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Congratulation on 44th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran

Interview

Moves against Iran stem from failure to counter its allies: expert ▶ Page 3

22nd of Bahman, Show of Unity

▶ Page 3



Op-ed **The Islamic Revolution at 44**

By Yuram Abdullah Weiler

"The tyrannies, transgressions and arrogance of Alexanders and Genghises which in the past they perpetrated by force, nowadays the powerful and civilized democracies of the world collectively impose on the weaker nations."— Allamah Seyyed Mohammad Hosayn Tabataba'i

Iran has suffered egregiously from a pathologically-driven, violent and hegemonic U.S. foreign policy. From the 1953 CIA-engineered coup overthrowing the government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, up to the 1979 victory of the Islamic Revolution, Washington effectively ruled Iran through the autocrat, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. After the Islamic Revolution ousted its puppet ruler, the U.S. has sought revenge incessantly in the name of western secular democracy, yet for 44 years the Islamic Republic has thwarted all attempts to impose this capitalist contagion. ▶ Page 2

Op-ed **Such ridiculous panic over a darn balloon!**

By Martin Love

A rather large Chinese weather balloon drifted over the U.S. this past week. The Chinese really had no control over where it would go exactly. It could as easily flown over southern Canada and wound up over Nova Scotia.

This drift is quite normal however novel the incident was because winds high aloft usually flow from west to east. Washington called the big white balloon a dastardly effort to spy on the U.S. by the Chinese. One might readily suppose it was spying on the weather over the U.S., hit in recent days by an Arctic mass of very cold air said to mimic the temperatures seen on the planet Mars, a planet by the way named after the "god" of war. But in any case, the U.S. government went into a panic as the balloon drifted south eastwards over my home state, North Carolina, and the military finally ▶ Page 5

Interview

Freestyle team technical manager lauds wrestlers in Zagreb

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN - Mohsen Kaveh, technical manager of Iran men's freestyle wrestling, is satisfied with the results of the team at the 2023 Grand Prix Zagreb Open.

Iran finished in second place at the competitions in Croatia. The U.S. secured the team championship with 174 points. Iran came in second with ▶ Page 3

440 industrial projects being inaugurated during Ten-Day Dawn

TEHRAN - Some 440 industrial projects are going operational in Iran during the Ten-Day Dawn (February 1-11), which marks the 44th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Baradaran announced.

According to Baradaran, seven of the mentioned projects worth 10 trillion rials (about \$25.2 million) are going to be inaugurated in Khuzestan Province which create direct job opportunities for over 600 people in this province, IRIB reported.

Regarding the supportive measures, the official said: "These measures are being taken in the industrial estates and are in the form of the allocation of land and suitable infrastructures, which there is a growing trend in this field, regarding facilities and provision of primary resources, especially in the field of petrochemical, chemical and metal products."

"We have this promise for the owners of the industry that there will be no price increase in the cost of production in the coming months", the deputy minister further stated.

As announced by the head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (SIPO), 1,191 idle production units ▶ Page 4



U.S. sanctions increasing Syria quake deaths

U.S. sanctions are having a direct impact on a rising death toll from the devastating earthquake in Syria.

At times of natural disasters, countries actually set aside differences with the foes and extend a helping humanitarian hand.

But the United States and its Western allies have refused to assist the Syrian government even as it faces one of the worst natural disasters in more than a century. ▶ Page 5

Medical tourism: Kerman calls to boost ties with Muscat

TEHRAN - Iran's Kerman province and Muscat have agreed to draw a roadmap for widening ties in the field of health and medical tourism.

Kerman University of Medical Sciences plans to ink a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Omani counterparts to expand cooperation in the medical tourism sector in the near future, the president of the university said on Wednesday.

Moreover, Kerman University hopes to attract more Omani medical students through the MOU, Mehdi Ahmadijad stated.

Currently, this university has 189 foreign students studying in the medical departments, mostly in medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, and nursing, he added.

According to available data, Iran hosts an average of one million medical tourists each year.

"About one million medical tourists, mainly from the neighboring countries, arrive in Iran annually," Mohammadreza Tarjoman, who presides over the Health Ministry's tourism office, said last April.

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

Eagle 44 is a unique military base in the world

Yesterday, Iran unveiled its newest and most up-to-date defense fortifications, which was an underground air base, the Iran newspaper writes. ▶ Page 2

Neighbors alone unable to assure long-term peace in Afghanistan: Iran

TEHRAN- Iran's senior security official has cautioned that "transregional intervention" in Afghanistan can spread unrest to other nations in the region.

Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), spoke on Wednesday at the fifth session of the regional security conference in Moscow and criticized the U.S. for continuing to use Afghanistan as a platform to support terrorism and insecurity.

"Transregional intervention should not be permitted to spell insecurity, ▶ Page 2

Raisi authorizes Iran SCO membership

TEHRAN- President Ebrahim Raisi sent a directive to the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday to put the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) law into effect.

The decision to begin recognizing Iran as a full member of the SCO was announced at the 21st summit of the SCO leaders held in the capital of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, in September 2021.

The legislation for Iran's SCO membership was overwhelmingly adopted by the Iranian parliament in November 2022.

Iran, Russian sign MOU to enhance media ties

TEHRAN - A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was inked between Iran and Russia on Tuesday to boost ties on media issues.

The MOU was signed by the Deputy Minister of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of Russia, Bella Cherkosova, and Iran's Deputy Culture Minister for Press Affairs, Farshad Mahdipur, in Tehran.

Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili also was in attendance at the meeting with a Russian media delegation headed by Cherkosova, the culture ministry announced. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

Eagle 44 is a unique military base in the world

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

from page 1 ▶ The publication writes there are a few points about the military base: First, its unveiling carries an important message for some regional and extra-regional actors who have been saber-rattling for some time by changing their tune.

Second, pursuing a defense policy based on civil defense, which for years not only minimizes the costs to protect sensitive and military centers but also leads to compliance with the principle of surprise in operations.

The third point is a distinctive feature of the military installation compared to similar bases in the world, which shows the technical capability of the engineers who built it.

Etelaat: Do not leave the earthquake to God

In a commentary, Etelaat refers to the huge earthquake in Turkey and Syria and warns about the occurrence of a similar incident in Iran.

It also refers to the recent Khoi earthquake and says: The lesson that these events should teach us is not to allow irreparable damage in natural disasters.

The daily also mentions the possibility of an earthquake in Tehran and writes: We all know the unbelievable danger of a strong earthquake in the capital, and we just say God forbid and ask God that this never happens. But it is not wise to forget the possibility or leave everything to God.

The newspaper points how the Japanese have dealt with the earthquake problem over the past few decades and writes: For example, in the earthquake-prone country of Japan, even the occurrence of strong earthquakes should be accompanied by minimal losses and damages.

It is hoped that the recent events will make us think about planning for a better and safer future. God willing.

Arman-e-Melli: Grossi's important journey

In an op-ed in Arman-e-Melli, political analyst Hassan Beheshtipour refers to the difference between Iran and the IAEA regarding the change to the interconnection between two clusters of centrifuges in Fordow and the Western reaction to it and writes: It seems that the misunderstanding will be cleared up with Mr. Grossi's visit to Iran to the extent that we can find answers to the IAEA's three questions.

An agreement may be made with the IAEA. Although it seems unlikely that Iran will immediately answer the queries in the same meeting with Grossi, the two sides can reach a solution to answer the questions gradually or based on a specific schedule.

If the IAEA's questions are answered, it seems that a new round of negotiations will be formed.

The U.S. was waiting for the results of the protests in Iran, and when it noticed that the unrest did not get to a result, Washington is now more willing to talk.

If we reach a proper solution during Mr. Grossi's visit to Tehran, we can both prevent the approval of a new resolution in the Board of Governors and have a new start in the dialogue with the Europeans and Americans.

Javan: Eagle 44, Iran's bargaining chip in

Panama greenlights Iranian vessels to cross canal

TEHRAN- Panamanian authorities said on Tuesdays that Iranian navy ships will be permitted to transit the Panama Canal as long as they adhere to international standards.

The United States, which constructed the canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific seas at the beginning of the 20th century, would be enraged by an Iranian military presence.

Washington has cautioned that it is closely observing Tehran's operations in the Western hemisphere.

The Panama Canal stated that the waterway must "remain safe and open for the peaceful transit" as long as ships adhere to international safety standards, pay tolls, and do not engage in hostile acts.

This statement was made in reference to a 1977 international treaty that gave control of the canal to Panama and established its neutral status.

"Based on the regulations, the Panama Canal

the region

There were three developments in the military field in the last two months, namely the Zulfiqar 1401 military exercises and the unveiling of some achievements, the joint exercise between the U.S. and the Zionist regime which was an answer to Iran's, and the first underground air base called "Eagle 44."

Such moves by the army have a deterrent aspect above all because the strategy of the U.S. and the Zionist regime is usually complete destruction of the rival's military power in the first moments of the war (first strike, also known as preemptive strike) and the construction of bases like Eagle 44 will make their strategy ineffective. And for Iran, which has created underground cities for missiles, drones, and now fighters, it is a great advantage in any possible war.

Ham-Mihan: JCPOA is a hurdle to Tehran-Riyadh ties

Ham-Mihan examines the negotiations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and writes: In recent years, efforts have been made to re-establish diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and finally, the first round of talks began in September 2021 in Baghdad, and five rounds were held until April 2022.

The reopening of Iran's office in the secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Jeddah, and the return of the ambassadors of Kuwait and the UAE to Iran were among the achievements of these talks.

The date for the sixth round has not yet been determined.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al-Sudani recently asked his foreign minister to resume efforts to organize the sixth round of negotiations, but evidence indicates that Saudi Arabia considers the deadlock in negotiations to revive the JCPOA as an obstacle to resuming relations.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Ambiguity surrounding the JCPOA

Siasat-e-Rooz writes: The status of the JCPOA is unknown, there is no clear horizon for it, the revival of the agreement, which was limping from the beginning, needs the breath of the Messiah! Iran's nuclear agreement with 5+1 or, in other words, Iran and the U.S. deal had a lot of weaknesses from the very beginning.

The agreement was arranged in such a way that Iran was the only country obliged to comply.

Iran did not benefit from adhering to its commitments. However, the opposite party, especially the United States, not only did not fulfill its commitments, it also put under pressure and sanctions every country that cooperated economically with Iran.

Upon entering the White House, Trump finally announced his withdrawal from the nuclear agreement with Iran.

Although Europe has repeatedly said that the JCPOA is not dead, it has not done anything to revive it in practice. But Iran must be freed from dependence on the agreement that conditioned its economy.



Authority has the duty to authorize the passage of any vessel that satisfies all of these standards," it declared in a statement.

The arrival of Iranian Navy ships has been reported in local media.

According to the Panamanian daily La Estrella de Panama, Tehran intends to put its warships in the Panama Canal in order to increase its influence in Latin America.

Neighbors alone unable to assure long-term peace in Afghanistan: Iran

Shamkhani says regional instability exacerbated by transregional meddling in Afghanistan

from page 1 ▶ which has traditionally been the misery of Afghans, into a collective curse of all the people of the region," he warned.

The Iranian official also emphasized the importance of making significant steps to counter terrorist organizations in addition to strengthening stability and national unity in Afghanistan by enabling political engagement by the general population free from racial and ethnic prejudice.

Shamkhani emphasized Tehran's assistance to the Afghan people during the previous four decades, saying that despite the harsh, unjust, and unlawful sanctions on Iran by the U.S., the Islamic Republic still offers support and has hosted hundreds of thousands of Afghan immigrants and refugees.

The senior security official declared that "establishing security, peace, stability, and growth in Afghanistan is our fundamental



objective."

Then, he stressed the necessity for the caretaker Afghan government and other domestic players to take concrete action to break the cycle of instability and insecurity, emphasizing that joint efforts by Afghanistan's neighbors alone

could not assure long-term peace and stability in that nation.

Iran, Shamkhani continued, "believes that the imposition of any political system with resort to foreign interference or internal confrontation will result in nothing but the escalation of in-

stability and insecurity, without commenting on how an inclusive government should be formed in Afghanistan."

Shamkhani emphasized that the funds that have been frozen belong to the Afghan people and that their release is essential for the nation's rehabilitation. "Using these assets should not be hindered by harsh and illegitimate U.S. sanctions."

Afghanistan has been in upheaval since the United States abruptly withdrew all of its soldiers from the country in August 2021, allowing the Taliban, who previously controlled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, to retake power.

Since then, the U.S. and its allies have mostly ceased financial support to Afghanistan, fueling a refugee crisis that has severely impacted Afghanistan's neighbors.

The Biden administration has blocked billions of dollars belonging to the people of Afghanistan.

Islamic Revolution at 44: Thwarting capitalist contagion of western secular democracy

from page 1 ▶ What is this western secular democracy that the U.S. has wanted to force upon Iran, and how do we define "democracy?" Beyond the notion of governance that coexists with freedom, human rights and social justice, and legitimizes policies and laws by allowing public input, usually by free, public elections, "democracy" defies definition. One scholar divides "democracy" into five categories based on citizen involvement, ranging from participation by all citizens at the one extreme, to a group of leaders acting on behalf of citizens at the other. Likewise, democracies can be classified as "secular" or "religious," with the Islamic Republic included in the latter category, since Iranians do have a voice in public policy, which is based on interpretation of Islamic laws.

"Democracy does not come from a blueprint dreamed up in a foreign think tank, to be imposed from above by an occupying military regime," writes Professor Ali Mirsepassi of New York University. And yet the United States has repeatedly, albeit not always successfully, attempted to do precisely that in numerous countries around the world. Moreover, the U.S. blueprint for western secular democracy calls for instigating internal turmoil in a targeted country, or even resorting to military force, as was the case in Iraq, to topple the legitimate government and impose a U.S.-aligned, economically neoliberal client system. Rather than spreading democracy by any definition, the U.S. infects host countries with a capitalist contagion.

The U.S. is an antithetical choice for the standard bearer of democracy in the world, given its origins as a British colonial project, its lands usurped by wholesale slaughter of entire native populations, and its economic viability built upon the Atlantic slave trade. Far from being a de-

mocracy, the U.S. was controlled by elites from the start, with fifty-five wealthy white men responsible for the writing of the U.S. constitution, which enshrined the repugnant institution of slavery in the country's supreme law of the land. Most of the white settlers killed the Native peoples without hesitation, considering them to be a subhuman species. Few felt as did secretary of war Henry Knox that, due to such barbaric acts, a "black cloud of injustice and inhumanity will impend over our national character."

Today, this "black cloud of injustice and inhumanity" can be seen as a pervasive consequence of western secular democracy, which in truth is merely a moniker for a morally vacuous ideological veneer hiding the unprincipled system of unbridled neoliberal capitalism lurking underneath. In his seminal work, *Iqtisaduna (Our Economy)*, Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr commenting on the historical reality of what results when capitalism is imposed, writes, "Humanity has indeed suffered terribly at the hands of capitalist societies as a result of its moral emptiness, spiritual vacuum and its peculiar way of life." And yet this corrupt, capitalist contagion, under the rubric of freedom, human rights and democracy, is exactly what the U.S. desires to inflict upon other nations and societies, Iran in particular, using military force if need be.

The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 made clear to the European powers that the U.S. intended to exercise control over the former Spanish colonies of Latin and South America, which were then gaining their independence. By the 1890s, the U.S. had intervened three times in Nicaragua alone as well as in Argentina and Uruguay. By the time American officials were mulling over invading Cuba to overthrow Fidel Castro, the U.S. had intervened in 103 countries around the globe ac-

cording to a U.S. State Department report titled "Instances of the Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad 1798-1945." U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt wrote in 1897, "I should welcome almost any war, for I think this country needs one." It is likely that his view on war was shared by every subsequent U.S. president.

The binary mythology of a culturally white, manly and "Godly" U.S. in contrast to "backward," or at best, "developing" non-western countries has provided the impetus to spread western secular democracy around the world by means of its unrivaled economic and military power. Although the U.S. tended to view itself as distinctively different from the European colonial powers, the country adopted a neocolonialist foreign policy, which was increasingly justified during the cold war in terms of "good" versus "evil," with the latter term applied to those nations that dared to oppose Washington's dictates.

Guatemala is case study in U.S. neocolonialism marketed to the gullible American people as fending off communism by supporting "democracy." After being elected president in 1951, Jacobo Arbenz instituted a series of social reforms, including land redistribution, minimum wage and health care, which gave the impoverished Guatemalans hope. Interpreting Arbenz' progressive policies as "Soviet penetration in Latin America," the U.S. intervened and drove him from power by means of a CIA covert operation. The U.S.-backed military regime returned the redistributed land to the oligarchs and launched a reign of terror, which resulted in horrendous violence for two generations and the "disappearance" of some 200,000 Guatemalans.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Situation will become more complicated if JCPOA talks fail: IAEA chief

TEHRAN- The chief of the UN's nuclear watchdog has emphasized the necessity of restarting negotiations to save the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement, stating that failure to do so would result in a rapid deterioration of the situation.

Rafael Grossi stated on Tuesday that while progress is "not impossible," the diplomatic effort to revive the nuclear agreement, or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), "is not at its best position."

During a speech at the London-based Chatham House think tank, he said, "I want to be able to re-set, re-establish, and deepen that vital discourse. If we don't do that, things will only grow worse."

Grossi said that despite the deadlock in the negotiations, he was still hopeful for success.

"I wouldn't despair in the sense that the JCPOA cannot be revived," he added.

"I'm not saying yes JCPOA or no JCPOA. The important thing is to keep the non-proliferation rule

strongly in place, and so we will see," he said. "The next few weeks and months will be crucial to determine whether there is a possibility."

In other parts of his remarks, Grossi expressed sorrow at the disclosure of private information regarding Iran's Fordow nuclear plant and said that the agency lacked the tools necessary to control and monitor the situation.

Although he said that the agency takes "rigorous procedures" to preserve sensitive reports, he



called it "difficult" and "impossible" to manage the flow of information.

Iran rules out veracity of chemical watchdog report on Syria

TEHRAN- Iran's UN envoy has cast doubt on the authenticity of a report from the world chemical watchdog that charges Syria of a purported chemical assault against the citizens of the Arab nation in 2018.

Amir Saeed Iravani made the comments while speaking at the United Nations Security Council meeting on Tuesday.

The so-called Investigation and Identification Team of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) released the report around the end of last month saying there were "sensible reasons to suspect" that during the alleged event, two cylinders of poisonous gas were



dropped on the town of Douma, near Damascus, by at least one Syrian air force helicopter.

The charges have been vehemently refuted and blasted by Damascus as having no support from any logical or scientific evidence.

Ambassador Iravani said the report, like earlier ones produced by the OPCW about the purported event, is "based on illegal sources, lacks the requisite legal conclusion, and has been developed regardless of the Syrian government's findings."

He said that Syria was the target of a "premeditated scenario" put on by Western nations.

Iravani said, "The Islamic Republic is profoundly worried about the exploitation and politicization of the OPCW," adding that "such manipulation of the organization damaged its credibility."

Leader: 22nd of Bahman will be a show of unity

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh

TEHRAN – After declaring a massive amnesty for unrest prisoners and detainees, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, rolled out a strategy aiming to further boost internal cohesion vis-à-vis enemy plots.

Ayatollah Khamenei met Wednesday with hundreds of commanders and officers of the Iranian Army's Air Force and Air Defense on the eve of the 44th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The meeting was held to mark the 44th anniversary of the historic pledge of allegiance by a group of the Army's Homafar unit to Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic.

At the beginning of the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei reflected on the historic move, describing it as a key factor the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, according to a readout by khamenei.ir.

Ayatollah Khamenei called the 19th of Bahman event (the historic pledge of allegiance by Air force commanders), as an effective and morale-boosting prelude to the 22nd of Bahman that showed the greatness and dignity of the Iranian nation, saying, "The 22nd of Bahman is the peak of the proud movement of the Iranian nation and is reminiscent of the most glorious day in the history of the Iranian nation, because people gained their dignity, greatness and power on this day."

Emphasizing that the 22nd of Bahman must be kept alive in the future, just as it has been kept



alive so far, he added, "A living revolution is one that keeps its traditions and arrangements alive and, in every period, through knowing the needs and dangers, resolves those needs and neutralizes the dangers."

The Leader argued that the failure or return of harsh and bitter dictatorships in the great revolutions of the world, such as the French and Soviet revolutions, is because of the neglect of the main needs and dangers and preoccupation with personal issues and disputes.

"The Islamic Revolution protected itself from these plights. Of course, we have had problems as well, and the efforts and diagnoses were not the same in different administrations, but the general movement was towards the highest point and material and spiritual progress," he added.

The Leader then pointed out the plots of the enemy against the Islamic Republic, underlining that the main goal of the enemy

is to bring the Islamic Republic to its knees and destroy it by creating discord and mistrust within the country.

After diagnosing the disease, Ayatollah Khamenei explained the cure. He highlighted the need for maintaining unity in the face of the enemy's plot to sow discord and division.

Referring to national unity as an essential need, the Leader said, "National unity had a very important role in the victory and progress of the Revolution. And it is a barrier and a high wall in the face of enemy. Today, this unity should be strengthened as much as possible."

Ayatollah Khamenei said the Americans are determined to bring the Islamic Republic to its knees despite their public assertions to the contrary. Nearly 15 years ago, the Leader recounted, the then-U.S. president sent me a letter in which he openly said that 'we do not intend to change your system,' but we have had

reports at the time that they were hatching plots to destroy the Islamic Republic.

Explaining the reasons why ill-wishers seek to dismantle the Islamic Republic, the Leader said, "The Islamic Republic took this important, strategic, and beneficial region out of their control. In addition, it raised the issue of independence and not making ransoms as not only a political one but also as a belief and religious faith."

He also said that the enemy seeks to sow discord and division among the people. "Their strategy is creating discord because in that case, hope in future will be destroyed," he said.

Headed, "The most important task in the face of this evil plot is to maintain the strategy of unity, and by the grace of God, the 22nd of Bahman this year will be the manifestation of unity and national trust, and the people will clearly convey this message to all ill-wishers that their efforts to create distrust and destroy national unity has been neutralized."

During this meeting, the Leader condoled with "our disaster-stricken brothers in both Syria and Turkey" over a tragic earthquake that left thousands of dead in both countries. He asked Almighty God for mercy for the deceased and patience for the bereaved, saying, "We ourselves have been afflicted, [therefore] we know how hard it is when earthquake hits, when the loved ones of families are destroyed, how bitter it is, how bitter they feel."

Moves against Iran stem from failure to counter its allies: expert

By Sadegh Fereydounabadi

TEHRAN – Hussein al-Dirani, an Australia-based Lebanese political activist, says the relentless moves against Iran are a result of the foes' failure to counter the Islamic Republic's allies in the West Asia region.

Iran is "considered the backbone of the axis of resistance due to its capabilities culturally, militarily and materially. Therefore, we see the fierce global attack on the Islamic Republic directly after their failure to strike and defeat Iran's allies in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Palestine," al-Dirani, who is also the representative of the Ahl-ul-Bayt World Assembly to Australia, tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the full text of the interview:

Q: In your opinion, when did the axis of resistance dialogue take place and what is the state of the resistance movement today?

A: In my opinion, I do not call it the dialogue of the axis of resistance. Rather, I call it the emergence of the axis of resistance, which began with the victory of the Islamic Revolution, this victory we will celebrate the 44th anniversary of it in a month from now, and this blessed tree has grown until it has become a complete axis of resistance. As for the state of the resistance movement today, it is strong, solid, and fortified as it grows. In the region and in the world, where there is arrogance and oppression

Is there any need for unity in the resistance front in different countries?

Yes, and certainly there is a need for unity and cohesion in the resistance front in different countries, and considering any aggression on any of the fronts as an assault on all, and the enemy and its aggression cannot be deterred unless the resistance front is united and cohesive to deter the enemy so that it does not think of launching any aggression on any front from the axis of resistance fronts. They should be united as the countries of aggression are united and help each other in launching their aggression on the fronts of the axis of resistance.

What can be done to introduce the real face of this front to the world?

Introducing the true face of this front in the world requires a great and literal media effort, and the implementation of the instructions of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Sayid Ali Khamenei, in which he said, "No idea or elaborate thought will succeed in spreading and will not be believed in by the public, without

clarification and eloquent clarification." Therefore, we call on all those who have intellectual, cultural and media capabilities to use them to publicize the true face of this front in the world.

What steps are needed to make the front more effective?

Unity, readiness and the availability of capabilities that strengthen this front are among the most important elements that maintain this front.

Who do you think is the cornerstone of the resistance movement?

Without a doubt, the center of the resistance front today and in the past is the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is considered the backbone of the axis of resistance due to its capabilities culturally, militarily and materially. Therefore, we see the fierce global attack on the Islamic Republic directly after their failure to strike and defeat Iran's allies in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Palestine

What was the role of General Qassem Soleimani in the resistance front? And, how do you evaluate his character?

The martyr commander, Major General Qassem Soleimani, is the icon of the resistance front, and he is the main leader in building this front that is spread across the countries of the resistance axis, that is why he was targeted and assassinated in a cowardly terrorist way, the enemies thought that his assassination constituted a break for the resistance front.

As for my evaluation of his great personality, I and all the writers in the world are unable to show his great personality. He is the great mujahid, the genius thinker, the humble and spiritual person who worships God. He is the fruit of the heart of Imam Khomeini, and he is the eyes of the Imam, Sayyid Ali Khamenei, and he is an inspiration and lover of all the free people in the world.

How do you see the role of General Soleimani in the Palestinian resistance?

In the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, there are provisions confirming the support of the front of the oppressed, especially the Palestinian resistance, and since the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Zionist-Israeli embassy was closed during the time of the dictatorial Shah and that embassy was opened for the State of Palestine.

As for the role of the martyr General

Soleimani in the Palestinian resistance, it was important and prominent, and was very clear that all the leaders of the Palestinian resistance factions declared his role after his martyrdom, may God's peace be upon him. He used to provide the Palestinian resistance with all he could provide in terms of weapons, money and training to confront the terrorist Zionist occupation.

How do you see the role of General Soleimani in defeating ISIS and opponents of the resistance front?

The role of the martyr General Soleimani in destroying the terrorist organization ISIS was essential on all fronts and fields, he moved from one front to another and participated in the preparation, planning and attack so that he himself participated in the front lines with all courage and strength, and he participated in all the battles with the mujahideen between Syria and Iraq until The terrorist organization ISIS, which was supported by Western and Arab countries, led by America, Israel and Saudi Arabia, has been eliminated. The defeat of ISIS was a defeat for the organization and for the countries that supported them, and the assassination of the martyr Soleimani and his brother, the leader martyr Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis, is nothing but revenge for the defeat they suffered

In your opinion, what was the secret behind General Soleimani's popularity and legendary commandship?

In my opinion, the secret of the martyr Qassem Soleimani's popularity and his transformation into a legend in the region and the world is because of his sincerity, faith, intellect, courage, wisdom, leadership, humility, and generosity of morals, and he ended his life with the martyrdom that he wished and desired.

He was loved by everyone who knew him during his life, and all the free people of the world loved him after his martyrdom, after people were informed of his achievements, championships and victories.

So, we watched how millions of people in the world wept over his assassination and millions of his fans and lovers in the Islamic Republic of Iran mourned him, and many fair-minded people consider him to have saved them from the crimes of ISIS if they managed to control the region, he is the martyr and the savior

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

SPORTS

Freestyle team technical manager lauds wrestlers in Zagreb

From Page 1 ▶ 140 points, and Azerbaijan racked up 135 points for third.

"The wrestlers who participated in the tournament did their best," said Kaveh in his interview with Tehran Times.

"The Zagreb Open Ranking Series was not held at the best time. Many of our wrestlers had just started training to participate in the world championships and other international tournaments," he added.

The Iranian six-member team won four gold and two silver medals.

Kave said that the freestyle team were made up of wrestlers who did not participate in national championships, and most of them were medalists in the recent international tournaments.

Reza Atri (61kg), Ali Savadkouhi (79kg), Hassan Yazdani (86kg), and Amirhossein Zare won four gold medals.

"It was mentally important for Atari to win the gold medal and he needed to prove himself that the medal he won last year was not an accident," Kaveh added.

Yunes Emami in the 74kg and Amirali Azarpira in the 97kg seized two silver medals.

"Younes performed eye-catching matches to reach the final. However, in the final, he was far from his best. He had some flaws in his wrestling that are fixable by more training.

"In the 97 kg finals at the Zagreb Open, Kyle Snyder (USA) controls Azarpira. I think that Azarpira, who is a young talented wrestler, was impressed by his famous opponent and was thinking more about not giving points than getting points," said the technical manager of the Iran national team.

He said that the selection of wrestlers to participate in the important world tournaments depends on their success in the selection competitions, and this rule applies to everyone.

"To wear Iran national team jersey, every wrestler must follow the selection process and beat all his rivals in the domestic competitions. There is no exception in this case," Kaveh included.

Cheick Diabate scores brace as Persepolis beat Sanat Naft

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team forward Cheick Diabate scored a brace against Sanat Naft in Matchday 19 of Iran Professional League (IPL) on Wednesday.

Fardi Yosefi gave the hosts a lead with a header just eight minutes into the match but Diabate leveled the score in the 19th minute.

The Malian striker completed his brace two minutes into the second half.

Persepolis move to second place with 39 place. Sepahan lead the table due to a better goal difference.

Earlier in the day, Havadar suffered a home loss against Tractor in Tehran, Zob Ahan were held to a 1-1 draw by Malavan in Isfahan and Gol Gohar and Mes Kerman shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw.

Geraei world's 2nd best Greco-Roman wrestler

TEHRAN – Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Mohammadreza Geraei has become the world's second-best, UWW reported.

Geraei has previously been the world's number four Greco-Roman wrestler.

Now, he stands in second place, according to the latest ranking of the UWW.

Iran's Mohammadreza Geraei claimed a gold medal at the Men's Greco-Roman 67 kg in the 2020 Olympic Games.

Ex-Iran coach Blazevic passes away



TEHRAN – Miroslav "Ciro" Blazevic lost his battle with prostate cancer on Wednesday, two days before his 88th birthday.

His family and friends said Blazevic died at a Zagreb hospital.

The "coach of all coaches," as he was known in his home country of Croatia, led four national teams and several domestic and foreign clubs during his career.

He led Croatia to a third place finish at the 1998 World Cup.

He took charge of Iran coach midway through the 2002 World Cup qualification process but failed to book a place in the Finals after losing to Ireland Republic 2-1 on aggregate. The defeat that marked the end of Blazevic's time in Iran as his assistant Branko Ivankovic took over.

Ivankovic, his disciple, won a gold medal with Iran U23 in the 2002 Asian Games and claimed a bronze with Team Melli in the 2004 AFC Asian Cup.

Legendary Blazevic introduced new players to Iran football such as Rahman Rezaei, Javad Nekounam, and Ebrahim Mirzapour.

May he rest in peace.

Moussa Coulibaly parts ways with Foolad

TEHRAN – Malian defender Moussa Coulibaly parted company with Iranian football club Foolad.

The 29-year-old player joined Iranian team Esteghlal Khuzestan in 2013 and helped the team win Iran league for the first time in 2015.

Coulibaly has also played in Iranian teams Sepahan and Naft Masjed Soleyman.

He has parted ways with Foolad by mutual consent.

Coulibaly was a member of Foolad since 2019.

Foolad had parted ways with their South African winger Ayanda Patosi two weeks ago.

Iran handed tough group at 2022 IWBF World Championships

TEHRAN – Iran wheelchair basketball team are handed a tough group at the 2022 IWBF World Championships.

Team Melli are pitted in Group D against the U.S., Britain and Iraq.

Group A consists of Australia, Italy, Brazil and the UAE. Egypt, Germany, Canada and Thailand are in Group B and the Netherlands, Argentina, South Korea and France are drawn in Group C.

The 2022 IWBF World Championships will be held in Dubai, the UAE.

The competition was originally scheduled for Nov. 16 to 27, 2022 have been postponed until June 9 to 20, 2023.

Men's Draw:

Group A: Australia, Italy, Brazil, UAE

Group B: Egypt, Germany, Canada, Thailand

Group C: Netherlands, Argentina, Korea, France

Group D: US, Britain, Iran, Iraq

Women's Draw:

Group A: Algeria, US, Thailand, Germany, Japan, Netherlands

Group B: Brazil, Canada, China, Australia, Spain, Britain

Flowers, ornamental plants greenhouse inaugurated in Hamedan province



TEHRAN- A greenhouse for the production of flowers and ornamental plants was inaugurated in Bahar county in Hamedan province.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the mentioned greenhouse, Alireza Qasemi Farzad, the governor-general of Hamedan, said that the development of greenhouse cultivation is a top agenda of the governorate's activities,

as well as a prioritized plans of the province's Agriculture Department.

Stating that the Agriculture Department has prioritized water and soil productivity for agricultural development, the official noted that the development of greenhouse cultivation is one of the measures of the 13th government in line with water and soil productivity.

Iran has 17th place in the world in the production of flowers and ornamental plants, but it is ranked 107th in terms of export.

Considering the high potential and volume of import of flowers and ornamental plants by the Persian Gulf littoral states and Central Asian countries, in order to increase the share of Iran in the world markets, it is necessary to adopt effective and targeted policies in order to solve the problems in the way of production and export of flowers and ornamental plants.

Greenhouses being established in 180 hectares of land in Ardebil province

TEHRAN- Greenhouses are being established in 180 hectares of land in Ardebil province, in the northwest of Iran, according to a provincial official.

Nader Taqizadeh, the head of the province's Agriculture Department, also announced that 30,000 tons of products cultivated in the greenhouses of the province are exported.

As recently stated by the deputy agriculture minister, the development of greenhouse cultivation is a major policy of the Agriculture Ministry.

Safdar Niazi Shahraki reiterated that taking the country's water resources into account, one of the policies of the government is the development of greenhouse cultivation, and good facilities have been considered for such works.

In this regard, several projects have been defined and introduced to the banks, and as soon as the notification is made, the projects will receive facilities and their implementation will begin, the official added.

In recent years, the water crisis has caused serious challenges in Iran's agriculture sector.

To solve this problem, several solutions, including the implementation of pressurized irrigation project and greenhouse cultivation, have been emphasized by experts and officials in this sector.

Iranian Agriculture Ministry's Greenhouse Development Program is one of the priority projects of this ministry which aims at increasing productivity, efficiency, and water consumption management in the agriculture sector.

The program was approved in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (ended on March 20, 2017) under the framework of the National Resilient Economy Plan.

The development of the country's agricultural parks and greenhouses not only is going to create new job opportunities but also increases the country's non-oil exports and helps preserve the environment and the national water and soil resources.

Due to the growing need of the market for



flowers and ornamental plants, as well as off-season vegetables and summer crops, greenhouse cultivation has become one of the most profitable agricultural sectors today.

Cultivation in the controlled space of the greenhouse will have an average of 10 times higher yield per unit area than outdoor cultivation due to suitable environmental conditions.

For example, in the case of cucumber, each square meter in the greenhouse will have a production capacity of 20 kilograms of cucumber, while compared to outdoor production, the production capacity of one square meter of arable land will be much lower and about two kilograms.

Significant reduction in water consumption in modern greenhouses is in fact the major advantage of greenhouse cultivation.

In greenhouse cultivation, due to the closed environment, water loss through various evaporation ways is greatly reduced. Also, through mechanized irrigation methods such as irrigation canvas and irrigation tape, water consumption is minimized.

Increased control over pests, weeds and diseases is the other advantage of greenhouse cultivation.

In greenhouse cultivation, due to accurate monitoring and control of pests and diseases, especially the use of biological control methods and a sharp reduction in the use of chemical pesticides, we will see an increase in product quality, that will lead to the popularity of the product in the market and increase export capability.

Export from Golestan province rises 22% in 10 months yr/yr

TEHRAN- The value of export from Golestan province, in the northeast of Iran, rose 22 percent in the first ten 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, a provincial official announced.

Darvish-Ali Hassanzadeh, the director-general of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said that commodities worth \$181 million were exported from the province in the ten-month period of this year.

He said the goods were exported to 32 countries, among which Turkmenistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Bulgaria were the major ones.

As previously announced by Ebrahim Hosseini, the director-general of the province's customs department, the value of export from Golestan province rose 63 percent in the past Iranian

calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), from the preceding year.

Hosseini said that over 402,000 tons of commodities worth \$183.6 million were exported from the province in the previous year, indicating also 51 percent growth in terms of weight.

He named polystyrene, dairy products, dates, pistachios, cement, ceramic and tiles, and tomato paste as the major exported products, and Kazakhstan, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Bulgaria, Afghanistan and Romania as the main export destinations.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil exports rose 17.66 percent during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year, registering a new record high.

Iran 75% self-sufficient in home appliance production

TEHRAN - Head of Iranian home appliance sellers' union said more than 75 percent of the equipment and parts used for manufacturing various types of home appliances are produced domestically and only 25 percent including pumps and motors are imported, IRIB reported.

"In the field of audio and video equipment, however, 40 percent is domestically produced and 60 percent is supplied through imports," Akbar Pazouki said.

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

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

Considering the previous year's data, the manufacturing of the said products is expected to increase by 1.5 million sets (about



10 percent) in the current year.

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

The official mentioned some of his ministry's programs for supporting the domestic production of home appliances

in the country and increasing the self-sufficiency rate in this industry, saying: "This year, we are pursuing an increase in both quantity and quality of home appliance production; in this regard, new plans have been set by our office, so that the domestic production in this sector is increasing and new investments have been made."

He further mentioned the significant role of the home appliances industry in creating job opportunities in the country

and noted that there are currently 300,000 people working in this industry.

Shokrollahi also referred to the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's roadmap for the development of the country's home appliances industry and said: "The roadmap for this industry is been formulated in collaboration with the country's top think tanks and knowledge-based companies."

Manufacturing of home appliances in Iran increased 7.56 percent during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), from its previous year, according to the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry data.

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

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

440 industrial projects being inaugurated during Ten-Day Dawn

from page 1 ▶ have been revived in the industrial estates and zones of the country since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022).

Referring to the addition of many lands to industrial estates last year, Ali Rasoulia noted: "This year, we focused on providing infrastructure for these lands, and infrastructure was provided for 2,151 hectares of lands."

The official also announced that 2,170 idle production units have returned to the production cycle since the current government took office in August 2021.

According to Rasoulia, who is also the deputy industry, mining and trade minister, this approach is very important since the country has been dealing with the most severe international sanctions for many years; and while it relies more than ever on domestic production.



MAPNA to build 20 electric vehicle charging stations across Iran

TEHRAN - Iran's MAPNA group, which is a group of Iranian companies involved in implementing major industrial projects, has announced a plan for building 20 electric vehicle charging stations across Iran.

The company has invited interested private sector investors to participate in this pioneering project, IRNA reported.

The mentioned stations will be launched in public places such as shopping centers, public parking lots, accommodation centers such as hotels and guesthouses, intercity



resorts, entertainment centers, gas stations, and roadside parks.

Based on the model that Mapna has offered for the private sector participation in the project, the group

undertakes the provision of chargers, shelters, software and network systems, installation, commissioning, support, and guarantees, as well as operation and maintenance, while the private sector can provide the branching of electricity, internet, land and protection of the site.

Back in 2020, the former managing director of Mapna Group said the group was preparing a proposal package for the production of electric cars or to turn regular cars into electric ones.

"This equipment can be utilized

to electrify the cars being produced as well as the cars that have been produced and the owners request to electrify them," Abbas Aliabadi said.

Emphasizing the importance of developing the infrastructure for manufacturing electric vehicles in the country, the official said: "We are installing the charging stations for this type of cars in some cities and we are ready to develop this equipment across the country. Currently, these stations have been installed in Tehran and Mashhad and will be implemented in other cities in the near future."

Iran's deposits with foreign banks grow by 7%

TEHRAN - The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) has announced a seven-percent growth in Iran's deposits with foreign banks and financial institutions during the third quarter of 2022, as compared to the Q3 2021, IRNA reported.

According to the BIS's latest report, Iran's deposits with foreign banks and financial institutions at the end of the Q3 2022 were \$18.586 billion.

The Islamic Republic's deposits with foreign banks and financial institutions at the end of the Q3 2021 stood at \$17.447 billion.

As reported, of Iran's total deposits with foreign banks and financial institutions at the end of the third quarter of 2022, \$9.848 billion were with foreign banks and the rest with non-banking financial institutions.

Based on the BIS data, 40 percent of Iran's foreign deposits, equal to \$7.396 billion, were in the form of Euros in the mentioned period, the share of the dollar is \$270 million and equal to \$1.403 billion is also in the form of the Japanese yen.

According to the BIS report, Iran's commitments to foreign banks and financial institutions at

the end of the third quarter of 2022 also faced a 27-percent growth compared to the same period in 2021 and reached \$1.865 billion. Iran's commitments to these banks in the third quarter of 2021 amounted to \$1.462 billion.

Iran's total financial transactions with foreign banks and financial institutions at the end of the third quarter of 2022 also increased by eight percent compared to the same period of the previous year and reached \$20.451 billion. In the same period of 2021, Iran's foreign exchanges were reported to be \$18.909 billion.

ICCIMA calls for reforming old economic policies

TEHRAN - Mohammad Qasemi, head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA)'s Research Center, has called on the government to reform the country's old economic policies and take a new approach toward international trade.

Speaking in a conference dubbed "Economic Policy Making in Iran

Based on Global Models", held by ICCIMA on Tuesday, Qasemi said: "With the continuation of the current traditional views, we cannot achieve a suitable position in the global supply chains and create value."

According to the official, in most political and economic theories, the success of international trade is one of the main factors that depends on the political, economic, and even

military dimensions of countries, the ICCIMA portal reported.

"Subjects like what commodities can be exchanged and what goods can be produced in a country, where is the path of value creation in the production chain and where can the country be positioned to benefit the most from the international trade, have been the subject of various economic modeling after

the Second World War; A point that has been paid less attention in Iran and a kind of traditional approach has been adopted to this issue," he explained.

Qasemi emphasized that the current problems in Iran and the issues related to regional development have created the necessity of changing the country's economic strategies.

TEDPIX rises 1,500 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 1,556 points to 1.558 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 6.863 billion securities worth 45.615 trillion rials (about \$114 million) were traded at the TSE.

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).

Iranian government has allocated 150 trillion rials (about \$375 million) to the country's Capital Market

Stabilization and Development Fund (CMSDF) in the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1402 (begins on March 21) to support small shareholders.

As reported, the government has decided to supply the mentioned fund from the shares of state-owned companies to protect small shareholders against the risks of the capital market.

From page 1 ▶ Syria has already faced 12 years of war waged by foreign-backed militants and terrorists as well as sanctions that have ravaged the Arab country.

Over the past years, Damascus has also seen large chunks of its oil, estimated at more than 10 billion dollars, looted by the United States military stationed in the east and northeast.

This is the money that must have gone to reconstruction projects in Syria and invested in vital services.

Now, much-needed equipment is being prevented from reaching the nation as the number of deaths from the 7.8 magnitude earthquake, that shook several regions in southern Turkey and northern Syria, is constantly rising.

The country is struggling to pull people out of the rubble as many governments fear violating U.S. unilateral sanctions imposed on Damascus by sending machinery and other relevant equipment as well as humanitarian aid to help victims of the natural disaster.

Other countries, including Iran, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, India, and Argentina, have shown no fear and have either delivered aid and equipment or have pledged to do so.

Many Arab leaders have also spoken to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to express their sympathy and extend their condolences.

Al-Assad chaired an emergency meeting of cabinet ministers and security officials. He says the government will provide everything it can to help all areas affected, including regions occupied by militants or terrorist groups such as the northern city of Idlib, whose residents are living under occupation by terrorists such as the al-Qaeda-affiliated Nusra Front.

Damascus has also announced it will not stand in the way of any country willing to send humanitarian aid or rescue teams to the civilians in these regions.

U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price told reporters that Washington will deliver aid to Syria through nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) without engaging with the Syrian government.

These are the same NGOs that Washington sponsors to back the militants and terrorists who are terrorizing the civilian population under their control.

Experts say there is no question that any funds will go to the pockets of the terrorists and not for aid and rescue efforts.

Images have gone viral on social media, from cellphone air traffic tracking applications, that shows how the movement of airplanes appears to be very dense in Turkish airspace, while Syrian airspace is almost devoid of any air movement.

There does appear to be a rush to provide aid to Turkey, unlike Syria.

Syrians have spoken of waiting several hours for rescue teams to arrive, as civilians themselves, using



U.S. sanctions increasing Syria quake deaths

their hands and traditional tools removed what they could from the rubble and tried to save their families and neighbors.

The destruction that the West and some of its allies have inflicted on Syria for more than a decade is indescribable.

The country had enormous capabilities before the 12-year war and used to send aid to countries around the world when they were exposed to such disasters, such as India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Iran.

The Syrian region of Aleppo has been designated as the most affected part of the country so far, according to government data, when taking into account the number of buildings and houses that have totally collapsed or partially destroyed.

The head of the Aleppo City Council has spoken about “the difficulties in removing rubble and in securing adequate mechanisms and rescue personnel, as a result of the large scale of damage.”

The deputy head of the Aleppo City Council, Ahmed Rahmani, has also said “the violent military battles that took place in the neighborhoods of Aleppo had a major role in the recent collapse of buildings, as a result of the cracking of the soil under the buildings, and the delay in the reconstruction process due to the sanctions imposed on Syria.”

He explained that there is a great shortage of equipment for such operations, especially those used to remove rubble, while also stressing that there is a severe shortage of medicines and fuel needed to operate hospitals.

The Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has appealed to the UN member states, its relevant agencies and funds, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and other humanitarian agencies, including international governmental and non-governmental organizations, to

help and support the rescue efforts as the country in wrestling with the devastating earthquake.

Foreign Minister Faisal al-Miqdad held a meeting with representatives of UN organizations and offices operating in Syria and NGOs explaining the impact of unilateral sanctions, which have worsened the situation.

On the other hand, sources have confirmed to different Arab media outlets that a large number of air cargo companies have refrained from landing at Syrian airports, for fear of U.S. and European sanctions.

Several countries have asked Syrian airlines to transport tons of aid on board their civil aircraft, intended for the transportation of large volumes of aid to circumvent the sanctions.

Commander of the Latakia Fire Brigade Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Jaafar says “the unjust sanctions against Syria contributed directly to the increase in the number of earthquake victims, due to the inability to secure modern machinery and equipment used in such cases.”

Latakia is a port city in Syria’s west strongly affected by the earthquake.

“We have done our duty to the fullest, according to the capabilities available to us. The regiment, with all its elements, is on alert. Rescue operations are continuing until this moment, but unfortunately, we are taking double the time because we do not have cameras to detect victims, heavy equipment, or a sufficient number of vehicles, while if these were available, we could have saved more lives,” Jaafar pointed out.

FM Miqdad says “the earthquake disaster is enormous.” He said “what has increased its depth is the difficult circumstances of Syria, as it is fighting terrorism and those who support it.”

He explained “the sanctions against Syria have increased the difficulty of the disaster,” stressing that “the state is following up, at an external and internal level, the

mobilization of support to help the earthquake victims.”

Referring to Syria’s request, through ambassadors, for external support to deal with the disaster, he pointed out that President al-Assad “requested the use of all the state’s capabilities in rescue and relief operations,” and that “all hospitals in Syria have been set up to treat earthquake victims.”??

He extended gratitude to countries that have sent aid and to the leaders of countries who have expressed their “desire to help.”

Calling on European governments to deliver aid to his country, he has stressed that “sending it now from Europe does not need a request and (administrative) bureaucracy. Humanitarian aid is not subject to sanctions, according to international laws. Therefore, there is no need for this as an excuse.”

He added Syria has “suffered double standards in international politics.”

He also said “if Western countries are not able to fulfill their humanitarian duties, history will not forget this.”

Meanwhile, reports suggest there has been no communication between Syria and Turkey, even at a humanitarian level.

The Israel regime claims it has received a request for relief assistance from Syria, but Foreign Minister al-Miqdad set the record straight, saying “Syria does not consider Israel a state, but rather calls it the Zionist entity, many assassinations, through the Nusra Front and other terror groups, are carried out with direct Israeli support.”

Damascus has stated that probably Israel has received request for aid from Daesh or the Nusra Front.

“The occupation entity is the cause of the scourge, wars, and tensions in the region, and is the last one who has the right to speak of aid and assistance,” the Syrian foreign minister confirmed.

Such ridiculous panic over a darn balloon!

From page 1 ▶ shot it down over the coastal Carolinas for Allah knows how much wasted fiat dollars. If the U.S. had really thought the balloon was “spying” it would not have waited until it crossed over the entire U.S. before the U.S. military destroyed it. The wait was an attempt to build a case against China and the result was actually damaging to the Biden Administration’s reputation and credibility, presuming it had much of that left to expire.

One has to understand the U.S. is in very bad shape, like utterly paranoid, when a darn balloon creates panic and becomes a geopolitical incident seized upon by the government as a means to call the Chinese an evil (or whatever) threat to the U.S. It’s all quite risible, a sign of the times when the world suffers at the hands of the warmongers in Washington.

But in fact the U.S. is not doing well. It’s deluded “leaders” are acting like petulant, spoiled children not getting their way — which they have become so accustomed to for decades that it has created blindness.

The Russians, for one thing, are said by the best observers to be “winning” the proxy war in Ukraine. And if and when Russia launches any suspected big offensive against the Zelensky regime it may spell the end of the war. The important Rand “think tank” which the U.S. “deep state” relies on for support and

direction like few others, and which initially pushed the proxy war strongly, issued a paper recently which essentially indicated that Russia was gaining control and that it was time for negotiations with the Putin government. This constitutes a 180 degree turn in orientation by the Rand “thinkers”. With very few clear minds running the U.S. and its war machine, there exists at the margin and even in the Pentagon a few relatively enlightened souls who see REALITY which the Neocons, long in control of U.S. foreign policies, abandoned for bloody fantasies of perennial world domination. And as well, there is chatter that the Biden gangsters could be aiming to abandon Clown-in-Chief Vladimir Zelensky and giving the nod to Valerii Zaluzhnyi, who’s been commander of Ukraine’s decimated military. Word is that Zaluzhnyi and Zelensky despise each other, each blaming the other for battlefield losses. This inward turning against itself and peers is quite common wherever and whenever a regime is losing its marbles...or a war it provoked. Zelensky has been called crazy or crazed by those who heard a recent speech he gave.

The Russians, in any event, are likely to laugh at any U.S. gestures towards formal fresh accords over Ukraine. Since when has the U.S. not torn up treaties and accords like the JCPOA? Most of the world no longer trusts the U.S. government.

But more importantly, there is evidence that some erstwhile vassals of the U.S. are losing the scales over their eyes and beginning to show some courage and say “NYET” to the bullying the U.S. has largely been about since the end of World War 2 but especially in this century. This is a drift, like that drifting Chinese “spy” balloon, that reminds of what the great novelist Ernest Hemingway wrote a hundred years ago about how any bankruptcy occurs: “Two ways. Gradually, then suddenly.”

The sudden part of a U.S. bankruptcy of confidence among other countries may be about to occur. And it’s beginning to dawn on others, too. Confidence is most of everything and once it has been lost, it’s gone forever. Instilling confidence, even in micro situations like in rearing children, is the most important thing that can be done by parents to insure at least some success in life. Iranian government “confidence” may be evident of late given reports that on the 44th anniversary of the Islamic Republic’s victory, Ayatollah Khamenei allegedly approved mass amnesty and commutation of sentences for detainees in the riots initiated by the death of Masha Amini and subsequently provoked by the U.S. and the MEK and others. On this matter of loss of confidence between nations one can cite recent comments:

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

WORLD HEADLINES

Turkey-Syria earthquake death toll tops 11,000

Thinly-stretched rescue teams on Wednesday continued searching for survivors buried in the rubble of thousands of buildings destroyed in Turkey and Syria by catastrophic earthquakes and aftershocks that killed over 11,000.

Amid calls for the Turkish government to send more help to the disaster zone, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited a “tent city” in Kahramanmaraş, where people forced from their homes are living. He conceded shortfalls early in Turkey’s disaster response but vowed that no one would “be left in the streets.”

Turkey now has tens of thousands of aid personnel in the quake zone, and search teams from more than two dozen countries have joined them. But with the devastation so widespread, many are still waiting for help, and hope of rescuing survivors is fading.

Experts said the survival window for those trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings or otherwise unable to access water, food, protection from the elements or medical attention was closing rapidly. At the same time, they said it was too soon to abandon hope for more rescues.

“The first 72 hours are considered to be critical as the condition of people trapped and injured can deteriorate quickly and become fatal if they are not rescued and given medical attention in time,” says Steven Godby, a natural hazards expert at Nottingham Trent University in England.

Turkey’s disaster management agency said Wednesday that the recovered bodies of people who died in the earthquakes but cannot be identified would be buried within five days even if they remained unnamed. The agency, known as AFAD, said unidentified victims would be buried following DNA tests, finger printing and after being photographed for future identification. The move is in line with Islamic funeral rites, which require a burial to take place as quickly as possible after a person’s death.

The scale of suffering was also staggering in Syria, a region already beset by more than a decade of civil war that has displaced millions within the country, prompting many to seek refuge in Turkey. With thousands of buildings toppled there, it wasn’t clear how many people might still be trapped underneath the rubble.

The United Nations said it was “exploring all avenues” to get supplies to the rebel-held northwest of the country, and on Wednesday, the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights said Egypt had sent a medical and rescue team.

The European Union said Wednesday that Syria had asked for humanitarian assistance to support the victims. An EU representative insisted the bloc’s sanctions against the Syrian government had no impact on its potential to help.

Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous visited neighborhoods in the northern city of Aleppo on Wednesday, where buildings collapsed.

“Our priority now is to rescue the people who are still under the rubble,” he said.

US to act if China threatens its sovereignty: Biden

Washington will act to defend the United States if China takes measures that threaten the US sovereignty, President Joe Biden said in his annual State of the Union Address to Congress.

“Make no mistake: as we made clear last week, if China threatens our sovereignty, we will act to protect our country. And we did,” he was quoted as saying in the transcript of the speech, released by the White House.

Biden went on to say that his country makes it clear to China that it is seeking competition, not conflict.

“Before I came to office, the story was about how the People’s Republic of China was increasing its power and America was falling in the world. Not anymore. I’ve made clear with President Xi that we seek competition, not conflict,” he said.

“Let’s be clear: winning the competition with China should unite all of us. We face serious challenges across the world,” Biden added.

However, the US president said he was “committed to work with China where it can advance American interests and benefit the world.”

“Today, we’re in the strongest position in

decades to compete with China or anyone else in the world,” Biden said. “I will make no apologies that we are investing to make America strong. Investing in American innovation, in industries that will define the future, and that China’s government is intent on dominating.”

US Defense Department Press Secretary Patrick Ryder said on February 2 that US authorities had detected and were tracking a high-altitude “reconnaissance balloon” over the continental United States. It was shot down on February 4 by the US military off the coast of South Carolina within US airspace. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken postponed his visit to China over the incident.

Marjorie Taylor Greene yells ‘liar’ during combative State of the Union

Midway through the State of the Union address, the room turned feisty as some Republican lawmakers began booing President Biden. Some pointed fingers toward his position at the center of the House chamber. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) stood and yelled at him: “Liar!”

It was a remarkable display of partisan animosity, one that illustrates the challenges gripping a deeply divided Washington. And it put on vivid display the power of Greene as leader of the Outburst Caucus — and the struggles that House Speaker Kevin McCarthy has in controlling the behavior, let alone the votes, of his conference.

Hours before the speech, McCarthy (Calif.) and other Republican leaders had told lawmakers during their weekly conference meeting that all eyes would be on them as Biden delivered his remarks, according to people in the room for the meeting who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss it freely.

That guidance echoed a similar message sent out by Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-N.Y.): “Cameras are always on and microphones are always hot.” Ahead of the speech, Republicans did not anticipate any outbursts, and McCarthy had said Monday that he would not shred the president’s speech as then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) did with President Donald Trump’s.

But about 40 minutes into his speech, Biden turned to one of the most contentious current topics facing Congress. Halfway through a speech that was by turns folksy and feisty — and contained more than a hint of swagger — he looked to the Republicans sitting in the chamber to his left, chiding them for a lack of specificity in their approach to cutting the budget.

Their decisions under Trump, he said, added more to the national debt than any president, triggering boos from Republicans.

India will buy oil ‘from wherever is beneficial’ – energy minister

India will continue to import oil from suppliers it deems reliable, despite mounting pressure from the West to stop buying the commodity from Russia, according to the country’s energy minister, Hardeep Singh Puri.

In an interview with CNBC, Puri said New Delhi “didn’t allow the geopolitical turbulence or the pandemic or anything else to come in the way of our ability to supply to our consumer.” The minister added that India has no plans to change this approach.

“Today we feel confident that we’ll be able to use our market to source from wherever we have to, from wherever we get beneficial terms... Beneficial terms in this situation is: you have to be sure of your supplies,” Puri explained.

India significantly increased purchases of Russian oil last year, taking advantage of steep discounts that Moscow offered to attract new buyers amid Western sanctions. India recently became Russia’s top importer of crude, while Russia also outpaced India’s former largest suppliers, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, in terms of delivery volumes. New Delhi’s oil imports from Russia surged to a five-month high in December, and some 70% of January’s cargoes of Russian oil were also destined for India, according to Reuters.

Puri reiterated that India will not reject Russian oil, and cautioned that restrictions could disrupt the global oil market and cause a surge in prices.

Iran can emerge as major destination, tourism minister says



Last August, Zarghami said that Iran has recorded about 2.9 million foreign tourist arrivals over the past 11 months.

The tourism minister said the rate of tourist arrivals, concerning coronavirus restrictions, is ahead of some international estimates.

"Designing an Iranophobia project and presenting a negative image of Iran in some media is one of the obstacles to attracting foreign tourists," Zarghami said.

"We have many relative advantages and facilities that none of the countries in the region have."

Long shunned by Western travelers, the Islamic Republic has steadily stepped-up efforts to use tourism, over the past couple of years, to help promote its international image battered by endless opposition mostly from the U.S.

Experts believe even before the pandemic, Iran's tourism was already grappling with some challenges, on top of those Western "media propaganda" aimed at scaring potential travelers away from the Islamic Republic. They say Iran is still somehow "unknown" to many potential travelers due to such a "media war."

Before the COVID pandemic, Iran's tourism had constantly been growing, reaching more than eight million visitors in the Iranian calendar year 1398 (started March 21, 2019). That surge, however, helped prejudices to become thick and thin.

However, Iran's trump card is that the country benefits from a wide variety of travel destinations ranging from seacoasts and lush green woods to towering mountains and harsh deserts. As a wallet-friendly destination with hospitable people, Iran has long been a desired destination for nature lovers, birdwatchers, powder chasers, culture devotees, pilgrims, museum-goers, foodies, adventurers, and medical travelers, to name a few.

TEHRAN – Iran has the potential to be one of the world's most important tourism hubs if it is provided with the minimum number of resources that it needs, the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister has said.

Among Islamic countries including Iran, tourism accounts for a large portion of their capacities, but for a variety of reasons, this huge potential has not been considered, Ezzatollah Zarghami said on Tuesday while visiting the 16th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition.

Considering that tourism plays an important role in economic, cultural, and social development today, Islamic countries must compensate for this historical backwardness by continuing to develop tourism, he added.

By removing obstacles and introducing the capabilities of Iran in the tourism field properly, the country could also combat Iranophobia, he mentioned.

A safe and beautiful country with four seasons, Iran is among the first few countries in the world with the best capabilities in the fields of cultural heritage, ecotourism, and other tourist attractions, he noted.

Iranianophobia, however, has been one of the enemies' methods for years, and there have been attempts to halt tourism development in Iran, the minister explained.

Veteran curator and cultural heritage expert Abbas Etemad Fini dies

TEHRAN – Veteran Iranian museum curator, restorer, and cultural heritage expert Abbas Etemad Fini died on Tuesday after a period of illness.

Etemad Fini collaborated with well-known archaeologists such as Roman Ghirshman, Jean Perrot, and Sadegh Malek Shahmirzadi and was a member of various archaeological teams in Khuzestan and Sialk, the National Museum of Iran told the Tehran Times on Wednesday.

Moreover, he served as curator of the Sialk museum and conservator, with more than seventy years of experience in the field of cultural heritage and restoration.

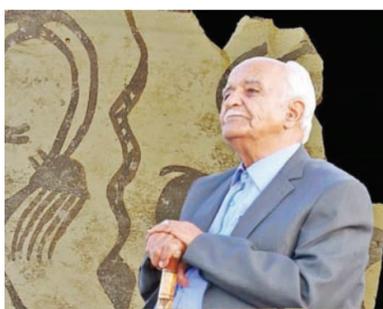
Born 1936 in Fin of Kashan, Etemad Fini joined to Sialk excavation team as a teenager due to the cooperation of his father, "Ahmad Etemad Fini" with the research team of Sialk and Roman Ghirshman.

For more than three decades, he participated with Ghirshman and later Jean Perrot in the excavations of Susa and Ivan-e Karkheh, Chogha Zanbil, Masjid Soleiman, Khark Island, and Kangavar. Etemad joined the archaeological project of Silk at the beginning of the re-excavations of Silk in 2001, and after several seasons of excavations, he became the curator of the Sialk Museum for more than 20 years, and at the same time, he actively participated in the restoration of the archaeological finds.

Etemad Fini had a deep knowledge of conservation and adobe architecture, and due to his experiences in this field, he was invited by the Archéodrome archaeological Park in Burgundy, France, to hold a workshop and experimental construction of adobe structures.

Etemad Fini spoke French well. His book "The Secret of Number Seven" was published by Babr Publications in 2019. Nasim Mograzi wrote his biography "Ser-e Sweida" which was published by Edbestan Novin Publishing House.

In recognition of his efforts in the field of cultural heritage for more than half a century,



a commemoration ceremony was held in the Sialk archaeological base in 2019.

National Museum of Iran Director Jabrael Nokandeh expressed his condolences to the late Etemad Fini's family and the people of Kashan. He added that Abbas Etemad Fini will be greatly missed, but his efforts for the cultural heritage of Iran will be remembered forever.

Ancient Iran, also known as Persia, historic region of southwestern Asia that is only roughly coterminous with modern Iran. The term Persia was used for centuries, chiefly in the West, to designate those regions where the Persian language and culture predominated, but it more correctly refers to a region of southern Iran formerly known as Persis, alternatively as Pars or Parsa, modern Fars.

During the rule of the Persian Achaemenian dynasty (559–330 BC), the ancient Greeks first encountered the inhabitants of Persis on the Iranian plateau, when the Achaemenids—natives of Persis— were expanding their political sphere.

The Achaemenids were the dominant dynasty during Greek history until the time of Alexander the Great, and the use of the name Persia was gradually extended by the Greeks and other peoples to apply to the whole Iranian plateau.

TEHRAN – Iran recorded more than three million foreign tourist arrivals in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (1401, which started on March 21), the deputy tourism minister has said.

"In the first nine months of this year, more than three million tourists entered the country, of which 14% were one-day visitors," Mehr quoted Ali-Asghar Shalabafian as saying on Tuesday.

"In 1400, more than 1.3 million tourists entered the country, of which 11% were one-day visitors," the official stated.

Talking about the number of outbound passengers, the official said: more than seven million Iranian nationals traveled abroad [during the mentioned period], and of the number about six percent, were one-day visitors.

He put the number of outbound passengers at 2.8 million for the past Iranian year, adding some 10% of the passengers were one-day visitors.

Iran registers three million foreign arrivals in nine months



Earlier in August 2022, the tourism minister Ezzatollah Zarghami announced that the Islamic Republic had recorded about 2.9 million foreign tourist arrivals "over the past 11 months." "With the support of President Ebrahim Raisi [the issuance of the tourist] visas has been resumed and 2,900,000 people entered Iran in less than a year. And this amount is growing and increasing," Zarghami said in a televised speech.

The minister added one of the priorities that his ministry follows was to develop tourism ties with the neighboring countries. "Our priority is to strengthen relations with neighboring countries and now we are pursuing the project of cheap overland travels with neighboring countries."

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Medical tourism: Kerman calls to boost ties with Muscat



From Page 1 ▶ Experts believe medical tourism in Iran is a win-win opportunity both for the country and foreign patients, as they are offered affordable yet quality treatment services and the country gains considerable foreign currency. Amongst Iran's trump cards are the presence of credible surgeons

and physicians, cutting-edge medical technologies, high-tech medicine and diverse specializations, super affordable procedures, and finally its hospitable people.

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

Qatar seeks to lure Iranian sightseers

TEHRAN – Iran is among the 15 tourist markets that Qatar focuses on for its tourism industry, Berthold Trenkel the COO of Qatar Tourism, has said.

In a press release published by Qatar's pavilion at Tehran's international tourism and handicrafts fair on Wednesday, Trenkel said that as part of Qatar's tourism strategy, Iran is one of the target markets.

The goal of Qatar's participation at the fair is to make Iranian visitors choose Qatar as their vacation and leisure destination, he added.

Qatar will be able to better introduce itself to Iranians through its participation in the 16th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, he noted.

"By offering attractive travel packages, we provided new information to our colleagues in Iran's travel industry," he mentioned.

By 2030, Qatar's tourism development strategy aims to increase tourist attraction by three-fold and the tourism sector's share of the country's GDP by 12 percent, he stated.

Tehran's international tourism fair, which was inaugurated on Tuesday, brings together 200 exhibitors from 47 countries involved in the tourism industry.

Foreign participants will attend the exhibition as exhibitors and visitors, and a private-sector negotiation hall has been set up for them.

A number of countries have pavilions at the exhibition, including Qatar, Iraq, Japan, Indonesia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Russia, and Venezuela.

The exhibition is also attended by countries such as Oman, Syria, Turkey, Armenia, Lebanon, Libya, Algeria, China, and Georgia, among others.

A total of 67,000 square meters has been devoted to the exhibition, which is running in 15 vast halls.

Over 70 licensed health tourism centers are also present at the exhibition.

It is a benchmark event in the tourism sector of the country as a meeting place for industry professionals and the premier trade show for destinations and destination markets. It turns the spotlight on new tourist segments, technological leadership in the management of tourism, and knowledge transfer tools.

It stages cultural evenings, B2B meetings, folk music performances, live workshops, 3D films of historical monuments and tourism destinations, and highlights of Persian cuisines, to name a few.

The handicrafts sales exhibition brings together craftspeople and artisans from all over the country,



showcasing arrays of personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy, traditional musical instrument, metalwork, and marquetry to name a few. Nomadic culinary arts, live workshops, and performances are among other themes for the event.

The 36th National Handicrafts Exhibition and the 16th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, which are held simultaneously, will be running until February 10.

Malaysian exhibitors in Tehran to foster partnership

TEHRAN – Following years of coronavirus-related restrictions, Malaysian travel insiders and exhibitors seek to promote partnership with Iranian counterparts at the 16th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, which runs from February 7 to 10.

Tourism Malaysia, which operates under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture Malaysia, is set to provide an avenue for Malaysia tourism industry players to network and solicit new business with their Iranian counterparts.

The agency is set to boost its promotion activities in Iran by participating in the 16th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, and to reconnect and further develop more partnerships in positioning Malaysia as a preferred destination for Iranian sightseers, Tourism Malaysia said on Tuesday.

"Tehran tourism fair is also a platform to update industry players on Malaysia's latest tourism developments and strengthen



awareness of Malaysia as an ideal holiday destination for this market. Furthermore, it will also give visitors an insight into the many exciting packages and promote some of the country's latest attractions and destinations such as Kuala Lumpur, Genting Highlands, and Penang for shopping, family fun, and theme parks."

Last year's roadshow to Tehran which

was led by the Director General of Tourism Malaysia, Dato' Hj Zainuddin Abdul Wahab in May 2022, together with Malaysian travel trade players and officials validated that Malaysia maintains as one of the tops of the mind travel destinations for this region.

Tourism Malaysia's promotion campaign as such is a continuous effort to boost inbound tourism to a greater height in the hope to achieve 15.6 million international tourist arrivals with MYR 47.6 billion in tourism receipts for 2023.

Iran remains one of Malaysia's top international tourists generating markets in West Asia before the pandemic. Iran's strong arrival of 46,559 in 2019 shows that Malaysia is a value-for-money destination for them.

Currently, Iranian travelers will have the chance to travel to Malaysia from other cities like Tehran, Mashhad, Isfahan, Tabriz, and Shiraz, the agency said.

Historical cistern in Bafq restored to former state

TEHRAN – A restoration project on an Afsharid era (1736–1748) Ab-Anbar (cistern) in the city of Bafq, the central province of Yazd, has come to an end, Bafq's tourism chief has said.

The project involved strengthening the structure, repairing damaged parts, and replacing worn-out materials, Leili Ranjbar said on Tuesday.

The historical monument is one of the biggest cisterns in the region, which is located in the historical texture of the city, she noted.

The cistern has been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The term Ab-Anbar is common throughout Iran as a designation for roofed underground water cisterns. It associates with water management systems in arid areas that are reliant on permanent

springs or seasonal rainwater.

Such underground reservoirs or Ab-Anbars are parts of the iconic qanat systems, which rely on snow-fed streams flowing down from surrounding mountains.

Qanats, according to UNESCO, provide exceptional testimony to cultural traditions and civilizations in desert areas with an arid climate.

In July 2017, the historical structure of the city of Yazd was named a UNESCO World Heritage. Wedged between the northern Dasht-e Kavir and the southern Dasht-e Lut on a flat plain, the oasis city enjoys a very harmonious public-religious architecture that dates from different eras.

Yazd is usually referred to as a delightful place to stay, or a "don't miss" destination by almost all

of its visitors. The city is full of mud-brick houses that are equipped with innovative badgirs (wind catchers), atmospheric alleyways, and many Islamic and Iranian monuments that shape its eye-catching city landscape.

It is a living testimony to the intelligent use of limited available resources in the desert for survival. Water is brought to the city by the qanat system. Each district of the city is built on a qanat and has a communal center.

The use of earth in buildings includes walls and roofs through the construction of vaults and domes. Houses are built with courtyards below ground level, serving underground areas. Wind catchers, courtyards, and thick earthen walls create a pleasant microclimate.

TEHRAN - The Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy has played an effective role in encouraging 2,600 Iranian researchers and experts residing abroad to return to the country.

The goal was attained with the successful implementation of a "cooperation program with Iranian experts and entrepreneurs abroad", IRNA reported.

This program is a joint collaboration between the Center for International Interactions of Science and Technology of the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy and the National Elites Foundation.

It has led to the formation of a suitable infrastructure for using the scientific and technological capacity and power of Iranian experts in various specialized fields.

As part of the program, more than 10,000 Iranian experts and researchers residing abroad have been recruited, and more than 2,600 researchers and experts from the world's top universities (mostly from America, Canada, and European countries) have returned to the country.

Some 19 percent of the researchers and experts are graduates of the top 20 universities in the world (such as MIT, Stanford, Cambridge, Harvard, Berkeley, Illinois, Imperial College, Princeton, Michigan, National Singapore, and EPFL) and about 79 percent of the people have spent five years outside Iran.

Threat or opportunity?

International migrations are extremely important in today's world and all countries are facing this phenomenon to varying degrees.

Accordingly, immigration is considered an opportunity for many countries and a threat for some countries, and the difference between countries in terms of whether immigration is an opportunity or a threat for them is the type of encounter with the issue and the way it is managed.

In this regard, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, in cooperation with the National Elites Foundation, launched a joint



Some 2,600 Iranian expat researchers, experts back home

program with Iranian experts and entrepreneurs abroad in 2016 with the aim of creating a mechanism to benefit from the valuable knowledge and experiences of Iranian researchers and experts abroad.

The program has been developed and implemented within the framework of post-doctorate studies, exchanging professors, establishing technological companies, and holding specialized workshops.

The audience of this program includes Ph.D. graduates from one of the top 200 universities in the world, professors from one of the top 200 universities in the world, and professionals and entrepreneurs active in one of the leading scientific and technological institutions or foreign knowledge-based companies.

Removing hurdles

This program aims to solve the basic challenges mentioned by Iranian elites interested in cooperation with the country.

The challenges include a "lack of a specific mechanism to establish

relationships with selected scientific and technological institutions and centers", and "unfamiliarity with the country's scientific and technological situation in the specialized field".

Over the past six years, it has been able to be a bridge between Iranian experts and scientists abroad with more than 150 scientific and technological centers, including top universities, research institutes, technology parks, and domestically selected knowledge-based companies in the shortest possible time, and has provided them with the capacities available to introduce different fields of science and technology.

Another achievement of this program is the creation of 280 knowledge-based companies and startups in various fields of "Artificial Intelligence", "Biotechnology", "Nano", "Energy", "Information and Communication Technology" and so on.

These companies have provided the ground for the direct employment of the best domestic specialists and graduates.

Also, more than 450 researchers who have returned so far to the country have been recruited by the faculty of top-ranked domestic universities as part of this program, which has had a great impact on raising the quality level of research, educational and international activities of universities.

Also, in the past two years, special virtual meetings were held with Iranian experts and researchers living in Canada, North America, and some European countries with the aim of introducing the programs of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology and the National Elites Foundation, focusing on projects and support programs in the field of coronavirus.

The important point in providing conditions for the return of elites is to increase their commitment every time they are in the country to participate in activities related to the field of science and technology.

The goal is to create a sense of dependence and responsibility in Iranian elites towards the country, which should be done step by step.

Some \$1m allocated for national observatory

TEHRAN - A total of 390 billion rials (about \$1 million) has been earmarked by the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year to the Iranian National Observatory project.

The next year's proposed budget has increased by 90 billion rials compared with the budget for the current year, ISNA reported.

From 2007 to 2021, a sum of 690 billion rials was allocated for the project.

In June 2021, the Iranian National Observatory (INO), which is said to kick off a big movement in the area of astronomy in the country, was inaugurated near the city of Kashan, central Isfahan province.

The project places Iran among the ten countries in the world capable of manufacturing observatories.

INO has been built on Gargash peak at an altitude of 3600m above sea level.

The main activities of the national observatory include designing, construction, monitoring, and operating the 3.4-meter INO340 telescope, its



instruments, and infrastructures. The range of instruments initially planned for the telescope includes a wave-front sensor, auto-guider, imaging CCDs, and a high-resolution spectrograph.

The INO340 telescope is a Ritchey-Chrétien f/11 which provides unvignetted 20 arcmin field of view at the main Cassegrain focus. In addition, 3 bent focuses are also provided each with a field of view of 8 arcmins. The primary mirror is meniscus shaped and the secondary mirror is convex and together they form a well-corrected focus.

The main mirror (M1) is a single-segment fast f/1.5 mirror with a diameter of 3.4m, which

makes IN340 one of the most compact telescopes of this size. M1 is a meniscus shape 18 cm thick made of a Zerodur ceramic with a 700mm central hole. The M1 is supported by 60 actuators that are actively or passively controlled to keep the mirror shape undistorted under its own gravity at different points.

INO is a national project and has been envisioned to become an international scientific platform for astronomy in the future. Therefore, educating the general public and especially the younger generation about the basics of astronomy is another important step ahead of the INO project.

An important focus of these activities is the residents close to the area around the INO site whose lifestyles can directly affect the workflow of the INO observatory. So far, about 1,400 students from 22 schools in towns and villages close to the Gargash site have been educated about the basics of astronomy and the effects of light pollution on the INO observatory. Furthermore, the project is using social media to engage the general public with the project.

Technology, innovation ecosystem bringing positive change to society

From page 1 ► and increasing the number of university courses and students are only a part of the achievements after the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Over 8,000 knowledge-based companies registered

According to the latest statistics, a total of 8,046 knowledge-based companies are operating in the country.

The number of knowledge-based companies in biotechnology, agriculture, and food industries is 362, in advanced pharmaceuticals is 480, in advanced materials (chemistry and polymer) is 1130, and in advanced machinery and equipment is 1721.

Moreover, 326 companies are operating in the field of medical equipment, 1821 companies in electricity and electronics, 1778 companies in information technology, 397 companies in commercialization, and 31 companies in creative industries and humanities.

Knowledge-based production, a priority

In line with the law enforced on May 24, 2022, knowledge-based production is a priority of the government so the plan for promoting knowledge-based products has progressed well so far.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei designated the current Iranian calendar year, which started on March 21, 2022, as the year of "Production: Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating."

Over the past couple of years, the concept of a

'knowledge-based company' has changed to a 'knowledge-based society', meaning that supporting knowledge-based companies will lead to many social and economic advantages for the public.

The Leader reemphasized the importance of boosting domestic production, as he had done in past years, saying the reason he placed so much emphasis on production was "because it boosts economic growth, it creates employment, it reduces inflation, it increases per capita income and it improves public welfare."

To this end, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has executed and supported several projects toward the goal of boosting knowledge-based production.

Moreover, the development of an innovation ecosystem is on the agenda, according to which 65 houses of innovation have been set up across the country.

The Innovation and Prosperity Fund has paid a total of 240 trillion rials (nearly \$960 million) to support knowledge-based companies over the last [Iranian calendar] year (March 2021-March 2022).

Exporting technological products of Iranian knowledge-based companies is one of the important and key programs of the vice presidency for science and technology, and in this regard, the Iranian houses of innovation have been set up in several countries to develop the global market for knowledge-based products.

RAMSAR SITES IN IRAN

Part 62

A GEF project, implemented through UNEP and coordinated by the International Crane Foundation and CMS, aims to conserve the critical sites used by Siberian Cranes for breeding, staging during migration, and the main wintering grounds.

General location

The site is located on the coastal plain of the South Caspian, just south of the town of Fereydoon Kenar and 13 km southwest of Babolsar, Mazandaran.

This site is in fact a Non-Shooting Area through the rice fields. The area is comprising four "Damgahs" or duck trapping areas (Fereydoon Kenar, Ezbaran, Eastern and Western Sorkh Ruds) and also a Wildlife Refuge (Fereydoon Kenar WR, 48ha.) is based in north eastern part of these damgahs.

Each damgah is comprising with a complex of shallow freshwater impoundments situated in harvested rice paddies where developed as a duck-hunting area, surrounded by forest strips and reed enclosures.

The area is situated in the southeast Caspian lowlands; of outstanding importance as the winter quarters of the entire western population of the Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*), but also extremely important as a wintering area for

many other species of waterfowl, notably dabbling ducks (*Anas* spp.) and Gees (*Anser* spp.).

Fereydoon Kenar Marshes are critically important as the regular wintering grounds of the known western population of Siberian Crane, *Grus leucogeranus*.

Other endangered species using the site include Red-breasted Goose, *Branta ruficollis*, Lesser

White-fronted Goose, *Anser erythropus*, Dalmatian Pelican, *Pelecanus crispus* and Pygmy Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax pygmaeus* (occasional visitors), wintering raptors such as *Falco* spp and *Haliaeetus albicilla*.

The site is a particularly important area for migratory waterfowl, regularly supporting large numbers of birds and over 30 species.

It is therefore of importance for conservation of the region's biodiversity.

Based on current information, the site appears to support the entire western population of Siberian Cranes *Grus leucogeranus* in winter.

The site regularly holds well in excess of ten thousand waterfowls in winter, with up to 100,000 birds at any one time.

The wintering waterfowl includes over 1% of the regional populations of Great Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo* (maximum 1,560); Greater white-fronted goose, *Anser albifrons* (maximum 1,700); Greylag Goose, *A. anser* (maximum 6,000); *Vanellus vanellus* and Blacktailed Godwit, *Limosa limosa* (maximum 5,000).

Physical features

Damgahs are a system of small circular or strip forests including ponds and channels surrounded by flooded rice paddies designed by villagers to catch ducks.

Source: Ramsar.org
To be continued

ENGLISH IN USE

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Iran will defeat COVID-19, we believe: Chinese envoy

Chinese Ambassador in Iran, Chang Hua, has said he believes that Iran would overcome the crisis of coronavirus outbreak.

"We believe that by sending humanitarian aid, Iran will overcome the crisis," he said in a meeting with Mahmoud Reza Peyravi, secretary general of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, IRNA reported.

The envoy praised Iran's Red Crescent Society as the first organization affiliated with the Red Cross and the Red Crescent societies which sent humanitarian shipments of aid to the Chinese people.

A delegation of Chinese medical experts arrived in Tehran on Saturday with a cargo of aid to help combat the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19.

سفیر چین: باور داریم ایران بر بحران کرونا غلبه خواهد کرد

سفیر جمهوری خلق چین در تهران ابراز امیدواری کرد ایران بر بحران شیوع ویروس کرونا غلبه خواهد کرد.

به گزارش ایرنا، چانگ هواروژ دوشنبه در حاشیه دیدار با محمودرضا پیروی دبیرکل جمعیت هلال احمر ایران گفت: ما باور داریم که با ارسال کمک های انساندوستانه از سوی دوستان دولت ایران از بحران این بیماری عبور خواهد کرد.

دیلپلمات ارشد چین در ادامه ضمن قدردانی از جمعیت هلال احمر ایران به عنوان نخستین سازمان بشردوستانه عضو جمعیت های ملی صلیب سرخ و هلال احمر که محموله های کمک را برای مردم چین ارسال کرد، گفت: ما هم با شدت گرفتن ویروس کرونا در کنار ایران هستیم.



Bakhtegan lake receives water right

Bakhtegan lake in the southern Fars province has received its water right. With a surface area of 3,500 square kilometers, it was once Iran's second-largest lake, fed by the Khor River. However, several dams on the river significantly reduced water flow into the lake.



Be afraid of nothing but sins.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Part 7 Persian literature: pre-Islamic

Part 2

Two chronologically and dialectally different variants can nevertheless be distinguished: Old Avestan (or Gathic), the language of the 5 metric gatas attributed to Zaratushtra, the Yasna Haptanhaiti, and some short prayers, all of which are hypothetically dated around the turn of the 2nd to the 1st millennium BCE.

All other texts (Wisprad, Xorda Avesta, Siruza, Yashts, and Widiwad), composed in Younger Avestan, are of more recent date, while their linguistic and stylistic qualities differ substantially.

The oldest and better parts of the Yashts may well have been composed around the beginning of the Achaemenid era.

For many centuries, the Avesta was orally transmitted, and the writing down of the "canonized" text seems to have taken place in the Sassanid period, though for linguistic and historical reasons presumably not before the 6th century.

The by now almost general assumption that the extant written corpus represents only about one-fourth of the original Avesta is at best an educated guess.

Parthian literature: Parthian literary remains from the Arsacid period are almost non-existent.

Inscriptions are few and short, since the use of Aramaic and Greek was still frequent at that time; all longer Parthian inscriptions actually date from the early Sassanid period, when the first kings of the new dynasty chose to incorporate a Parthian version in their trilingual or bilingual inscriptions.

Mainly due to the oral character of Parthian literature, both religious and secular, no work of literary value survives from the Arsacid period, though secondary Middle Persian redactions, as well as tertiary Persian and Georgian versions of those, do give us an indirect impression of what was lost.

Thus, a fragment of the Kayanian epic cycle survives in the Ayadgar i Zariran or "Memorial of Zarir." This heroic poem, transmitted in a late post-Sassanid Middle Persian redaction (perhaps of the 9th century), is undoubtedly of Parthian origin, as can be seen from the use of Parthian words and expressions.

It relates the exploits of the Iranian hero Zarir in the confrontation of the Iranians under King Wishtasp with King Arjasp and his Xiyonians. A number of passages were later taken over almost word for word in the Shahnameh.

Another work of Parthian origin that has come down to us in a Persian version of the 11th century and a Georgian version of the 13th century is the romance of Vis o Ramin, which relates the story of Ramin's love for the wife of his brother, King Mabad.

Finally, wisdom literature is represented by the Draxt i asurig or "The Babylonian Tree," another Middle Persian poem of Parthian origin, in which the contest between a palm tree and a goat may be interpreted as an allegory on the superiority of pastoral life over agriculture.

The bulk of Parthian literature was written after the Arsacid period, however, and is of Manichean content. It dates from the 3rd to 10th centuries, reaching its peak between

the 4th and 6th centuries.

The latest texts show less literary merit, since they were composed by Sogdian speakers, at a time when Parthian had become a dead, church language.

Relatively few texts have survived to the present day; however, among them one might mention, in particular, the hymn cycles Huyadag-man "Fortunate for us" and Angad Roshnan "Rich in light," both named after the first words of the text and attributed to Mani's disciple Mar Ammu (and thus dateable in the latter part of the 3rd century).

Middle Persian literature: Other than legends on coins and seals, as well as private and business letters, economic documents, and administrative records on ostraca and papyri, Middle Persian literature encompasses fragments of a manuscript of the Psalter and a number of inscriptions up to the 11th century, but above all an important corpus of writings in Book Pahlavi script (mostly of religious content) and of Manichean texts.

The manuscript from Bulayiq with a Middle Persian translation of the Psalter was probably written no earlier than the 7th century, though the original text itself presumably dates from the 5th century.

Although Middle Persian continued to be used in private inscriptions from India and Mazandaran as late as the 11th century, the most important and longer inscriptions date from the 3rd century.

These include the trilingual inscription (Middle Persian, Parthian, Greek) of Shabuhr I (241-72) on the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht at Naqsh-e Rostam, the bilingual (Middle Persian, Parthian) inscription of Narseh in Paikuli, and the four Middle Persian inscriptions of the Mazdean (Zoroastrian) high priest Kerdir, all of which show a number of interesting parallels with the Old Persian inscriptions of the Achaemenids.

The mostly severely damaged Manichean manuscripts discovered in the early decades of the 20th century in Central Asia are written in a variant of the Palmyrene script and deal with religious matters.

Apart from the one work written in Middle Persian and entitled Shabuhragan, in which Mani summarized his teachings in order to convince the Sassanid king of kings Shabuhr I of his new religion, all his works were presumably written in his Aramaic dialect.

The latest dateable Middle Persian Manichean text is in prose and was written in the second quarter of the 9th century: it is the introduction by a Sogdian author to a hymn-book composed at Qarashahr between 825 and 832.

Other texts include hagiographic and dogmatic prose writings as well as fragments of Manichean church history, homilies, prayers, and the translation of two Christian apocryphal works, the "Shepherd of Hermas" and the "Book of Henoch".

The major part of Middle Persian Manichean texts, however, is comprised of versified hymns, among which one might mention the Guwishn ig Griw Zindag "Hymn of the Living Soul" and the Guwishn ig Griw Rushn "Hymn of the Light Soul."

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued.

Iran picks top books of the year

TEHRAN – Top publications in different categories were honored on Wednesday during the 40th edition of Iran's Book of the Year Awards.

The winners received their awards from President Ebrahim Raisi at Tehran's Vahadt Hall.

Top books of the year were awarded as part of the Ten-Day Dawn celebration, which is organized annually in February to mark the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

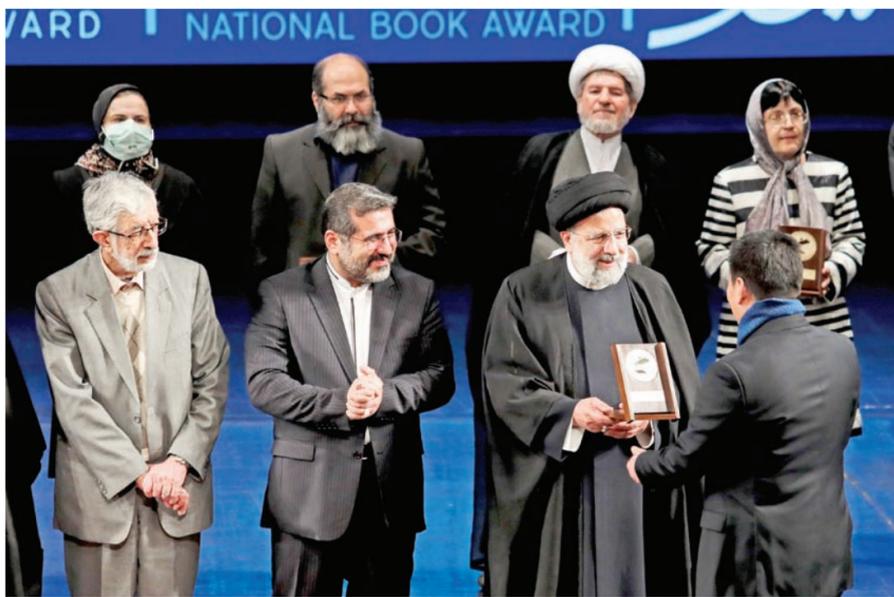
The awards are granted in the categories such as art, literature, religion, philosophy and psychology, applied science and pure science.

"Abi Talib Dictionary" by a group of writers was selected as best book in the religion section.

In the language section, "Pahlavi Language Dictionary" by Yadollah Mansuri won the award.

"Accidental Mathematics" by Einollah Pasha won the award in the pure science category.

"Source Book for Intensive Care Unit" by Keivan Gohari-Moqaddam, Amir Vahedian-Azimi and several other scholars was awarded in the



President Ebrahim Raisi honors an author during the 40th Iran's Book of the Year Awards at Tehran's Vahadt Hall on February 8, 2023. (ISNA/Hadi Zand)

applied science section.

"Timeless Centuries: An Analytical Introduction to Mantiq at-Tayr" by Mehdi Mohabbati received the award in literature.

Mantiq at-Tayr (Conference of the Birds) is the most famous book of the Persian mystic and poet Farid ud-Din Mohammad ibn Ebrahim Attar Neyshaburi (C. 1142-1220).

It is an allegorical poem

describing the quest of the birds (i.e., Sufis) for the mythical Simorgh, or Phoenix, whom they wish to make their king (i.e., God).

Dozens of books were also honored in several other categories.

Iran, Russian sign MOU to enhance media ties



Deputy Minister of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of Russia, Bella Cherkesova, and Iran's Deputy Culture Minister for Press Affairs, Farshad Mahdipur, exchange documents in the MOU on media issues in Tehran on February 7, 2023. Culture minister Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili is also seen in the photo.

From Page 1 ▶ "The long history of living in the neighborhood and the current condition of the region emphasize the need to develop media relations between Iran and Russia," Esmaili said.

"Today, Iran and Russia have been under media attack from their rivals, which give a tarnished image of the two countries, therefore Iran and Russia should present an accurate image of themselves in their media," he added.

"The presidents of the two countries have always stressed the need for the expansion of relations on media issues," he noted.

Accordingly, two cultural centers will be established in the two countries to pursue the policies that will help the matter.

He described the perspective on the media relations between Iran and Russia as bright and expressed his hope that the activities of the mutual media committees would change into an example of a successful media collaboration.

For her part, Cherkesova said that representatives of Russia's major news agencies took part in the meetings the committees have held in Tehran over the past few days.

She expressed her hope that by the implementation of the agreement, a new season of media relations would open between Iran and Russia.

Iran is seeking closer relations with Russia on cultural issues under the administration of Ebrahim Raisi.

Director of the Cinema Organization of Iran, Mohammad Khazaei, and Deputy Culture Minister for Cultural Affairs Yaser Ahmadvand visited Russia in August and September 2022.

In addition, Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation and the Embassy of Russia in Tehran organized the Russian Film Days in December.

A Russian film delegation led by the director of Russia's Union of Cinematographers, Valery Ivanovich Tonkikh, attended the program.

Fajr "Mirrored Reflections" showcases photos of Islamic Revolution

TEHRAN – "Mirrored Reflections", a major exhibition of the 15th edition of the Fajr Festival of Visual Arts, opened on Tuesday at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.

This posthumous exhibit showcases a collection of photos of the Islamic Revolution in Tehran by Qorban Khalili, most famous for his striking single shot later entitled "Soldier, don't shoot".

This exhibition, whose first edition was held in 2022, was initiated by the festival organizers to highlight art collections on the revolution.

A collection of paintings by different artists were put on view in the previous edition.

"Mirrored Reflections 2" is curated by Mojtaba Kuchaki, who first hung the photos at the Iranian Photographers Center (IPC) during an exhibition named "The Green Beat" in 2004.

"Qorban Khalili remained unknown for everybody except his



A man visits the exhibition "Mirrored Reflections" at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art on February 7, 2023. (ISNA/Hadi Zand)

colleagues until the middle of the 2000s," Kuchaki said during the opening ceremony of the exhibition.

"There are three memorable photos of the revolution published by Kayhan; one by Abodolhossein Partovi and two by Khalili," he added.

"He took a few photos of the early days of the revolution. Although he was a self-taught freelance

photographer and no organization supported him, yet he did a great job with his collection," he noted.

Comprising 1241 photos, Khalili's collection covers the various events of the revolution from mid-September 1978 to mid-March 1979.

Only 57 photos from the collection remain and the rest have been lost, Kuchaki said and asked

the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to help search for the missing photos.

All the 57 rare photos, which are being preserved at the Iranian Photographers Center, are on view at the exhibition running until April 19.

"Soldier, don't shoot" is one of the photos taken by Khalili. The picture shows a member of the security force aiming at a protester who is a short distance away.

Published by Kayhan, a major daily based in Tehran, the photo was captioned "Soldier, don't shoot", which later became a title for the photo.

Copies of fifteen photographs by Khalili are also on view in an exhibition at the Khaneh Gallery of the Art Bureau.

The exhibition entitled "44 Years" is also showcasing rare photos of the revolution by Iranian photographer Qasem Hajmohammadi and the renowned French photojournalist Michel Setboun.

True Stories of True Men

An interview with Zeinab Sodachi

The author Zeinab Sodachi is an amazing author who writes for children and adolescents.

She announced the publication of two more volumes of the "True Stories of True Men" book series and said that "The Bicycle" and "The Strange Sleep" books are the 7th and 8th volumes of this series.

She added that "The Bicycle" is a story about martyr Ali Ghorbani, while "The Strange Dream" narrates the true story of Ahmad Ali Niri for children.

"Our goal with this series was to write stories in prose that children aged 7-8 could understand without being bored, and with appealing illustrations that would accompany the stories," said the author.

In reference to the book's two concluding chapters, which have the titles "Philosophical" and "Intelligent," Sodachi said that they were added so that children would reflect on the material and

pose questions after finishing the book. There are also ideas in the Intelligent chapter for the book's parental aims to be more effectively achieved.

"Children's sacrifice and forgiving spirits are bolstered by the story about the martyr Ali Ghorbani in the book 'The Bicycle,' and we aim to portray this in each of these books by retelling memories of martyrs that highlight a particular trait. Since we've transformed a true experience into a tale and a book, we gave the collection the name True Stories of True Men," said Zeinab Sodachi.

The author said that real stories usually have a bigger influence on children. It is more credible for youngsters to realize that they are reading the story of someone real, who grew up in the same country and community as well.

She mentioned a different problem, saying: We want kids to be book readers, and it's a weakness



that today's kids don't read books, but they won't become book readers at any price! In addition to introducing role models to kids, translated novels force kids to adopt the western culture, which has nothing to do with our Iranian and Islamic values.

Unfortunately, the issue of translated children's books and the dissemination of Western culture is ignored, and while its negative effects are not yet evident, we shall observe them in the years to come as our children begin to read more widely.