So in the Tata Steel Chess Tournament.

Maghsoodloo succeeded to draw with Wesley So in the ninth round of the 85th Tata Steel Chess Championship.

The Iranian champion, with a rating of 2719, could draw the prominent American chess player Wesley So, with a rating of 2760.

Earlier, Maghsoodloo succeeded to stop his prominent Chinese rival Ding Liren in the Tata Steel Chess Tournament.

Maghsoodloo and Mohammad-Amin Tabatabaei represent Iran in the international tournament.

Tabatabaei also succeeded to draw with his Serbian rival in this tournament.

‘Honey production should be increased by 3-4 kg per colony’



TEHRAN- The amount of honey production in the country should be increased by three to four kilograms per colony, according to the chairman of Animal Science Research Institute of Iran (ASRI).

Mokhtar Mohajer said, “According to the Seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026), the amount of honey production should be increased by at least three to four kilograms per colony according to the diversity of plants and the area of pastures that we have in the country”.

He announced that 112,000 tons of honey, 8,300 kilograms of royal jelly, 406 tons of pollen, 2,536 tons of beeswax, 247 tons of propolis, and 3,917 grams of bee venom are produced annually in the country.

Currently, there are about 11.8 million

bee colonies in 109,759 apiaries in the country, he added.

Pointing out that Iran ranks third in the world in the number of apiaries, he said 87,932 people are working in apiaries in the country, and the output of these apiaries is honey and its by-products.

Stating that all these products are not consumed domestically, he said about 10 percent of these products are exported to countries such as Turkey and Arab countries.

Complaining about the low amount of honey production compared to the number of apiaries and colonies, Mohajer said the average production of honey in Iran is much lower than the standard, in a way that about four kilograms of honey is produced in traditional colonies, and an average of 9.6 kilograms of honey is produced in modern colonies.

He stated that the low literacy of the producers is one of the main reasons for the low production in the colonies, adding that the production potential of each bee colony in the country is more than 25 kilograms.

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

Over 48m tons of cement produced in 9 months

TEHRAN- Production of cement in Iran stood at 48.362 million tons in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2022), according to the data released by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry.

The ministry's data indicate that the nine-month output has fallen one percent as compared to the production in the same period of time in the past year.

Iran produced 63 million tons of cement in 2021 to be ranked the world's seventh biggest cement producer, IRIB reported last month citing international statistics.

As reported, the Islamic Republic also exported 14.4 million tons of cement in that year to stand in fourth place among the world's top cement exporters.

Based on the Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry data, Iranian cement complexes have managed to export 7.6 million tons of the

product in the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22), registering a four percent increase compared to the figure for the previous year's same period.

The Islamic Republic was ranked the world's fifth biggest cement producer in 2020, producing 69 million tons of the product.

Iranian cement industry has a history of more than eight decades of activity.

Currently, there are 96 cement production lines active in 74 factories across Iran, and nearly half of them are less than 10 years old. This is an indication that new production units have a greater share of the total output in this sector.

Neighboring countries are not only consumers of Iranian cement but also demand the transfer of the cement industry's technology to their countries.

Export from Qom province rises 28% in 9 months yr/yr

TEHRAN- The value of export from Qom province, rose 28 percent in the first nine of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the previous year, according to a provincial official.

Akbar Ebdali Mohammadi, the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, put the worth of nine-month export from the province at \$263 million.

The official also said that the export from the province rose 63 percent in terms of weight year on year.

As previously announced by Mojtaba Farhadi, the head of Foreign Trade Office of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, export from Qom province rose 92 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022).

The official said that commodities worth \$283 million were exported from the province in the past year.

He named metal products, rubber and plastic items, and foodstuffs as the main items exported from the province in the past year.

TEDPIX loses 34,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 34,091 points to 1.611 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 12.871 billion securities worth 73.654 trillion rials (about \$184 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index dropped 29,908 points, and the second market's index lost 53,464 points

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and



Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Iran plans to raise oil output by 1.9m barrels in 8 years

TEHRAN – Head of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has said his company plans to increase the country's oil production capacity to 5.7 million barrels per day (bpd) from the current 3.8 million bpd, Shana reported.

Speaking on Tuesday in the signing ceremony of a contract between NIOC and a domestic company for increasing the recovery factor of low-yield oil wells, Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr said 900,000 bpd of the mentioned capacity is going to be realized through recovery-improvement projects.

According to the official, there are currently 6,000 low-yield wells in the country, among which 700 have been selected to be handed over to capable domestic companies for revival.

Khojasteh-Mehr said according to NIOC's reviving program, the Petroleum Industry Innovation and Technology Park, a company responsible for the Oil Ministry's



innovation and technology projects, has been put in charge of selecting the candid companies and \$500 million has been allocated for this purpose.

Petroleum Industry Innovation and Technology Park will supervise and coordinate works by domestic

startups and small companies on low-production oil wells.

“We have assessed the risk of the wells and identified and examined them, based on which they have been categorized as high-, medium-, and low-risk wells; every company can be awarded up to five wells for

reviving according to their ability,” the NIOC head explained.

On Tuesday, the head of Petroleum Industry Innovation and Technology Park signed the first contract under the framework of the NIOC reviving program with a domestic knowledge-based company named Diaco Energy.

The mentioned program is part of the company's efforts to boost its daily output and exports of crude oil despite U.S. sanctions that have targeted both Iran's oil sales and its investment in the development of new oilfields.

The signing of the contract with Diaco Energy comes two months after the NIOC denied rumors that it will use the services of Russian and Chinese companies to revive low-production or inactive oil wells in Iran.

Oil Ministry figures show reviving a low-production oil well costs around \$1 million, around 90 percent cheaper than developing a new oil well.

Iran’s 10-month non-oil exports hit new record high

From page 1 ► The Islamic Republic also imported 31 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$48.5 billion in the first 10 months of the present year, with a 16.86-percent growth in value and a 7.6-percent decrease in weight, year on year.

Corn, rice, soybeans, wheat, sunflower oil, barley, and soybean meal were among the items imported into the country in the said



Aluminum ingot output up 19% in 9 months on year

TEHRAN – Production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 19 percent in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

As reported, the production of aluminum ingot stood at 474,601 tons in the nine-month period of this year, while the figure was 398,610 tons in the same time span of the previous year.

Among the country's four major producers, South Aluminum Corporation (SALCO) had the best performance in the first nine months of the present year, producing 203,231 tons of aluminum ingots, followed

by Iranian Aluminum Company (IRALCO) producing 132,394 tons, Almahdi Aluminum Company producing 11,479 tons, and Iran Alumina Company producing 27,497 tons of the product.

According to the data previously released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 20 percent during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), as compared to its preceding year.

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

Among the country's four major producers, Iranian Aluminum Company (IRALCO) had the best performance in the previous year producing 177,058 tons of aluminum ingots, although the figure was 185,000 tons in the preceding year.

South Aluminum Corporation (SALCO) produced 173,594 tons, production by Almahdi Aluminum Company stood at 150,738 tons, and Iran Alumina Company produced 37,243 tons of aluminum ingots in the Iranian calendar year 1400, the IMIDRO's data indicated.

Annual production of aluminum ingot in the country had been planned to increase by 63 percent in the past year.



Iranian officials estimate the country's aluminum sector has a value of \$22 billion, which is sufficient to meet the country's aluminum needs.

At present, Iran is the 18th biggest aluminum-producing country in the world.

The country plans to reach the annual production of 1.5 million tons of aluminum ingot by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

Furniture exports exceed \$100m in 9 months

TEHRAN – Iranian furniture manufacturers have exported over \$100 million worth of their products in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 22, 2022), according to the secretary of Iran Wood Industries Employers Association.

Ali Moghanlou said the country's export of furniture in the mentioned nine months has been more than the total annual exports in the previous year, IRNA reported.

Speaking at a press conference on the sidelines of the 20th Exhibition of Home and Office Furniture, Decoration and Interior Design, Machineries, Equipment and Accessories (MEDEX 2023), Moghanlou noted that chipboards, MDA and HDF boards, and all kinds of sofas and furniture were the top exported items in the mentioned period.

“We have very good producers in the country who have defined good development plans and with the quality development of products, more export opportunities can be presented for this industry,” he said.

Also in the press conference, Hossein Norouzi, the secretary of the Iran Furniture Manufacturers and Exporters Union said this industry accounts for

eight percent of the country's total employment.

“Until 10 years ago, more than 500 million dollars of furniture was imported into the country annually, but with the help of unions and associations and the cooperation with the Industry Ministry in this area domestic production surged and imports decreased,” Norouzi said.

Earlier this year, Head of Iran Furniture Manufacturers and Exporters Union Hassan Ahmadian said the country has the potential to export \$600 million worth of furniture annually.

According to Ahmadian, many countries including Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and even Russia are eager to buy Iranian furniture, but the producers in Iran are currently facing some problems mainly in the supply of raw materials.

The financial turnover of the furniture industry in Iran is more than eight billion dollars, and due to job creation and high added value, it is considered one of the valuable industries, Ahmadian said.

He noted that more than 80,000 industrial, guild, and service units operate in the furniture industry and this industry accounts for more than eight percent of the industrial employment in the country.

Tehran, Tokyo seek expansion of port, maritime co-op in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) discussed infrastructural, transit, and training cooperation with the Japanese ambassador to Tehran on Tuesday.

During the meeting, Ali-Akbar Safaei and Aikawa Kazutoshi explored ways of developing cooperation in Iranian ports on the coasts of the Persian Gulf, the PMO portal reported.

Pointing to the long history of economic and commercial

cooperation between Iran and Japan as two coastal countries, Safaei emphasized the development of infrastructure and transit cooperation and the strengthening of educational activities with Tokyo.

Kazutoshi for his part mentioned a recent visit to Iran's southern Shahid Rajaei Port, emphasizing the strengthening of mutual relations and maritime cooperation.

The ambassador stated that sea-based development is one of

the most important aspects of his country's foreign policy, explaining that Japan attempts to expand its ties with other maritime nations through its smart ports.

Japan is interested to invest in Shahid Rajaei port in Hormozgan Province as they had previously negotiated for maritime cooperation in this port.

Shahid Rajaei Port can play an important role in the development of trade in the region as 80 percent

of Iran's transit is carried out through this port.

The port has many advantages and capacities including modern container equipment for container ships, access to the railway network, the Bandar Abbas International Airport, and to the high seas.

Shahid Rajaei Port is also important along International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC) which maintains fast speed and great security for freight transit.

From page 1 ► The Quran has been attacked in the West, but other symbols of Islam are also coming under attack.

Western governments have gone after the Muslim hijab. In some Western countries it has been banned, and in many cases, the same governments are making it look like a crime for a Muslim woman to wear it.

Places of Muslim worship, like mosques and Islamic centers, have been targeted, with the latest case being the Islamic Center of England in London which the UK has been putting under pressure.

This is while anti-Muslim extremists have in the past infuriated Muslims with similar incidents in Europe, including Holland, Switzerland, France, and Austria, as well as in the United States.

These blasphemous acts are happening with the authorization of the governments under the pretext of freedom of expression.

But this freedom appears limited to Islam as similar acts against other religions have been met with punitive measures by the respective governments.

The anti-Islam stance has a sinister motive behind it.

Some authorities are using double standards to seek a rise in extremism as well as hatred between Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

It is an incitement to hatred and an incitement to violence. This is against the fundamentals of modern society.

During this volatile time that we are living in, there are actually many in the world who are working to achieve peace and this peace can only be achieved if governments start respecting the roughly two billion Muslims in the world.

Critics say the right to freedom of speech has a limit when it provokes such strong anger among Muslims worldwide.

These double standards are the characteristics of these countries that allow anti-Muslim sentiments to flourish.

A lot of work has to be done for these governments to understand the meaning of living in a peaceful society.

Massive demonstrations have erupted in many West Asian countries as well as protests in Europe itself against the religious assault.

In the days after the burning of the



Allah will perfect His light although the disbelievers dislike it

Quran, which occurred during a rally against Ankara outside the Turkish embassy in Stockholm, crowds of people in Muslim countries like Yemen, Iraq, Jordan, Afghanistan, Indonesia Turkey and elsewhere flooded the streets in anger.

More protests in other countries are being organized or expected in the coming days against the hate crime.

Protesters outside the Swedish embassy in Turkey and Yemen burnt the national flag of Sweden and strongly condemned the latest sacrilegious act.

Demonstrators are calling for a boycott of all Swedish products such as clothing brands named H&M, furniture brands IKEA, Skype, Volvo, Ericsson, Nordea, and more.

Footage of the protests in various Muslim countries has gone viral online, in which the angry protesters can be seen raising slogans against Sweden and demanding accountability.

Muslim countries including Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait along with many others have issued strong condemnations.

The defacing of Islam's holy book is considered an act of provocation to most in Indonesia, which is host to the world's largest Muslim population, regardless of whether the act was aimed at another nation entirely.

Paludan, the Swedish-Danish politician and activist who has previously been accused of racial abuse, repeated the same act he did last year.

Yet there have been no genuine apologies issued or punitive measures taken against the perpetrators of these anti-Islam acts.

The White House has said that the extremist's burning of the Quran in the Swedish capital was "deeply disrespectful" but stopped short of directly condemning it.

When asked by reporters why he does not condemn the burning, Ned Price, the spokesman for the United States Department of State, said, "I'm certainly not refraining from condemning this, this particular action."

"Of course, countries around the world have, and what we also seek to uphold are the very democratic principles that we're talking about here: the right to freedom of assembly, the right to freedom of expression," he added.

Turkey, which is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation as well as a NATO member has summoned the Swedish ambassador over the sacrilegious act, with Stockholm's membership bid of the NATO military alliance in doubt as it requires approval of all members.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the "Swedish government does not need to (talk) about the rights and freedom to us. If you really do respect rights and freedom, at first, you need to respect the Turkish republic or Muslims' religious beliefs. If you do not show that respect, I am sorry, you will not see any support from us regarding NATO membership."

"If you love members of terrorist organisations and enemies of Islam so much and protect them, then we advise you to seek their support for your countries' security," he added

Jens Stoltenberg, the Secretary General of NATO, has condemned Erdogan's position on Sweden.

In an interview with German media, he said that "freedom of expression, freedom of opinion is a precious commodity, in Sweden and in all other NATO countries. That is why these inappropriate acts are not automatically illegal."

The Turkish Foreign Ministry has also summoned the Dutch Ambassador after issuing a statement that read "this makes clear that Islamophobia, discrimination, and Xenophobia know no borders in Europe."

For a long time now, countries in the West have been tolerating Islamophobic demonstrations, movies, and literature aiming to insult the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the holy Quran.

This is despite knowing that such willfully, planned, and state-sponsored acts insult Muslims globally.

Yet the desire to continue this blasphemy has its roots in giving Daesh terrorists an Islamic identity while the largest anti-terror organization, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, which defeated terrorists in West Asia and brought security to Europe is labelled as a terrorist entity by the European Parliament.

The West can try and twist the narrative on the peaceful religion of Islam and help extremists who disgracefully operate under the name of Islam, but it won't succeed.

These badly thought-out policies will only backfire on the governments that continue to implement them.

And finally, as God Almighty says in the Quran: They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths but Allah will perfect His light, though the unbelievers may be averse (As-Saff Surah, Verse 8).

WORLD HEADLINES

Germany, US expected to announce tanks deal

After days of intense discussions, media reports say Germany and the United States are poised to announce they will dispatch their battle tanks, the Leopard 2 and M1 Abrams respectively, to Ukraine.

There is no official confirmation yet but a US official said, US President Joe Biden is likely to announce plans to send M1 Abrams battle tanks to Ukraine "as early as tomorrow."

The official said the announcement will include "a battalion size number of tanks" that would comprise roughly 30-50 tanks.

Earlier in the day, multiple US media outlets reported that the Biden administration was inching towards sending M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine after its leaders called on the West for additional arms to help it defend against Russia's war.

The possible decision to send what the reports called a "significant number" of tanks to Kyiv comes as Washington and Berlin continue to grapple over the provision of tanks to Ukraine.

Germany has faced mounting pressure to provide its Leopard 2 main battle tanks to Ukraine's military, particularly after the UK agreed to send 14 of its Challenger 2 tanks.

Ukraine welcomed the UK's decision to send a squadron of Challenger 2 tanks but said that it was not enough to meet its battlefield needs, appealing in particular to countries with Leopard 2 tanks to send them.

While Germany has so far balked at sending its tanks to Ukraine, it has said that it would not prevent Poland from doing so if it chooses. Countries that have purchased the tanks from Germany must receive a sign-off from Berlin if they are to re-export them.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz told US lawmakers last week that his government would not approve of sending the Leopard 2's to Ukraine unless the US donated its own tanks first, according to the Politico news website.

Deliveries of battle tanks by the US would be "another blatant provocation" Anatoly Antonov, Russia's ambassador to the US, says.

Classified documents found in former Vice President Mike Pence's home

A lawyer for former Vice President Mike Pence found classified documents in his home in Carmel, according to a CNN report.

The discovery comes in the wake of two separate cases in which President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump were found to have missing classified records in their possession. Security analysts told USA TODAY that these cases show a need for more safeguarding of classified materials, especially between presidential administrations.

While attorneys say they uncovered a "small number" of documents in Biden's home and garage, hundreds of documents were found in Trump's possession.

Pence had previously said to multiple news sources that he didn't possess any classified documents. When asked by the Associated Press in August if he had taken any home, he said, "No, not to my knowledge." He gave a similar response in November to ABC News, saying "there'd be no reason to have classified documents."

According to letters from Pence's lawyer obtained by USA TODAY, FBI agents went to Pence's home on Jan. 19 to retrieve the documents from a safe.

Recently, it was announced that Pence bought a house for 1.93 million dollars in Hamilton County.

EU urged to turn to Azerbaijan for gas

Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia have requested that the European Commission (EC) allocate funds for infrastructure development that would enable increased shipments of Azerbaijani gas to the EU, Budapest announced on Tuesday.

Speaking at a joint news conference with Azerbaijani Economy Minister Mikail Jabbarov, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto urged Brussels to address the energy-supply issue "as a priority, and provide financial support." According to the official, the investment being sought is needed to build new and update existing infrastructure, which would provide for increased volumes of Azerbaijani gas flowing via Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Slovakia.

The projects, which, according to the Hungarian official, should provide for energy security in Southern and Central Europe, will include the construction of new interconnectors and the boosting of capacity in existing ones.

"This situation will show whether the EU is ready to make a step towards a real diversification from the talk that has been heard so far, about the importance of diversification for the security of supply in Central Europe," Szijjarto said.

Missile hit Turkish-owned ship in Ukraine's Kherson port

A Turkish-owned general cargo ship was struck by a missile in the port of the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson, sparking a fire, according to video footage from the scene and shipping sources.

The missile hit the bridge of the vessel named Tuzla on Tuesday, maritime security company Ambrey said, causing the fire. Video footage showed flames filling the command room of the ship.

Reuters was able to confirm the location from the ships and buildings seen in the video, which matched file and satellite imagery of the area. Reuters was not able to independently confirm the date the videos were filmed.

The ship, which has been stuck at the port since February 2022, was operated by Cayeli Shipping, which was not available for comment.

A shipping source said there are twelve Turkish ships trapped in Ukrainian ports, including in Kherson, that are not covered by the U.N.-brokered Black Sea grain deal.

"There has been an attack yesterday night, most probably to the port, and an explosive charge seems to have hit the ship. Turkish ships in Kherson are manned by a skeleton crew so there are no injuries or casualties," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Turkish opposition backs exit from NATO – media

Türkiye could leave NATO within months, a politician there has claimed, citing "provocations" by the US-led military bloc against his nation. Ethem Sancak is a Turkish businessman of Arab descent who is active in politics and who local media describe as close to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

He was commenting on an anti-NATO campaign in Türkiye that the Vatan (Patriotic) Party, where he holds the position of vice chairman for foreign relations, has organized.

"NATO forces us to take these actions with their provocations," he stated, predicting that his party's goal of getting Türkiye to leave the alliance may come to fruition "in five-to-six months."

Speaking to the news website enbursa.com on Tuesday, Sancak noted that being part of the bloc puts Türkiye on a collision course with fellow member and longtime rival Greece, and also at risk of being pulled "into a whirlpool in the Middle East." The recent Quran-burning stunts in some European nations make leaving NATO "a necessity," he argued.

9 British crimes against Indians during the colonial era

From page 1 ► The significance of the 26th January is of utmost importance to the imagining of India as a postcolonial sovereign state because it was on this day in 1930 that the Indian National Congress declared India's independence and urged the people to celebrate the day as Independence Day.

Contrary to the myth that Britain gave many gifts to India, the British Raj was a cruel and oppressive regime responsible for the deaths of an estimated 35 million Indians.

The followings are some examples of the anti-human records of Britain in India, which has one of the blackest colonial records among Europeans.

1. Stealing of valuable Indian artifacts by Britain

The list of Indian artifacts that were stolen in colonial times and are now in the United Kingdom is long. Artifacts that the British seized, looted or took away as "gifts" include the 105.6-karat "Koh-i-noor" diamond.

Lord Harihara idol, Sultanganj Buddha, Tipu Sultan's personal possessions, Wine cups of Shah Jahan and Maharaja Ranjit Singh's throne are among the other treasured possessions, idols and artefacts that were stolen and looted from India years ago but still remain in the possession of the British museums and royals. Many Indians are still sensitive about artifacts that were stolen during the British conquest of India and have yet to be returned.

2. Using Indian Army in WWII

The British colonial regime in India was heavily dependent on the Indian Army.

The Indian Army that had been used by Britain during World War II fought in Ethiopia against the Italian Army, in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria against both the Italian and German armies, and, after the Italian surrender, against the German Army in Italy. However, the bulk of the Indian Army was committed to fighting the Japanese Army, first during the British defeats in Malaya and the retreat from Burma to the Indian border; later, after resting and refitting for the victorious advance back into Burma, as part of the largest British Empire army ever formed. These campaigns claimed the lives of over 87,000 Indian servicemen, while 34,354 were wounded, and 67,340 became prisoners of war. World War II was the last time the Indian Army

fought as part of the British military apparatus, as independence and partition followed in 1947.

3. Britain tested chemical weapons on Indian troops

According to a report published by the Guardian, British military scientists tested a chemical weapon on Indian colonial troops during more than a decade of experiments before and during World War II. Hundreds of Indian and British soldiers were exposed to mustard gas in tests conducted in Rawalpindi, which was then part of Britain's Indian colony. The gas severely burned the soldiers' skin, and caused pain that sometimes lasted for weeks. Some of the soldiers had to be hospitalized. The scientists wanted to compare the effect of the gas on the skin of Indians to the results of experiments done on British soldiers.

4. British EIC looted Bengal

Backed by a 20,000-strong military force of locally recruited Indian soldiers, in 1757 the British East India Company (EIC) became the effective rulers of Bengal and looted the territory, draining the region's wealth into Britain. Company tax collectors in Bengal recorded that 'Indians were tortured to disclose their treasure; cities, towns and villages ransacked'. By the end of the eighteenth century, most of India had been seized by this unregulated private company, which had expanded its army to 260,000 men by 1803.

5. Britain stole \$45 trillion from India

It has been estimated that Britain stole a total of nearly \$45 trillion from India during the period from 1765 to 1938. The British impoverished India through a taxation operation that equated to systematic theft. Put simply, the British exhorted high taxes in cash from the Indian population, used that tax money to pay Indians for their goods, and then exported the goods overseas and invested the profits into the British economy and a colonial army of Indian men that far surpassed India's own defence needs.

6. Between 12 and 29 million Indians died of starvation

The British destabilized crop patterns by forced commercial cropping, and left Indians more prone to famines. Between 12 and 29 million Indians died of starvation while India was under the control of

the British Empire. In response to the outbreak of famines, the British authorities rarely made relief aid, insisting that starvation was a 'natural' and 'necessary' check for overpopulation. During the Great Famine of 1876-78 in Madras, it wasn't until 5.5 million Indians had already died that the British authorities began to administer any relief efforts. Instead of giving charity, the British set up labour camps for the poor where Indian workers were fed food portions that were less than 50% of the size given in Nazi concentration camps.

7. Railways in India were paid for entirely by Indian taxpayers

The building of railways across the Raj is often misconceived as one of the 'gifts' that Britain bestowed on India. The railways were in fact paid for entirely by Indian taxpayers, who were also forced to pay higher ticket prices than British personnel and confined to crowded 'third class' compartments. British shareholders were able to make extortionate amounts of money by investing in the railways, without ever paying towards the system through their own taxes.

8. Jallianwala Bagh massacre

On 13 April 1919, when peaceful protestors defied a government order and demonstrated against British colonial rule in Amritsar, they were blocked inside the walled Jallianwala Gardens and fired upon by Gurkha soldiers. Under the orders of General Dyer, the soldiers kept firing until they ran out of ammunition, killing between 379 and 1,000 protestors and injuring another 1,100, all within 10 minutes. Britain has never formally apologized for the massacre.

9. 1918 flu pandemic in India

India's 1918 flu pandemic was the outbreak of influenza in India between 1918 and later in 1920. The pandemic is thought to have killed over 17 million people. When colonists from Britain arrived in India, they brought their soldiers and their war. The British ships carrying troops returning from the First World War in Europe brought the Spanish Flu with them and devastated India. Almost an entire generation of Indians was wiped out. All rivers across India were clogged up with bodies because of a shortage of firewood for cremation.

Tourism minister calls on Treasury of National Jewels to reopen doors to museumgoers

From Page 1 ► “It is my request that the treasury officials provide the public with another opportunity to visit the National Jewels Treasury,” the minister said during his visit to the place on Tuesday.

It is worth visiting here to see the beauty and art of these works and to understand royal lifestyles wiped out by the Islamic Revolution, he added.

There have been rumors about the disappearance of two highly magnificent crowns of this treasure in cyberspace in the past few weeks, and since the doors of this place have been closed due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, the rumors have gained strength.

It was for this reason that the minister paid a special visit to the treasury and confirmed the existence of these crowns.

There are famous, small, and big crowns here that are related to the royal families of the Qajar and Pahlavi dynasties, but they are insignificant compared to the treasures that were looted by these families, the minister stated.

Owned by the Central Bank of Iran and accessed through its front doors, the incomparable Treasury of the National Jewels is a collection of the most expensive jewels of the world, collected over centuries. Commonly known as the ‘Jewels Museum’, it is not to be missed while in the Iranian capital.

Every piece of this collection is a reflection of the tumultuous history of this great nation, and the artistry of the residents of this land. Each piece recalls memories of bitter-sweet victories and defeats, of the pride and arrogance of rulers who were powerful or weak.

These jewels and rarities were decorations for the rulers during the past eras, and often showed the glory and extravagance of their courts, as well as their power and wealth. The Safavid, Qajar, and Pahlavi monarchs adorned themselves and their belongings with an astounding range of priceless gems and precious metals, making this collection of bling quite literally jaw-dropping. Star pieces include the Globe of Jewels and the Peacock Throne.

This Treasury, according to the Central Bank, on one hand, depicts the culture and civilization of the Iranian people who have had an adventurous past, and on the other, repeats the silent tears of oppressed people who worked hard instead of the rulers, could show off their arrogance and power with their gold and jewels.

The value of the objects in the Treasury of National Jewels is not limited to their economic value, but is also a reflection of the creativity and taste of Iranian craftsmen and artists over the different eras of history, and represents the artistic and cultural heritage of the vast country of Iran.

Sales exhibit to showcase handicrafts, souvenirs from across Iran



TEHRAN – A sales exhibition of countrywide Iranian handicrafts and souvenirs is scheduled to open in the northern city of Amol, Mazandaran province.

Over 40 stalls will be set up for the one-month event, which starts today, Amol’s tourism director said on Wednesday.

Pitching Siah-Chadors (“vast traditional black tents”), local cousin contests, live music performances, and demonstrations of culinary art are amongst other programs for the event.

Iran has the most cities and towns

Ancient mudbrick fort restored in eastern Iran

TEHRAN – The second phase of a restoration project on a historical fortification in eastern Sarbisheh county, South Khorasan province, has come to an end, a local tourism official has said.

The project involved repairing the walls and towers of the structure as well as strengthening its infrastructure, Hadi Haqpanah explained on Wednesday.

From very early history to modern times, defensive walls have often been necessary for cities to survive in an ever-changing world of invasion and conquest.

Fortifications in antiquity were designed primarily to defeat attempts at the escalate, and to defend territories in warfare and were also used to solidify rule in a region during peacetime.

Uruk in ancient Sumer (Mesopotamia) is one of the world’s oldest known walled cities. The Ancient Egyptians also built fortresses on the frontiers of the Nile Valley to protect



against invaders from neighboring territories.

Many of the fortifications of the ancient world were built with mud brick, often leaving them no more than mounds of dirt for today’s archaeologists.

South Khorasan is home to many historical and natural attractions, such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond Desert. It is also known for its famous rugs as well as its saffron and barberry, which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Cemeteries as tourist attraction: Ibn Babawayh



From Page 1 ► The cemetery bears the name of Ibn Babawayh, an Islamic theologian and the author of one of the “Four Books,” which serve as the cornerstones of Twelver Shia doctrine.

Ibn Babawayh, also known as Shaikh Saduq, was born in Khorasan, northeast Iran, in 923 CE, and passed away in Ray in 991 CE. His tomb, which bears eight pillars decorated with beige and blue tiles, is a place of pilgrimage

for Muslims.

The cemetery, which was initially constructed during the rule of the Samanids (819–999), has been destroyed numerous times and for a variety of reasons, including the Mongol invasion (1219–1221 CE), several civil wars, and also natural disasters.

The construction of the current cemetery, which took place during the Qajar era, has a fascinating history. According to

Haj Mohammad Baqer Khansari in a book titled “Rozat al-Janat”, the old cemetery was once destroyed by heavy floodings.

Narratives say, the time when workers arrived to repair the damage, they discovered an intact corpse and an inscription in the mausoleum cellar. The mausoleum was constructed 800 years ago, based on the inscription. By the way, when word of the discovery of an intact corpse in Shaikh Saduq’s

mausoleum reached the court, the king dispatched an envoy to the location to verify the veracity of the report.

One of the Parthian empire’s capital cities, Rey, was conquered by Muslim Arabs in 641 CE. It was one of the Parthian empire’s capital cities (third century BC–first century CE). The city grew in importance during the rule of the Muslim caliph al-Mahdi in the eighth century, eventually surpassing Damascus and Baghdad as the most important cities in western Asia.

According to Britannica, Islamic writers described it as a city of extraordinary beauty, built largely of fired brick and brilliantly ornamented with blue faience (glazed earthenware). It continued to be an important city and was briefly a capital under the rule of the Seljuks, but in the 12th century, it was weakened by the fierce quarrels of rival religious sects. In 1220, the city was almost destroyed by the Mongols, and its inhabitants were massacred. Most of the survivors of the massacre moved to nearby Tehran, and the deserted remnants of Rey soon fell into complete ruin.

\$11m funding to boost tourism facilities in UNESCO-designated Bisotun

TEHRAN – Nearly \$11m will be invested by the private sector to boost tourism facilities across the UNESCO-designated Bisotun, which embraces magnificent masterpieces of Achaemenid Persians.

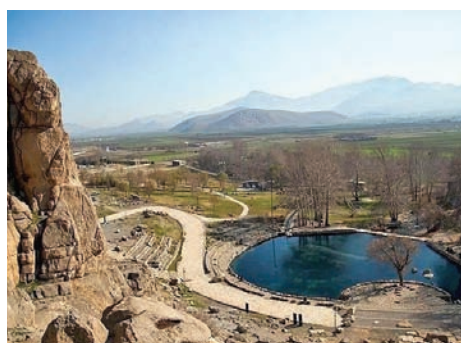
The private sector has agreed to invest 4.5 trillion rials (\$11. million) in Bisotun to upgrade its tourism facilities, Kermanshah province’s tourism chief said on Tuesday.

Supervised by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the investment scheme is expected to commence in the near future, IRNA quoted Mohammadreza Soheili as saying on Monday.

The official believes that if money is invested in building new facilities and developing infrastructure, the number of tourists visiting this World Heritage site annually, which is currently around 250,000, is anticipated to triple.

At the base of the Zagros Mountains, approximately 30 kilometers from Kermanshah, Bisotun was added to UNESCO’s World Heritage List on July 13, 2006.

The largest bas-relief and cuneiform inscription were commissioned by Darius the Great soon after he came to rule the Persian Empire in 521 BC,



and they serve as the site’s main monument.

The gigantic bas-relief shows Darius stepping on the chest of a figure who is lying on his back before the Achaemenid king while holding a bow as a symbol of his authority. The figure is said to be a representation of Gaumata, a pretender to the throne and Median magus, whose death paved the way for Darius’ ascent to power.

There are about 1,200 lines of inscriptions below and around the bas-reliefs that describe the battles Darius fought in 521–520 BC against the governors who tried to sunder the Cyrus-found empire.

The inscription bears inscriptions in three

languages. The oldest is an Elamite text referring to legends describing the king and the rebellions. This is followed by a Babylonian version of similar legends. The last phase of the inscription is particularly important, as it is here that Darius introduced the Old Persian version of his res gestae (things done).

This is the only known monumental text of the Achaemenids to document the re-establishment of the empire by Darius I. It also bears witness to the interchange of influences in the development of monumental art and writing in the region of the Persian Empire. There are also remains from the Median period (8th to 7th centuries BC) as well as from the Achaemenid (6th to 4th centuries BC) and post-Achaemenid periods.

According to the UN cultural body, Bisotun bears outstanding testimony to the important interchange of human values in the development of monumental art and writing, reflecting ancient traditions in monumental bas-reliefs.

The Bisotun region contains artifacts dating from prehistoric times to the Median and Achaemenid eras and was on the ancient trade route connecting the Iranian high plateau with Mesopotamia.

Lorestan receives some 3,000 Iraqi tourists every day

TEHRAN – A daily average of 3,000 Iraqi tourists travel to the border of the western Iranian province of Lorestan, the Iranian consul general in Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan has said.

An estimated 2,500 to 3,000 Iraqi tourists visit Lorestan for health, religious and cultural tourism, CHTN quoted Nasrollah Rashnudi as saying on Wednesday.

This volume represents a great potential for developing tourism and even strengthening local craft markets, the official added.

Last January, Mehr reported that some 1.47m foreign nationals visited Iran from the beginning of the last Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021) to January 1, a span

most of which was subject to severe travel bans due to coronavirus.

Of the number, 635, 862 foreign nationals arrived in Iran as of mid-October when the Islamic Republic started issuance of tourist visas after a 20-month hiatus, the report added.

Citizens from Iraq and Afghanistan were the main source of tourism for Iran from October 23 to December 22, 2021.

Over the past couple of years, neighboring Iraq has been one of Iran’s most important markets for tourism and pilgrimage. In January, the deputy tourism chief Ali-Asghar Shalbafian announced that Iran had renewed arrangements to facilitate travels for Iraqi nationals. “For Iraqi

tourists visiting Iran, a new system has been implemented to ensure their safety and comfort.”

In 2021, the two neighbors agreed to abolish visa requirements for air travelers.

The announcement came after President Ebrahim Raisi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi met in Tehran, discussing various issues including visa waiver, a joint railway project, and increasing the level of trade.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, Iraqi constituted Iran’s largest source of tourists. In return, hundreds of thousands of Iranian pilgrims head for the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala each year to attend the Arbreen pilgrimage,

aka the Arbreen trek, to mark an end to the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Lorestan, which is a region of raw beauty, was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan Bronzes are noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs.

Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid dynasties.

Ardabil to host intl. nomad festival

TEHRAN – The northwestern province of Ardabil is scheduled to host an international festival dedicated to nomads and the nomadic lifestyle in May, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

ECO has added the festival of nomads and conference on hydrotherapy and health tourism to its annual calendar, bringing these two programs to an international level in 2023, Yahya Najargabel explained on Wednesday.

It has been a tradition to hold the nomad festival every May accompanied by the Moghan plain nomads, and this year the event will be held internationally, the official added.

Ardabil’s potential in tourism, as well as tourists’

interest in visiting this province, has created the need for better infrastructure and investments in this field, he explained.

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

Last April, the tourism authorities of the province announced that they had developed extensive plans to draw more tourists during the winter to the province and make it the winter tourism hub of the country.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardabil is well known for having abundant natural beauty, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade

tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and the Shrine Ensemble.

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

Heaven for nomadic people, Ardabil is home to some nomadic tent hotels, which are reportedly the first of their kind in the country.

The Islamic Republic seeks to boost ethnic tourism or tribe tourism in which holidaymakers may even stay with a nomadic family or enjoy an independent stay.

TEHRAN – The Iranian ambassador to Afghanistan, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, has urged the United Nations to help Iran provide better support for Afghan refugees.

He called for the UN to benefit from all of Iran's capacities to help the people of Afghanistan and increase regional cooperation in solving the economic, social, and educational problems of Afghan people and refugees.

He made the remarks in a meeting on January 23 at the place of the embassy in Kabul with Ms. Roza Otunbayeva, the special representative for Afghanistan and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

During the meeting, the Iranian official emphasized the need for boosting cooperation between the United Nations and Iran, which hosts more than 5 million Afghan refugees.

For over four decades, Iran has been hosting one of the largest and most protracted refugee situations in the world and has provided asylum to refugees, mostly from Afghanistan.

The recent fast-paced turn of events in Afghanistan has the potential to create additional population movements; internally displacing families and potentially driving them to neighboring countries to seek refuge.

However, with the continued allocation of insufficient international aid, it is very difficult and almost impossible for the Islamic Republic to continue providing services to refugees and unauthorized foreign nationals, the Iranian delegation at the 73rd meeting of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner for Refugees, said in October.

Filippo Grandi, the High Commissioner for Refugees, while



Envoy urges UN to assist Iran in supporting Afghan refugees

thanking Iran for its long-term measures in supporting Afghan refugees, stressed the need to increase international support for Iran and implement sustainable solutions, including the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons.

Services to refugees appreciable

Despite the sanctions and economic pressures, Iran continues its comprehensive policy of providing services to refugees, and this is appreciable, UNHCR's Officer in Charge, Inna Gladkova, said in November 2022.

The best solution and the most stable support system for refugees is that have access to schools and education just like Iranian nationals, she stated, IRNA reported.

Iran has taken effective and continuous measures to include

all refugees, and the UNHCR also declares its readiness to fulfill its obligations, she noted.

In the provision of educational services, there are different aspects, she said, adding, school construction, equipping schools, providing teachers and human resources, and providing quality educational services are the main and important work done by the Ministry of Education.

There are many needs in the field of education, but in the last 10 years, the High Commissioner for Refugees has built only 95 schools in Iran, but the need is definitely more than this, she also said.

In June 2022, Maha Kashour, head of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Mashhad, said Iran's efforts and activities in the last 40 years have

been commendable to refugees, and in the past year, after the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, has reached its peak.

Iran has so far been able to provide decent services to refugees in the fields of health, livelihood, and vocational training in cooperation with UNHCR, she noted.

The Ministry of Interior has announced to the Ministry of Education a list of 200,000 Afghan children who have the conditions to study in Iranian schools.

In the current school year which began on September 23, about 300,000 new foreign students enrolled in Iranian schools.

For the time being, 560,000 foreign students are studying in schools across the country, Education Minister Yousef Nouri has said.



IFRC appreciates IRCS

In May 2022, Francesco Rocca, head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), said the Iranian Red Crescent Society has done its best in providing support to refugees despite U.S. sanctions and international pressures.

"We are well aware that the Government of the Islamic Republic, despite sanctions and political pressures, has never stopped supporting the Red Crescent Society and is one of the few governments that has always had the full support of the Society," Rocca stated.

Expanding cooperation with the IRCS is one of the policies and priorities of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and today we proudly announce that Iran, as the educational hub of this international organization, is transferring its experiences to other countries and aid workers worldwide, he highlighted.

change is one of the most important and influential issues and challenges for international health, peace, and security."

The Iranian Red Crescent Society considers dealing with climate change as its priority because the negative impact of this phenomenon has been manifested in Iran in the form of drought, sudden floods, serious lack of water resources, migration, and the emergence of fine dust, Kolivand highlighted.

Negative effect of sanctions

The Iranian Red Crescent Society is the largest humanitarian organization in Iran, which is responsible for dealing with disasters, and is the only organization that is obligated to send aid and dispatch relief and treatment agents to other countries, he said.

"Unfortunately, we see that the cruel sanctions have affected the humanitarian activities of the Red Crescent Society and prevented the efficient and effective performance of its duties and obligations at the national and international levels," he lamented.

Among the cases of the effect of sanctions, we can mention the non-cooperation of banks to transfer and move money, import medicine and medical equipment, the impossibility of buying and transferring relief items and equipment such as life detectors, helicopters, and related equipment for air rescue, he explained.

IRCS elaborates on activities to combat climate change

From page 1 ► Referring to the activities done to fight climate change, he said: "Establishing a climate change center for the Red Crescent Society, preparing a 2-year action plan for the Red Crescent Society to deal with the effects of climate change, concluding a memorandum of understanding with governmental and non-governmental organizations and bodies and universities, and offering training courses to the public were among the activities."

Moreover, the exchange of information and experiences between the Iranian Red Crescent Society and the red cross red crescent societies of the Middle East and North Africa region has been carried out in this regard, he noted.

He went on to say that the duties of the IRCS at the national and international levels include providing relief services during natural disasters and accidents, providing first aid, offering education and training services to people for dealing with disasters, sending relief and medical forces to other countries if necessary, providing medicine, medical devices and equipment for rehabilitation, and promoting the participation of youth and volunteers in related activities.

Pointing out that climate change alone can be considered the biggest international threat, and the whole world is involved in its formation, he added: "In the current century, climate

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

COVID-19 lockdown moves most cities out of "red" zone

Strict COVID-19 restrictions which took effect on October 26 have caused 87 out of 89 infected cities to get out of the high-risk "red" zone.

The National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control started strict restrictions in 43 cities that had the highest rate of infection in the country. Ten days later, decisions were made to set new limitations on highly-affected areas for another 10 days, through which 46 cities undergone restrictions.

The plan divided cities into three levels of alert, namely red, orange, and yellow.

All of the cities, except for two, are now out of the red condition and have turned orange or yellow so that the hospitalization rate has decreased, said Alireza Raeisi, the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control spokesman, expressing hope that the death toll will also drop within two to three weeks.

In some 160 cities and towns that were on the highest alert, the disease prevalence has begun to decrease in about 145 cities. And the remaining 15 cities will also experience a downward trend this week, he explained.

اعمال محدودیت ها اکثر شهرها را از وضعیت قرمز خارج کرد

علیرضا رئیسی، سخنگوی ستاد ملی مقابله با کرونا گفت: از ۸۹ شهری که از پنجم آبان محدودیت‌های کرونایی در آنها اعمال شده است، ۸۷ شهر از وضعیت قرمز خارج شده اند.

او با اشاره به محدودیت های کرونایی در ۸۹ شهری که (از ۵ آبان در ۴۳ شهر و از ۱۴ آبان در ۴۶ شهر) اعمال شده است، گفت: از این تعداد به جز دو شهر همه شهرها از حالت قرمز خارج و به نارنجی یا زرد تبدیل شده اند. با توجه به ورودی بیمارستان ها و اینکه میزان بستری هم کاهش یافته است امیدواریم روند فوتی ها هم تا حدود دو تا سه هفته دیگر آثار خود را نشان دهد و روند کاهشی پیدا کند.

وی اعلام کرد: اکنون در ۱۶۰ شهر و شهرستان که قرمز رنگ بودند در حدود ۱۴۵ شهر روند کاهش بیماری آغاز شده است. در ۱۵ شهر باقیمانده هم در همین هفته این روند کاهشی شروع خواهد شد.

SOCIETY

JANUARY 26, 2023

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Tehran hosts 3rd Persian Medicine Festival

TEHRAN – The 3rd Persian Medicine Festival was held in Tehran on Tuesday with the main goal of identifying and supporting top scientists and innovators in the health sector.

The event also aimed to create a platform for greater productivity from the research achievements, expansion of knowledge-based markets, and multilateral interaction between educational, research, and therapeutic centers.

"Persian medicine; the path of progress and scientific innovation" was the motto of the festival, in line with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's designation of the current Iranian year (March 2022-March 2023) as "The Year of Production: Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating".

Addressing the opening ceremony, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said Persian medicine is a precious heritage of our ancestors.

Persian medicine has a history of thousands of years and it creates an identity for us and it is valuable to pay attention to it, he added.

Persian medicine is one of the issues that gives us an identity and shows us that when the westerners had none, we had medicine and solved problems, Einollahi noted.

Persian medicine pays attention to nutrition and disease prevention, which has not been paid attention to in other medicines, he said, adding: "We were able to place Persian medicine as one of the most important levels of science in the world, and we rank fourth in this field."

Persian medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

It is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in the concept of four senses of humor: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Sa-



fra'), and black bile (Sauda'). The concept of the four senses of humor is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna in an elaborate medical system.

So far, about 30,000 plant species have been identified in the world, with Iran's share of about 8,000 species which is more than the whole of species found in Europe.

Some 2,300 species of medicinal plants have been identified in the country, accounting for one-third of the medicines used in human societies.

The per capita consumption of medicinal plants in Iran is about one kilogram of dried plants, in other words, 83,000 tons of medicinal plants worth 1.2 trillion rials (around \$4 million) are consumed in the country, while in Europe this amount is 900 grams and in the United States is 2.5 kilograms.

The export revenue of medicinal plants is estimated at \$700 million, the Vice President for Science and Technology, Rouhollah Dehghani, has said.

Over 17,000 books have so far been published about Persian traditional medicine, which has been recognized by the World Health Organization, she noted.

RAMSAR SITES IN IRAN

Part 51

An irrigation scheme along the Karun River to the north has already reduced the inflow of freshwater into the marshes, and some of the area has been degraded to sterile silt flats by soil deterioration resulting from poorly managed irrigation schemes in the past.

Some oil pollution has been reported on the beaches around Bandar Shahpur in the southeast. Illegal hunting occurs throughout the area, and there is little control by Department of the Environment personnel.

Shadegan Marshes are situated in a military zone close to the border with Iraq. The Iranian National Reports of 1987 and 1990 indicated that the wetlands in the border areas had been severely polluted by bombardments with chemical weapons during the Iran/Iraq war in the 1980s.

It was estimated that about 10% of Shadegan Marshes had been destroyed in that

way. The marshes may also have suffered some damage as a result of "acid rainfall".

Conservation measures taken

A wildlife refuge of 296,000 ha, encompassing all the main wetland areas and the coastal mudflats in the south, was established in 1972 and has remained unchanged since then.

Hunting is prohibited at the site. The site is placed on the Montreux Record because of the damage done during the Iran-Iraq war.

Conservation measures proposed

Harrington (1976b) proposed that several of the islands between the Arvand River and Cape Bahrgan in the southeast should be appended to the Shadegan wildlife refuge. Most important among these are Bune and Dara Islands.

Source: Ramsar.org

To be continued



Orange harvest in Mazandaran

Farmers in the northern province of Mazandaran are picking oranges at an orchard, on January 23, 2023.

There are about 97,000 hectares of orange orchards in Mazandaran, and it is expected that 2,800,000 tons of oranges will be harvested in the province this year.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Allah will cover up on the day of resurrection the defects (faults) of the one who covers up the faults of the others in this world.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:17 Evening: 17:44 Dawn: 5:42 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:08 (tomorrow)

Adab in Iran

Part 4

On the evidence of the Qabusnameh, which is essentially a recapitulation of Sassanid adab, more subjects can be added to the list, such as rules for going to bed, going to the hot baths, conducting battles, buying slaves, seeking the hand of a girl in marriage, picking friends, receiving and giving hospitality, behaving at meals, making jokes, practicing chivalry (javan-mardi or ayyari), judging horses, and many others.

Scattered in the Shahnameh and other Persian and Arabic works based on Pahlavi sources are copious data on the details of all these rules, e.g., the etiquette at meals from a Pahlavi source in the Ketab al-taj and in the Moruj of Masudi.

Three branches of Sassanid adab had great influence, namely dabiri, rhetoric (sokhanvari, Arabic balagha), and manners.

The importance of dabiri and the high standing of dabirs (secretaries) in the Sassanid period, and their continuing role in the Islamic period, do not need exposition here.

According to the Shahnameh, the secretary should be well versed in rhetoric and calligraphy, be able to write in short but pithy sentences, be mentally alert, learned, acute, and receptive, and morally patient, perseverant, truthful, reticent, loyal, uncorrupt, abstemious, and cheerful.

The secretarial qualifications enumerated in chapter 39 of the Qabusnameh and the first discourse of Nezami Aruzi's Chahar maqala roughly correspond with the descriptions in the Shahnameh; in other Persian and Arabic writings about the secretarial profession, they reappear with more details and with anecdotal embellishments which in many cases are derived from stories in Pahlavi books.

As regards the art of composition and rhetoric, the Iranians ideally gave weight to meaning and were wary of verbal ornamentation which might distract the reader or hearer from the subject.

The rules of rhetoric in the Shahnameh, reflecting the style of writing in the 10th century, are as follows: Speech should be brief and meaningful and speakers should use the shortest possible words.

Khosrow Parviz's advice to his secretary is "few words and much meaning". Short words (sakhon-e kutah) in the Shahnameh mean conciseness, which is good, and long words (sakhon-e deraz) mean prolixity (etnab), which is bad.

The desire for correspondence (barabari, mosawat) between words and meanings is everywhere apparent. In another passage it is stated that speech should not be bound (basta), i.e., complicated, but light (sabok), i.e., simple and immediately intelligible, and furthermore that it should not be crude (kham) and mixed with the color and perfume (rang o bu) of verbal adornments.

According to the Shahnameh, there are five essential points in rhetoric: (1) The words must be beneficial such that they are incapable of causing harm or pain to the hearers; (2) the words must be in proportion, i.e. measured; (3) the speaker must have a sense of occasion and a quick wit; (4) the speaker, if telling a story,

whether old or new, must tell it in verse (peyvasta; this word, which means joined, is used here and in many other passages of the Shahnameh with the connotation of versified, Ar. manzum, as opposed to parakandeh, Ar. mansur, which means scattered and denotes prose;) (5) the speaker must have a warm tongue and a calm, soft voice.

The fourth point, which predicates the superiority of verse over prose, was to become a leitmotiv of Persian literature.

Among Ferdowsi's expressions of this opinion are his remark that the Shahnameh of Abu Mansur failed to please its readers because it was in prose and his favorable comment on the story of Kalila o Demna which Rudaki had put into verse.

Azraqi of Herat (11th cent.) likens a story in prose to a scrap and one in verse to a gem; Nezami describes prose as copper, verse as silver and gold; Ferdowsi compares an unversified story to unstrung pearls and vice versa; and Onsor al-ma'ali calls prose the subjects, verse the king.

From the Shahnameh's assertion of the superiority of verse over prose, it can be safely inferred that this opinion stemmed from Pahlavi literature and consequently that Pahlavi literature had contained many versified stories or narratives.

Moreover the fact that much of the first outpour of New Persian poetry was in the form of versified narratives, such as the Shahnameh of Masudi of Marv, the Kalila o Demna and Sendbad-nama of Rudaki, and the Afarin-nama of Abu Shakur Balkhi, indicates continuance of a tradition of versification rather than innovative change.

Two Shu'ubites , Aban Laheqi (d. 815-16) and Abu Jafar Ahmad al-Balazori (d. 892), translated Iranian romances from Pahlavi into Arabic mozdawej (= masnavi) verse, and like the Persian poets they must have taken over the method of narrative verse composition from Pahlavi literature, because versified narratives had never been—and never were to become—customary in Arabic poetry.

The Arab author Ebn al-Asir (d. 1239) criticizes this defect of Arabic literature at the end of his Ketab al-masal al-sa'er, where he writes that in the field under discussion the Iranians are superior to the Arabs.

The Iranian poet writes a vivid and eloquent book made up entirely of versified stories and adventures. Ferdowsi's Shahnameh is the Quran of the Iranians because it is the most eloquent work in their language.

No such work exists in Arabic, even though the Arabic language has a wideness of range and multiplicity of techniques (fonun) and themes (aghraz), a fact which makes the Persian language, in comparison, "like a drop in the ocean."

The Shu'ubites thought that "persons aspiring to rhetorical skill, ability to choose the right words, and mastery of language should read the Ketab-e karvand, and those in need of rationality (aql), adab, knowledge of etiquette (al-elm be'l-marateb), warning lessons, good examples, noble sayings, and lofty thoughts should study the Siar al-moluk (i.e. the Khaday-namag)".

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued.

Syrian cultural delegation meets organizers of Iran's resistance film festival

From Page 1 ▶ "Films can play a key role in showing a true image of what is going on in Syria and the aftermath of the hostile acts of the West and Western media against the Syrian people," he added.

For his part, Hosseini said, "There is great potential for producing short and feature films and documentaries, especially in resistance cinema."

"By combining and exploiting the potentials and capabilities of the two countries, we can produce quality works in the resistance cinema," he added.

Ghaffari said that the 17th edition of the International Resistance Film Festival will be held next year in the Iranian calendar and invited Syrian filmmakers to attend the event.

He called the festival "a permanent and dynamic cultural current of the Islamic world," and added, "This meeting could produce good results and blessings for Iranian and Syrian filmmakers."

This is the second time within the past six months that a Syrian cultural delegation has visited Iran.

Syrian Culture Minister Lubanah Mshaweh and a group of her aides visited Iran previously last September to discuss

A Syrian cultural delegation meets the organizers of Iran's International Resistance Film Festival in Tehran on January 24, 2023.

arrangements for an Iranian cultural week that subsequently was held in Damascus.

Mshaweh also held meetings with several Iranian officials, including Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) director Mohammad-Mekdi Imani.

She said that Syria is ready to team up with Iran on film projects, and added that her country is interested in learning from Iranian filmmakers' experiences.

There are many people in Syria that can speak Persian, Mshaweh said, and added that

Damascus University launched a department for the Persian language in 2008, which has taught many students.

She praised the Iranian Cultural Center in Syria for its great endeavors to promote the Persian language.

Kanoon celebrates Islamic Revolution anniversary by presenting 5 million books

Kanoon director Hamed Alamati attends a press conference to brief the media on the institute's programs for the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

TEHRAN – The Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon announced on Wednesday that will celebrate the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution by presenting children with five million books.

Iranian children honored at Kao environment painting contest

TEHRAN – Five Iranian children have won prizes at the 2022 Kao International Environment Painting Contest for Children in Japan.

Ahura Bakhtiari, Zahra Mozaffari, Zeinab Baqeri, Tarannom Sheikhsharifi and Bahar Rezaian are all members of Iran's Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon.

The contest is organized by Kao Corporation, a chemical and cosmetics company headquartered in Tokyo.

Nine-year-old Ahura was among the eight winners of the Kao Prize.

"It is quite interesting that the earth in the center is drawn beyond the common senses; the work is excellent in so far as expressing that the earth has feelings and emotions just like us," the jury said in their statement.

"The use of colors and techniques

A drawing by the 9-year-old Iranian boy Ahura Bakhtiari won a Kao Prize at the 2022 Kao International Environment Painting Contest for Children in Tokyo, Japan.

are also elaborate, and the texture and coloring leave us with a strong passion regarding the work; this work illustrates the message of striving to work on global environmental issues positively," the jury added.

Ten-year-old Zeinab's painting

"Pets" was honored with the Jury Sumiko Okubo special prize.

The jury said, "The vivid orange color is impressive and has an impact. The large spider drawn in the foreground is appealing, and the perspective is expressed well. The painting evokes an atmosphere by a pure expression based on the painter's keen observation of elements in everyday life."

"I Feed My Birds" by 6-year-old Tarannom won the Jury Kei Matsushita special prize.

"This work utilizes each individual color without mixing or blurring them. It expresses a message for the future, encouraging us to respect the individuality of each living thing while working to create the same world together," the jury asserted.

Bahar, an 11-year-old girl, won an Eco Friend Prize for her drawing "I Love Nature and I Love Trees".

"It is generally difficult to depict nighttime scenes, however, this work expresses well the smell of trees and marshmallows roasting in the bonfire, and the cold night air under the moon; expression in the work is excellent, such as depicting of the darkness and people's face lightened by the bonfire," the jury said in its comment.

Eight-year-old Zahra was also awarded an Eco Friend Prize.

"There are still many issues in the world that cannot be solved immediately; even so, the painter expresses an earnest wish that every living thing holds each other's hand and builds a peaceful world; it is remarkable for them to be expressed so purely as the painter's honest wish through the eyes of a child," the jury said.

Woraphitcha Phuangprakhon from Thailand won the Planet Earth Grand Prix at the contest.

Global experts' studies on AI impacts on human future published in Persian

TEHRAN – "The Age of AI: And Our Human Future" by Henry A. Kissinger, Eric Schmidt and Daniel Huttenlocher has been published in Persian by Qoqnus.

Hamidreza Bijani is the translator of the book, which was originally published in 2021.

Three of the world's most accomplished and deep thinkers come together to explore artificial intelligence (AI) and the way it is transforming human society and what this technology means for us all.

An AI learned to win chess by making moves human grandmasters had never conceived. Another AI discovered a new antibiotic by analyzing molecular properties human scientists

did not understand.

Now, AI-powered jets are defeating experienced human pilots in simulated dogfights. AI is coming online in searching, streaming, medicine, education and many other fields, and, in so doing, transforming how humans are experiencing reality.

In "The Age of AI", three leading thinkers have come together to consider how AI will change our relationships with knowledge, politics and the societies in which we live.

The book is an essential roadmap to our present and our future, an era unlike any that has come before.

A copy of the Persian edition of "The Age of AI".