

Nothing to Hide

Iran comes clean on uranium enrichment ▶ Page 3

Op-ed T

Someday a day of reckoning for cruelties...

By Martin Love

The Zionists think they are winning. They are not. They continue to push their violence in Palestine too far. They are despised world-wide. It's one thing to be an idiot, but quite another to be a violent idiot. I remember a morning well years ago.

I was headed to Tubas in the West Bank where I managed to stay a couple months, helping at a school funded by a rich American Palestinian entrepreneur and scientist who lived in North Carolina and who had set up a school in Tubas, his birthplace, for children. Getting there was a bit of a bitch. There was an IDF "checkpoint" just to the west of the Jordan Valley. A Palestinian cabbie from Ben Gurion took me that far one winter morning in 2006. The IDF held me there for a couple hours, wondering who I was and what doing. My ride the 15 or so more miles to Tubas was waiting up the road. He was the headmaster at the school, which by the way survived only 18 months. ▶ Page 5

Report T

China warns U.S. of "countermeasures"

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN- Beijing's recent peace plan to end the Ukraine war has seen the U.S. ramping up tensions with China.

For more than a week now, U.S. officials have been claiming China is considering sending "lethal" weapons to Russia.

The most direct warning to date has come from U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken during a news conference in Astana, following meetings with Kazakh Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tileuberdi and President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

"We did very clearly warn China about the implications and consequences of going through with providing such support," he said.

U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan has also warned that there would be "real costs" for China if the country went forward with providing lethal weapons to Russia.

Washington alleges it has intelligence that China is considering sending lethal arms to Russia. ▶ Page 5

Iran edge Qatar at 2023 AFC U20 Asian Cup

TEHRAN - Mohammad Hazbavi's second half penalty secured Iran a 1-0 win over Qatar in their AFC U20 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2023 Group B match at the Istiqlol Stadium in Fergana, Uzbekistan on Wednesday.

The win gives three-time winners Iran a head start in the race to advance to the quarterfinals while Qatar have it all to do after the defeat.

Iran dominated the closing stages of the first half with Saeid Saharkhizan and Amirreza Eslamtalab toiling in front of goal, while Qatar also saw Rashid Al Abdulla's effort foiled as the teams went into the break level.

Qatar began the second half with purpose and gave Iran a scare in the 54th minute when Younis Mohammed found space just above the box, only to rifle his effort high off Rashid Al Abdulla's lay-off, the-afc.com reported. ▶ Page 3



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Rehabilitated birds back into the wild

TEHRAN – On Wednesday, the Department of Environment in the west-central city of Hamedan, northcentral Iran, released an eagle along with several other wild birds back into their natural habitat after being treated to mark World Wildlife Day which is celebrated annually on March 3.

World Wildlife Day is a United Nations International day to celebrate all the world's wild animals and plants and the contribution that they make to our lives and the health of the planet.

This World Wildlife Day is also a celebration of CITES, (the Convention on International

Trade in Endangered Species), as it turns 50.

The theme for World Wildlife Day this year is "Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation".

Hosting over 600 species of birds, Iran is a climatically rich country, so it is said that the number of bird species in Iran is higher than in the whole of Europe.

Iran, Brazil need to boost trade ties: envoy

TEHRAN - Brazilian Ambassador to Iran Laudemar Gonsalves de Aguiar Neto said on Tuesday that Tehran and Brasilia need to enhance their bilateral trade relations, IRIB reported.

The ambassador addressed reporters on the second day of his trip to Abadan, Khuzestan

Province, in southwestern Iran where he said that the Brazilian government is seeking to increase the level of trade with Iran.

Referring to the economic plans for bolstering mutual economic ties, Aguiar said that business people of the two countries would communicate with each other in ac-

cordance with an economic schedule.

Holding the Brazilian trade desk in the Abadan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture is one of the missions of the Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber of Commerce and certainly will yield positive results, he noted. ▶ Page 4

Family physician program sees building 4,000 medical centers

TEHRAN - The family physician program, being implemented in cities with less than 20,000 people, has envisaged building 3,900 medical centers across the country.

"We all seek to strengthen and streamline health and treatment networks to increase resilience, and the family physician program provides an opportunity to realize the goal, IRNA quoted deputy health minister Behrouz Rahimi as saying.

The national development plan has emphasized the need for the implementation of the family physician program, and about 6 to 8 percent of the gross national product is allocated to the health sector, he added.

The health network has experienced many successes and has been praised by the World Health Organization, he stressed. ▶ Page 7

Japanese ambassador visits tourist sites in Chabahar

TEHRAN – Japanese Ambassador to Tehran Kazutoshi Aikawa on Tuesday visited some tourist attractions in the Chabahar region of the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province.

It is the Martian Mountains, Lipar Wetland, and numerous coastal capacities that make Chabahar one of the most popular tourist destinations in Iran, said the ambassador, IRNA reported.

As a result of its sea communication network, Chabahar is well connected to different parts of the world, which is a great opportunity for both tourism and investment, he added.

Chabahar people have similar lives to Japanese people in terms of food and seafood and Japanese people love such areas that are close to them, he mentioned.

© IRNA / Mohammadreza Alimadadi



Radiation defense exercise held in south of Tehran

TEHRAN – Civil defense forces in the southern Tehran county of Ray participated in a "radiation defense drill" to train for countering radiation emanating from plane crashes.

The exact location of the drill is Fashafouyeh District, where civil and military forces trained for countering poisonous contamination caused by plane crashes.

From Inside T

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Tehran Papers T

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

Iran naval fleet in U.S. backyard

The Javan newspaper writes: Two days ago two Iranian warships, Dena and Makran, docked in the port of Rio de Janeiro. ▶ Page 2

Iran expels two German diplomats

TEHRAN – Iran announced Wednesday that it was declaring two German diplomats based in Tehran as persona non grata in a tit-for-tat move.

In a statement on Wednesday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani said Tehran has expelled two German diplomats after declaring them persona non grata because of the meddling and irresponsible actions of the German government in regard to the Islamic Republic of Iran's internal and judicial affairs.

Kanaani referred to the summoning of the German ambassador by the director general of the Western Europe Department at Iran's Foreign Ministry to notify him of the decision, saying Tehran will act decisively in the face of the excessive demands on the part of foreign countries. ▶ Page 3

Raisi assigns interior minister to probe poisoning of schoolgirls

TEHRAN – In a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, President Ebrahim Raisi ordered Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi to immediately launch an investigation into the poisoning of schoolgirls in certain cities in Iran.

Raisi also asked the ministries of health and intelligence and other state bodies to cooperate with the interior minister in the investigation.

The president added that release of any information in this regard should only be done by the Interior Ministry.

The poisonings that have been taking place for several weeks in some schools in certain cities, including Qom and Boroujerd, have forced young students to be taken to the hospital after reports of smelling gas.

Iranian series enter world streaming market

TEHRAN – Several online platforms providing streaming services around the world and television networks are offering Iranian series.

The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), an American public broadcaster and non-commercial, free-to-air television network based in Arlington, Virginia, is screening "Mortal Wound" directed by Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian, the Persian service of IRNA reported last week.

Television networks in Bangladesh, Iraq, Malaysia and Russia will soon screen the crime series starring Javad Ezzati, Hanieh Tavassoli and Rana Azadivar. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

Iran naval fleet in U.S. backyard

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

from page 1 ► About 200 years ago, President James Monroe said Latin America was the U.S. backyard and that the country would not allow other powers to be there.

principle

The Monroe Doctrine has been upheld in the continent over the past two centuries, and the United States has repeatedly gone to war with some countries to preserve it.

Iranian warships in the region not only show the decline of American power but also shows that Iran has the upper hand in the world power system.

Of course, Iran's power is not only limited to its presence in the seas. Iran's pressure on the gradual withdrawal of Americans from West Asia and its resistance against the expansion of NATO to the East were other aspects of Tehran's power.

Etela'at: Ukraine war, world powers and Iran

Now, like Germany in 1914, Europe considers Russia as an aggressor that cannot remain silent in the face of its expansionism, the Etela'at newspaper writes.

And of course, like Germany, it should not be humiliated with agreements, but it should be punished and then relations with it become normal. But from the point of view of the United States, Russia, and China should be weakened as two powerful rivals.

But the important thing about the Ukrainian war is Iran's position. One of the most serious political-economic consequences of the war for Iran is that the JCPOA has been removed from the agenda.

In the meantime, Russia is not interested in solving Iran's challenges with the international community, because solving these problems can provide the grounds for Iran's return to the energy market.

The end of the war in Ukraine and the face-saving withdrawal of Russia from the Ukrainian swamp is in favor of Iran. Iran can form a coalition together with China and Belarus to end the war in Ukraine in order not to allow the JCPOA to be left out of the agenda of the great powers.

Etemad: Ground ready for start of new round of negotiations

Spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Behrouz Kamalvandi has said we had "constructive and promising" discussions with the International Atomic Energy Agency delegation headed by Massimo Aparo, chief of the Department of Safeguards.

So, we have to wait for the positive results of Mr. Grossi's talks with Iranian officials in Tehran next week.

Etemad writes the announcement of Grossi's visit on the eve of the IAEA Board of Governors meeting on March 15 has created a positive atmosphere to prevent a new resolution against Iran.

Tehran seeks 'unconditional' lifting of sanctions on quake-hit Syria

TEHRAN – Amir Saeed Iravani, the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations, on Tuesday urged "immediate and unconditional" lifting of Western sanctions against Syria in order to help Syria to deal with the aftermath of the highly devastating earthquake that hit the country early last month.

The huge earthquake that hit northern Syria and southern Turkey on February 6, has so far killed more than 50,000 people on both sides of the border.

The natural disaster "has exacerbated the country's already dire humanitarian situation," collapsed "structures and basic services" and severely affected "people's ability to meet their basic needs," Iravani told the UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East.

"Given the severity of the situation, humanitarian assistance must be scaled up and provided in an impartial and non-discriminatory manner, free of politicization or conditionality to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals receive the assistance

Recently, Nicholas Burns, the head of the CIA, also stated: "We have no evidence to show that Iran has decided to militarize its nuclear program since 2003."

Therefore, even, with a new agreement with the IAEA, both sides can reach a road map to answer the three suspected sites and close the file forever.

IRAN: U.S. misleading tact regarding leak of indirect messages for talks with Iran

Recently, Iranian officials announced that the U.S. has sent a message to Iran, which was denied by the State Department spokesman, the Iran newspaper reported.

While the spokesman denied sending the message to Tehran indirectly, Qatar's foreign minister had announced it.

Undoubtedly, after the end of the unrest in Iran, reaching an agreement with Iran is critical for the U.S. as the Biden government must have an answer for its failures against Iran and his promise to revive the nuclear deal.

But the U.S. president, who sees himself in a weaker position against Iran than in the past, does not want to pay the cost for the many signals he sends to Tehran to resume negotiations.

Denial of sending the message indirectly through high-ranking regional officials becomes meaningful in such an atmosphere because it has become clear that Biden has a difficult path ahead to reach an agreement. On the one hand, he is facing a challenge by the Republicans, and on the other, he is facing pressure by groups that believe efforts to resume negotiations with Iran are made at a time that the U.S. is in a weak position.

Arman-e- Melli: It is better to make changes to nuclear team

It is said that Iranians always prolong negotiations to reach their goals, Arman-e-Melli writes.

Of course, we are looking for more profit from the negotiations, but we should not wait so long in making a decision that opportunities are lost.

The Americans were waiting to see how Iran manages internal unrest. Iran was managed despite the bad economic situation.

Both Europe and Iran have come to the conclusion that Iran's nuclear issues should be resolved.

Considering the enthusiasm of both sides and also the comments made by the Iraqis and Omanis regarding mediation, we probably will witness a favorable atmosphere in the negotiations in the future.

We have to accept that the former negotiating team played a big role in the Vienna Talks, so it is better for the current negotiating team to utilize people like Araghchi and Zarif as advisors, and if necessary make a change in the team to achieve the result in the negotiations to revive the JCPOA.

they require," he added.

"In order to more effectively address Syria's current humanitarian crisis, the international community must focus on lifting the inhumane unilateral sanctions."

The U.S. and its Western allies introduced sanctions on Syria after 2011, when the country found itself in the grip of rampant foreign-backed militancy and terrorism. The coercive measures intensified further with Washington's passing of the Caesar Act in 2019, which targeted any individual and business that participated either directly or indirectly in Syria's reconstruction efforts.

The Iranian envoy reminded that the Western measures amounted to blatant violations of international law and the UN Charter, adding that the sanctions had made it more difficult for the Syrian people to access their needs and have constrained the ability of government institutions to deliver basic services and improve living standards.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Restoring JCPOA 'is the only way for us': EU's Mora

TEHRAN – Enrique Mora, deputy secretary general of the European External Action Service, has said the European Union is of the opinion that reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is the only way forward.

"We still think that the JCPOA is the only way to deal with the Iranian nuclear problem, it is the only way for us," Mora said in an interview with the Internationale Politik Quarterly (IPQ) published on February 28.

He added, "We want to keep the JCPOA on the table, but at the same time we are talking to the Iranians, we are helping the Ukrainians talk to Iranians and others and put an end to drone deliveries."

Iran has been saying that it has never sold drones to Russia to be used in the Ukraine war. Iran has also said it sold a limited number



of drones to Ukraine before the start of the war in Feb. 24, 2022.

Mora, who was representing the U.S. and three European countries in the nuclear talks with Iran

until summer 2022, went on to say that "we are keeping all channels open."

He also said the EU is "looking at the dynamics in the (Persian)

Gulf—and when I say Gulf, I mean both sides of the (Persian) Gulf."

The EU diplomat said the dispute between Iran and Saudi Arabia is a source of worry. "There is a worrying dynamic because of the Iranian-Saudi antagonism."

Mora also said the EU was criticized for being involved in talks with Iran and now it is being criticized for not holding "enough dialogue" with the country.

"We as the EU used to be criticized for talking to the Iranians, but more recently we are now being accused of not having enough dialogue with them. The focus is not just a question of strategy as expressed in our Strategic Partnership with the (Persian) Gulf announced in May 2022. If there is conflict in that part of the Middle East, then things can get very detrimental to the EU. We prefer to focus on that and try with all the countries."

Key element behind Sistan-Baluchestan unrest has fled Iran: IRNA

TEHRAN – One of the key elements behind the recent violent riots in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan has fled Iran, IRNA revealed in a report on Wednesday.

Abdul-Ghaffar Naqshbandi, a provocateur who played a major role in disrupting security in the province, has fled the country and taken refuge in a neighboring country, an informed source told IRNA.

"Abdul-Ghaffar Naqshbandi has been transferred to one of the neighboring countries after an arrest warrant was issued against him," the source said, speaking on

condition of anonymity.

The source explained that Naqshbandi was recently living in hiding and fled the country out of fear that his connections with foreign spy agencies would come to light, Press TV said, quoting IRNA.

He had long been a pawn in the hands of foreign spy agencies and was helped flee the country "by his masters" after the Shia and Sunni people of the province found out about his ill intentions, the source noted.

The source added that Naqshbandi also had a role in the assassination of Sunni cleric Molavi Mustafa Jangi Zahi, who was



Abdul-Ghaffar Naqshbandi

fatally shot on January 20, 2012 while traveling on a road between the southeastern port city of Chabahar and Sarbaz city.

Sistan-Baluchestan Province has been among the regions most affected by foreign-backed riots

Sanctions are an instrument of death, destruction and global rift



Be all this as it may, why should we consider sanctions an abomination to be renounced and outlawed in a civilized world? Let me provide you with a summary of the case against sanctions implemented by the United States and in the process confirm my own myopia in all that I wrote before.

Sanctions are "easy" to adopt. The President can sanction any country's exports, imports, access to the dollar market and more, sanction institutions, companies and individuals around the world, freeze assets and restrict travel. This is easy and painless. However, precisely because sanctions are now seen as an effective option to affect change around the world and easy to adopt, diplomacy has been shortchanged. Traditional diplomacy is not afforded the time and effort it needs to produce results.

A president can do much of the sanctioning by executive order and if he or she needs congressional support, it is invariably available. The president and Congress are seen by the citizenry as acting and doing something while avoiding armed conflict that leads to casualties and public scrutiny. Politicians can pound their chests and get good press.

Yet, while U.S. casualties may be avoided at least in the short run, Americans do not see the misery that might befall the target. Lack of medicines and deteriorating healthcare that will in some cases result in untimely death for many women and children, besides deprivation from malnutrition. Photos of these are not as disturbing as dead bodies of Americans in body bags and physical destruction caused by American bombs.

The fallout in the target is invariably on the poor, with those in power left unscathed. They have

all the medicines, the best available healthcare and nutrition. The powerful even invariably benefit financially through smuggling and corruption as shortages become more prevalent. Instead it is the poor and the average person who suffer and they will invariably hold the United States responsible, especially if they don't object to their government's policies that the U.S. finds objectionable. The U.S. creates enemies for itself. The number of enemies can grow with time as sanctions drag on and on as we have seen in the cases of Cuba, Venezuela and Iran. Even if the government is unpopular, significant pain and mortalities that drag on for years will invariably turn some of the citizenry against the United States.

Sanctions are a blunt instrument. It is very difficult to find a smart sanction that directly targets the source of the objectionable policies to pressure for change. Instead, the U.S. hopes that by causing widespread misery, it can get those in power to do as it wants. Still a key is how the general public feels about their government. Is the government popular and are its policies popular? Unfortunately, the U.S. rarely gives much weight to these factors. Washington imposes sanctions and hopes for the best.

A major shortcoming of U.S. sanction policies is that decisionmakers don't consider the widespread fallout to other countries and how they evolve over time. When the U.S. adopts secondary sanctions, then countries around the world that have economic, financial and human connections to the target are also affected—their exports may be harmed, their options for imports may be more limited and financial transfers may be impeded. Yes, they are not the target, but they are affected.

The impact on other countries depends on the economic characteristics of the target. Is it a major exporter of an essential commodity?

Is that commodity widely available from other countries? Is it in short supply? What is the impact of sanctions on prices of goods exported by the target? We see first-hand the impact of sanctions on Iran, Venezuela and now on Russia—higher oil and natural gas prices around the world affecting the prices of all forms of energy. This in turn affects supply chains and the price of other commodities that use energy as input, resulting in higher global prices and inflation.

The economic fallout is even more fundamental. The foundational theorem of international economics is Comparative Advantage—countries specialize in the production and export of goods in which they have a comparative production cost advantage. Sanctions undermine these "natural" advantages in production. In so doing and depending on the target attributes, there is industrial dislocation, countries may have to restructure, retool and change what they produce, incurring restructuring costs, which in turn affect global prices, inflation and employment.

The impact of sanctions goes far beyond trade. Sanctions affect cross border investment. Moreover, banks and financial markets may be sanctioned from lending to the target, which in turn impacts the target's economic growth and global economic output and employment. Financial matters could be made even more difficult for the target by the sanctioning of its banks and even its central bank to cut the country's access to the dollar market and international banking, which in turn would force the country to use gold or cash in suitcases for its international transactions, something that is costly and cumbersome.

All in all and depending on the country being sanctioned, the economic and financial fallout for the world could be devastating. Such widespread economic and financial dislocations can in turn lead to po-

litical upheavals and new alliances—the enemy of my enemy becomes a friend. How about Russia and China becoming closer or Russia and Iran cementing relations? Yet such global political earthquakes in political alliances and their long-term fallout are not on the forefront of politicians' minds as they slap sanctions willy-nilly on their adversary.

Depending on the characteristics of the target, exports and imports, a domestic lobby can emerge to prevent the lifting of sanctions because domestic producers have geared up to produce what was previously imported from the target. A case in point is dried nuts (pistachios) and fruit (raisins) from Iran. Also third countries may lobby to maintain sanctions in order to keep the target's exports from the market as they may lower the price of their exports (for example piped gas and LNG from Iran or oil from Venezuela).

The fallout from sanctions can also linger on for years even after the U.S. has "lifted" them. Again, the case in point is Iran. If and when sanctions are lifted, it is highly unlikely that foreign investment in Iran, private and corporate, will resume any time soon. A high-level international banker confirmed this to me. After what he had seen, he was unsure if the United States would slap sanctions back on a country after a few years or even after months. But just look at what Trump did. He withdrew from the nuclear agreement, re-imposed the sanctions that had been lifted and even added to them. The banker said that he would not advise a client to invest in Iran. Wars seem to have a finality, sanctions don't. They leave a trail that lingers and lingers, affecting all dimensions of the target's future relations in the post-sanction era. As a result, uncertainty and risk of doing business is increased, which in turn add to the cost of business transactions.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

By Mehran Shamsuddin

TEHRAN – After days of media speculation, the UN nuclear watchdog confirmed the finding of uranium particles enriched to up to 84% but it said it was in talks with Iranian authorities over the issue.

According to a report by the watchdog seen by Reuters, the International Atomic Energy Agency is in discussions with Iran on the origins of uranium particles enriched to up to 83.7% purity.

“Regarding the origin of the particles enriched above 60% U-235, identified after the implementation of the new cascade configuration at FFEP, discussions with Iran are still continuing,” the IAEA said in a confidential report to member states.

“Iran informed the Agency that ‘unintended fluctuations in enrichment levels may have occurred during transition period at the time of commissioning the process of [60%] product (November 2022) or while replacing the feed cylinder,’” it added.

The controversy over 84% uranium began a few days ago amid ongoing discussions between Tehran and the IAEA over protracted safeguards issues.

In response, Iran ruled out that it intentionally enriched at that level, saying that the particles found by the IAEA, if true, are a byproduct. And that misunderstanding has been addressed professionally by Iran.

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of



Iran, said Wednesday that Iran and the IAEA solved the issue of 84% uranium.

Speaking on the sidelines of a cabinet session, Eslami said the issue has been reviewed by Iran and the issue has been closed after being examined by experts.

He also said Tehran remains in contact with the IAEA chief and his deputy. According to the nuclear chief, a delegation from the UN nuclear watchdog traveled to Tehran to look into the issue. “It transpired that there were no deviations,” Eslami was quoted as saying by Iran’s official news agency IRNA.

Iran FM wraps up visit to Geneva

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has returned home after concluding a two-day visit to the Swiss city of Geneva, where he met with many foreign diplomats and officials.

In Geneva, Amir Abdollahian held a meeting with UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths. In this meeting, the two sides discussed issues of mutual interest including the humanitarian situation in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Amir Abdollahian referred to his meetings with the UN chief as well as directors of humanitarian organizations on Tuesday and Monday in Geneva, saying humanitarian issues in those countries are worthy of more attention from the international community, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

He also highlighted Iran’s move to send relief aid to Syria following the recent earthquake there. The Iranian foreign minister said unfortunately, the quake worsened the difficult humanitarian situation in Syria compared with the past and it is necessary that the imposed blockade against Syria be lifted in order to improve conditions for the Syrian people. He added that the Islamic Republic of Iran, just as always, is ready to continue its cooperation with the United Nations and the special envoy of the UN chief for helping relieve humanitarian and hygiene hardships in Syria.

Also referring to the issue of Yemen, he said that politically speaking, the Yemen war must end and the humanitarian siege of the country must be lifted. Amir Abdollahian added, “We are in touch with different Yemeni factions, and the Yemeni people believe that the key initiative for this country would be the removal of the humanitarian siege.” Pointing to Iran’s hosting of several million refugees and migrants from Afghanistan, the top diplomat noted that it is necessary to create sustainable infrastructure with the support of the UN to meet all their needs. Amir Abdollahian further spoke about Ukraine. He outlined Iran’s principled policy on the war in Ukraine, saying despite having good ties with Russia, Iran does not provide any warring side with military assistance because Tehran does not consider war as a solution and supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries including Ukraine.

Martin Griffiths for his part said he was pleased to meet Iran’s foreign minister and to be in constant touch with Iranian officials. He further thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for supporting his mission.

He concurred with Amir Abdollahian that it is necessary to facilitate and increase relief work in Syria and Yemen. Griffiths then briefed Iran’s top diplomat on his latest efforts regarding humanitarian issues in the two countries.

Iran expels two German diplomats

From Page 1 ▶ Kanaani stressed that Iran’s priority has always been to maintain interaction based on respect but if the other sides intend to ignore “our principles and sovereignty, resorting to other options will be

inevitable.”

The Iranian move appears to have come in response to Germany declaring two Iranian diplomats in Berlin as persona non grata.

Eslamic also touched on the stalled talks over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, formally called the JCPOA, linking them to the upcoming visit by IAEA chief Rafael Grossi.

Commenting on the planned visit, he said, “This visit can lead to an opening in the JCPOA talks. We don’t accept unusual cases that are politically motivated and comes under pressure,” he said.

Eslami said the remaining issues will be dealt with during the Grossi visit, which is expected to take place on Friday afternoon.

Grossi will arrive in Iran on Friday and will hold high-level meetings on

Saturday, according to Fars News.

The overall situation indicates that Iran is ready to clarify any misunderstanding and has not undertaken any activities that undermine nuclear transparency. Iranian officials have said that if Iran chooses to enrich at higher levels, it will make announcements in this regard.

The upcoming visit of Grossi is also a chance, maybe a last one, to pave the way for restoring the JCPOA talks. Pundits believe that if the IAEA acts professionally, it will be possible to clear the way for resuming the talks.

the world community including war, food crisis, energy crisis, water crisis and humanitarian situations in the world. Korosi highlighted Iran’s great progress in the field of water management, asking the Islamic Republic to actively participate in a relevant meeting of the United Nations in March 2024. Amir Abdollahian thanked him for the invitation and said that Iran will try to have an active and influential presence in this meeting.

On February 28, Iranian foreign minister held talks jointly with the heads and high-ranking officials of international humanitarian organizations based in the Swiss city including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

In the meeting, the Iranian foreign minister referred to the political and social situation in Afghanistan, especially over the past 1.5 years. He said the situation has sent an unprecedented influx of refugees into Iran from Afghanistan. Amirabdollahian stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran has hosted millions of displaced Afghans, immigrants and refugees for more than four decades but, unfortunately, international support has not been proportionate to the surge in costs imposed on Iran due to the entry of Afghan migrants in recent years, and very little assistance has been provided for Iran for this purpose.

He stressed that the new humanitarian crises should not cause the previous ones like Afghanistan’s humanitarian issues and its consequences on neighboring countries to slip into oblivion.

The top Iranian diplomat underlined that unilateral sanctions have had a detrimental impact on the motivation of financial sponsors to undertake the burden of hosting Afghan nationals. Therefore, international organizations must take necessary measures to protect global relief aid from the sanctions which act as a barrier. Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, António Vitorino, Director General of the International Organization for Migration, Ramesh Rajasingham, Director of Coordination Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Geneva, and Ms. Mirjana Spoljaric, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who were present in the meeting, appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran’s cooperation with international humanitarian organizations. They further underscored the need for continuing and bolstering this cooperation.

The international humanitarian officials also reaffirmed their commitment to step up efforts to fairly share the burden of hosting refugees and migrants. They also stressed the need to not let humanitarian relief operations be affected by sanctions.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said in statement that Germany decided to declare “two Iranian embassy staff members to be persona non grata and ordering them to leave Germany immediately.”

The development comes against a backdrop of rising tensions between Iran and Europe. In recent days, Britain, Germany, and Austria have summoned the Iranian ambassadors each for various reasons.

Iran edge Qatar at 2023 AFC U20 Asian Cup

From Page 1 ▶ Iran, however, persisted and were awarded a penalty in the 63rd minute when Zavoshi was brought down by Mohammed Mansour inside the six-yard-box with Mohammad Hazbavi sending Katoul the wrong way.

Iran should have doubled their advantage in the 70th minute when Mersad Seifi weaved his way through on the left flank before sending a wonderful cut-back to Zavoshi who, however, failed to connect in front of a gaping goalmouth.

Qatar pursued the equalizer but their efforts fell flat with Al Rawi failing to find the target from distance, before the Qatari No 11 saw his attempt from inside the box go to waste.

Iran will face Australia next on Saturday, while Qatar will have to defeat Vietnam to keep their hopes alive.

Fatemeh Rashidi named Iran’s women volleyball coach

TEHRAN – Fatemeh Rashidi was named as new head coach of Iran’s women’s national volleyball team.

She replaced Italian coach Alessandra Campedelli in the position.

Campedelli was named as head coach of Iran’s women’s volleyball team in January 2022 on a one-year contract but the federation did not renew her deal.

Iran’s women’s volleyball team will have to participate at the FIVB Volleyball Women’s Challenger Cup, 2023 Asian Women’s Volleyball Championship and 2022 Asian Games.

Pakdel retains Iran handball leadership

TEHRAN – Alireza Pakdel remained president of Iran handball federation for a four-year term till 2027.

In the elections held at the Iran’s Academy Olympic in Tehran on Wednesday, Pakdel secured 59 votes out of 61 votes cast.

The Iranian federation has not yet renewed the contract of Montenegrin handball coach Veselin Vujovic but Pakdel said that they will continue their cooperation with the coach.

“We will start negotiations within the coming days because we are satisfied with our team’s performance in the world championship,” Pakdel said.

Masoud Almasi came second with two votes.

Iran too strong for Saudi Arabia in Thailand’s futsal event

TEHRAN – Iran futsal team beat Saudi Arabia 11- 0 in their opening match in the NSDF Futsal Championship 2023.

Hossein Tayebi and Hamzeh Kakhodaie scored three goals each and Saied Mombeini, Saied Ahmad Abbasi, Mojtaba Parsapour, Salar Aghapour and Moslem Oladghobad scored for Team Melli.

Iran are scheduled to meet Egypt in Group B on Friday.

Hosts Thailand, Mozambique and Japan are in Group A.

The international event started on March 1 in Pattaya city and will run until March 7.

Iran are competing at the NSDF Futsal Championship as part of preparation for the 2024 FIFA Futsal World Cup.

Hong Kong beat Iran at 2023 IIHF World Championship Division III

TEHRAN – Hong Kong defeated Iran 11-1 in Group B of the 2023 IIHF World Championship Division III on Tuesday.

Iran had started the campaign with a 14-4 win over Malaysia Monday night.

Team Melli are scheduled to play hosts Bosnia and Herzegovina on Thursday.

Kyrgyzstan and Singapore are also in the group. Group A consists of Turkmenistan, Chinese Taipei, South Africa, Luxembourg and Thailand.

The Group A tournament will be held in Cape Town, South Africa from 17 to 23 April.

Sportsman snatches gold at Dubai 2023 GP

TEHRAN – Iran’s shot put thrower has ranked first at the Fazza International Competition.

At the shot put, Rashid Masjedi finished first at the event in the UAE.

The Iranian athlete registered a record of 6.97 in the competitions.

Hajar Safarzadeh ranked second at 400m in T12 class.

Earlier, Hamed Amiri and Yasin Khosravi claimed gold and Erfan Bandari took bronze.

The Dubai 2023 GP, aka the Fazza International Competition is being held from 26 February to 1 March.

As many as 700 athletes from 66 countries are competing at the event.

Also known as the Fazza International Competition, the event has featured in all GP editions since the inaugural season back in 2013.

Iran start 2023 Junior Kabaddi World Championships on high

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Chinese Taipei 62-25 in their opening match in the second edition of the Junior Kabaddi World Championships underway in Urmia, Iran.

Iran will play Uganda on Wednesday in Group A. Group B consists of Kenya, Iraq and Palestine, while Bangladesh, India and Thailand are in Group C.

Pakistan, Nepal and Georgia are in Group D.

The teams will play the group stages matches in a round-robin format. After that the top two teams in each group will qualify for the quarterfinals.

The semifinals and final will be held on March 3 and 4.

Beach soccer victorious over Belarus

TEHRAN – Iran beach soccer team beat Belarus 7-3 in a friendly match on Wednesday.

In the match held in Bandar Abbas, south of Iran, Mohammad Ali Mokhtari scored twice and Ali Mirshekari, Mehdi Shirmohammadi, Moslem Mesigar, Mohammad Moradi and Mehdi Mirjalili scored a goal each.

Iran, who had also defeated Belarus 5-0 in their first friendly match, will play the European team once again on Thursday.

Team Melli prepare for the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2023, where it has been drawn in Group B along with the UAE, Malaysia and Uzbekistan.

Iran, Brazil need to boost trade ties: envoy



Brazilian Ambassador to Iran Laudemar Gonsalves de Aguiar Neto (R) visits Abadan oil industry facilities on Tuesday.

from page 1 ► “It has been decided that a memorandum of understanding will be prepared by the officials of Abadan city and we are also interested in cooperating with them

in the fields that the Iranian side expects,” the diplomat said.

He underlined that agriculture, tourism, oil and petrochemical industries, sports, and fisheries are some of the fields of Abadan's cooperation agreement with Brazil.

Yasin Kaveh-Pour, the mayor of Abadan, who accompanied the ambassador in a tour of the city, said that the grounds for the cooperation between Abadan and Brazil are laid, so the two sides can develop ties in cultural, sports, and economic fields.

Mentioning a sisterhood agreement that was concluded between Abadan and Santos city in the past, Kaveh-Pour said: “Now we are pursuing the conclusion of this official agreement in order to provide the basis for develop relations with Brazil in various fields.”

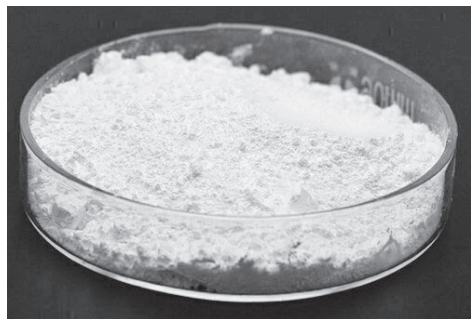
Over 190,000 tons of alumina powder produced in 10 months

TEHRAN- Iran has produced 190,782 tons of alumina powder during the first ten months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022-January 20, 2023), according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

As reported, the figure shows nearly one percent drop as compared to the output in the ten-month period of the previous year, which was 193,534 tons.

Aluminum oxide, which is commonly called alumina, is an inert, odorless, white amorphous material often used in industrial ceramics.

Alumina is an important ceramic material for industrial applications. The numerous fields of application range from construction materials, to filling materials, as well as abrasives and catalysts.



In plants and mechanical engineering, alumina ceramics are mainly used for wear and corrosion protection.

The particle size distribution largely determines the application range and the quality of an alumina powder. Reliably identifying the differences in particle size is therefore an essential requirement of the measuring instrument.

TEDPIX drops 16,300 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 16,348 points to 1.821 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 15.575 billion securities worth 89.95 trillion rials (about \$224 million) were traded at the TSE on Wednesday.

TEDPIX gained 132,000 points in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

The index lost 155,778 points (9.22 percent) in the previous Iranian calendar month Bahman (ended on February 19).

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).

A stock market analyst believes that TEDPIX is expected to follow an upward trend in the last month of the current Iranian calendar year (February 20-March 20).

“Now the stock market is in a good position for investment, and paying attention to the issues affecting the stock market can help in the improvement and prosperity of this market,” Majid Mohammad-Alizadeh told IRNA in mid-February.

He pointed to the recent fluctuations in the stock market and the factors affecting it, saying: “The lack of trust and confidence as well as the uncertainty of the investors in the capital market caused them to be more cautious and reduced their sense of risk-taking to a great extent which disrupted the upward trend of the stock market.”

According to the expert, rumors and false news, intrusive and non-expert comments, and numerous redundant bills passed by parliament have also contributed to the uncertainty in investors' decision-making.

Mohammad-Alizadeh further pointed to other influential factors in the withdrawal of liquidity from the stock market and said: “The attractiveness of parallel markets has also caused the withdrawal of liquidity from

the stock market and has pushed investors towards parallel markets.”

“The combination of all these factors has caused the growth of the stock market index to slow down,” he said.

In late October 2022, Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) unveiled a comprehensive support package to encourage activities in the capital market as shareholders were getting reluctant to invest in the market.

One of the major measures considered in this package was the insurance of shareholders' capital and dividends over the next year.

Insuring the shares of real entities, issuing subordinated warrants on shares of fixed income, injecting new resources into the market by sovereign funds to buy shares, depositing up to \$130 million of the resources approved in the national budget bill for the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, as well as direct and continuous coordination, supervision and monitoring of the legal entities active in the capital market, including companies and semi-governmental financial institutions, pension funds and military institutions were among the measures considered in the mentioned support package.

The package also stressed cooperation between the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs to manage the interest rates.

Increasing SEO's direct investment in Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, limiting the activities of marketers, and suspending the underwriting of securities and initial offerings until further notice, were also among the issues considered in SEO's support package.

Following this support package, the market started a modest upward trend in November and early December 2022, but the upward trend was once again hindered by various internal and external factors.

CEO of Russia's Gazprom visits Iran seeking expansion of energy ties

TEHRAN - During a visit to Iran, a delegation from Russia's state-owned Gazprom led by the holding's Chairman of the Management Committee (CEO) Alexey Miller met with officials from the Iranian Oil Ministry and discussed energy cooperation, Tasnim news agency reported.

As reported, Miller and the delegation accompanying him held talks with senior officials of the Iranian Ministry of Oil upon arrival on Tuesday.

According to a statement by Gazprom, as part of the visit, Alexey Miller met and held talks with Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber, Oil Minister Javad Oji, and Head of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr.

“The meetings addressed the cooperation areas in the energy sector in furtherance of the



memorandum signed between Gazprom and NIOC in 2022,” the company's statement said.

In July 2022, Gazprom and the National Iranian Oil Company

signed a memorandum of understanding for strategic cooperation. The document aims to evaluate cooperation prospects in areas like developing Iranian gas and oil fields, performing

swap transactions with natural gas and petroleum products, implementing large-scale and small-scale LNG projects, constructing gas trunklines, and cooperation in science and technology.

Later, Iranian Deputy Oil Minister Ahmad Asadzadeh said that Russia was going to start developing six oil and two gas fields in Iran. He noted that Gazprom has a promising opportunity to transport its gas through Iran to neighboring countries, including Pakistan, and the countries of the Persian Gulf.

In early November 2022, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak reported that Gazprom would soon agree on the technological parameters of projects in Iran and could sign contracts for these projects by the end of November.

Iran to open trade center in South Africa soon

TEHRAN - The Islamic Republic of Iran is planning to open a trade center in South Africa in the near future, the country's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced in a statement.

“The Trade Promotion Organization of Iran intends to establish a trade center in South Africa in order to facilitate trade in the country's market and to introduce the production and export capabilities of Iranian companies to their South African counterparts,” the TPO said in the statement published on the organization's portal on Tuesday.

TPO invited all the businessmen and traders interested in working in South Africa to fill out a registration form to get in touch with the mentioned center and get the necessary support and information.

Back in August 2022, Director-General of TPO's Africa Office Mohammad-Sadeq Qanadzadeh said TPO was planning to open

seven new trade centers in African countries by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

“So far, three business centers have been established in Africa, and we plan to increase this number to 10 centers by the end of the year,” Qanadzadeh said.

Earlier in June 2022, TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak said the country was taking the necessary steps to increase annual trade exchanges with African countries to \$5 billion by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (begins in March 2025).

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

Referring to the preparation of the country's trade development roadmap at the beginning of the work of the 13th administration, the official said: “In this roadmap, major factors



including exports and the share of different sectors are specified, and in the case of Africa, the priorities and targets for trade with different countries and the requirements for reaching these targets are determined.”

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

Transit of goods via Iran rises 5.2% in 11 months on year

TEHRAN- Transit of commodities through Iran increased 5.22 percent in the first eleven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022-February 19, 2023), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Mohammad Rezvani-Far said that 12 million tons of commodities have been transited via the country in the 11-month period.

After seven years of reduction in the transit of goods from the country, the growth path

of transit resumed in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022) and with the passage of 12.65 million tons of goods through Iran, a growth of 68 percent was achieved, the former spokesman of IRICA has previously announced.

The policy of paying attention to neighbors and developing political and economic relations with neighboring countries in the current government, increasing attention to road and rail routes in the world and the efforts and cooperation of transportation and trade-related organizations in establishing or activating corridors through the country has led to significant growth in transit



of goods through Iran.

Iran is one of the countries that has a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

Considering its geographical

location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due.

Paying attention to upstream documents, especially the country's development plans, and the government's decision to develop transit, paying special attention to infrastructure development, reducing transit time, making it cheaper to cross Iran and making more advantages over competitors, due to the short path for customers, can lead to facilitating the development of transit so that the country can reach the desired growth in this due.

Greenhouse cultivation development, a pivotal plan of Kordestan agriculture sector



TEHRAN- The development of cultivation in greenhouses is a pivotal plan of the agriculture sector of Kordestan province, in the west of Iran.

Kordestan province is considered one of the most promising provinces in the country in the agricultural sector, and for this reason, despite various deficiencies and limitations, agriculture contributes a lot to the production and employment in this province.

Due to its high economic benefit, greenhouse cultivation is one of the important capacities in the development of the agricultural sector and the prosperity of employment and production, and for this reason, in recent years, various measures have been taken in this direction in Kordestan province, although these

measures have not been proportional to the high potentials and capacities of the province.

The development of greenhouse cultivation will reduce the need to import agricultural products in the province in four seasons, and at the same time, it will provide the basis for the export of produced products to other provinces and even abroad.

Since the beginning of this Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022), the development of greenhouse cultivation has been placed as one of the central programs in the Agriculture Department of the province, and in this regard, special facilities are provided to the applicants, focusing on the development of small-scale greenhouses.

As announced by the province's Agriculture Department, currently the largest amount of greenhouse production in this province is related to products such as cucumbers, strawberries, tomatoes, and ornamental plants, and the ground has been prepared to increase the amount of production in other products as well.

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

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.

Someday a day of reckoning for cruelties...

From page 1 ► Soldiers stood and ambled about. Some Palestinian laborers had been detained by the roadside where they were forced to squat in the dirt. I went up to one soldier and I asked him, having a hunch: “Where are you from?” His English was good. He answered: “Israel”, as if I were stupid. “No,” I pressed the guy, a corpulent Jew. “Where are you REALLY from?” He hesitated a bit and finally said: “Brooklyn.” I simply told him I had lived and worked in New York, not wanting to stir up more trouble. I was interrogated about what I was doing and where wanting to go. I told the truth. I also told him my ride to Tubas was a hundred meters away and pointed him out.

I was delayed and searched for another hour or so, but finally the soldiers let me go to meet the school headmaster, a very kind elderly gentleman in a ragged overcoat with an ancient little car. I scanned the checkpoint scene more and then noticed the most important thing to see there at Hamra Checkpoint that winter morning. Up on a hill off the road stood a man dressed in civilian clothes, carrying a rifle and a handgun. He was observing the entire scene like a vulture. It at least felt like he was in charge, even of the soldiers, some 20 of them at Hamra Checkpoint. Like the soldiers would defer primarily to this man in civilian clothes with the weapons if it were demanded.

The IDF finally let me go to Tubas. The headmaster drove slowly away and soon we were climbing up out of the Jordan Valley and soon arrived at his home in Tubas where his wife fed me and let me sleep on a couch on his porch there.



But I learned something interesting that morning. The man on the hill beside the road was a Jewish “settler” in the West Bank from some foreign place, probably the U.S. I imagined. And a couple hours later I heard that the IDF had sent out a patrol to bring me back to Hamra Checkpoint and disallow my visit to Tubas. But by that time I was inside Tubas town and they could not find me. And for two months I was “safe” in and around Tubas and even managed three weeks later to visit the famous refugee camp in Jenin, courtesy of the Palestinian Red Crescent, where scores of fairly fresh graves had been dug, the result of a horrendous, infamous raid on the refugee camp by the IDF.

But I never forgot the civilian with the weapons on the hill, the apparent “settler”, and it was not difficult to realize that the “settlers” generally constituted the absolute core of Israeli designs on the West Bank:

to force Palestinians out by making their lives so miserable that maybe they would just leave their country and become refugees once again.

The settlers have been wilding this year like never before. Killing Palestinians and destroying their property and with absolute impunity and hand in hand with their IDF protection in the background. The best (or worst) recent example of this was a literal pogrom in Huwara, a village near Nablus in the West Bank. Scores were injured and some killed, scores of Palestinian cars set on fire and at least a dozen Palestinian homes set on fire, too.

What makes the Jewish settlers in the West Bank from afar any better than the now diminished but still extant “Islamic State” terrorists in Syria and Iraq? Nothing. They are worse in many respects. (And Islamic State was, much against the Western and U.S. propaganda, often supported by the U.S. and may still be.

The worst tale I ever heard of the IS rabble involved attacks on the Yazidi communities in Iraq. A mother had become a prospective “sex slave” to IS goons. She refused the role. IS thus starved her for three days and then fed her a good meal. She ate her meal with gusto. But after she had finished she was told she had just eaten her baby, or parts of her child. One can hardly imagine anything so cruel.

So this degree of cruelty, whether fomented by IS or the settlers in the West Bank or the IDF or gangsters like Netanyahu or Ben Gvir or Smoltrich or others such as enabling supporters in the West in the U.S. is what not just the Mideast, but the entire world must deal with for the time being. The cruelties are likely to become worse for a while until vocal opposition becomes so strong around the globe that changes will finally be forced and the Zionists and others of their ilk finally have their day of reckoning.

China warns U.S. of “countermeasures”

From page 1 ► But critics argue it may be similar to the same intelligence that the U.S. used to invade Iraq in March 2003.

“China can’t have it both ways when it comes to ... (the Ukraine war). It can’t be putting forward peace proposals on the one hand, while actually feeding the flames of the fire that Russia has started with the other hand,” Blinken said in Kazakhstan.

“We will not hesitate, for example, to target Chinese companies or individuals that violate our sanctions, or otherwise engaged in supporting the Russian war effort,” he added.

Washington has recently blacklisted several Chinese companies for allegedly providing “non-lethal” assistance to Russia.

Beijing has strongly denounced the punitive measures.

The Chinese foreign ministry said it will take “resolute countermeasures” in response to U.S. sanctions against Chinese companies.

“We deplore and reject the move,” China’s foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a press briefing.

Washington’s course of action “which has neither basis in international law nor authorization from the UN Security Council, is a typical practice of long-arm jurisdiction, severely violating China’s interests,” Mao said.

She pointed out that China has been maintaining its neutrality on the Ukraine conflict, actively pushing for peaceful dialogue and political solution, while the U.S. has been fueling the war by pouring more than \$32 billion of military aid into the battlefield.

Last week, Beijing called for peace talks, releasing a 12-point paper to end the war. It included respect for all countries’ territorial sovereignty.

“In response to the erroneous actions of the U.S. in sanctioning Chinese companies, we will resolutely counter them ... it is as plain as daylight who is promoting peace and who is pouring fuel into the fire,” Mao said.

She called on the U.S. to stop spreading disinformation, drop its sanctions on Chinese companies and embark on a path to help ease the tension.

“China will continue to take necessary measures to firmly safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises,” she noted.

Beijing has also urged the U.S. to reflect on itself and stop spreading false information about the war.

Further public claims by Washington and its NATO allies that China is considering providing lethal equipment, including drones, to Russia comes at a time when the U.S. is sending an additional \$12 billion in financial assistance to Ukraine.



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen became the latest senior Western official to visit the Ukrainian capital Kyiv, promising assistance and more measures to isolate Russia after meetings with the Ukrainian President and other officials.

Yellen, flanked by sandbags in true Hollywood style as some pointed out, announced the transfer of the first \$1.25 billion from the latest, \$9.9 billion tranche of economic and budget assistance from Washington.

As is the norm now, when U.S. officials meet their counterparts in Kyiv, air raid sirens go off in the Ukrainian capital and as usual, these turn out to be false alarms.

The rising tensions between the U.S. and China also come amid criticism over the use of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to advance political agendas against foes, rather than an international mechanism to address global human rights issues.

In a dig at the U.S. and some of its Western allies, China said it opposes “certain countries’ moves to politicize, weaponize and instrumentalize human rights issues.”

The 52nd session of the UNHRC this week saw a heavy focus on Ukraine with various countries exchanging accusations.

Mao said “the U.S. is in no position to point fingers at China-Russia relations. We do not accept coercion or pressure from the U.S.”?

Mao also slammed Washington for not just pouring lethal weapons into the battlefield in Ukraine but also selling more “sophisticated weapons to the Taiwan region in violation of the three China-U.S. joint communiqués. What exactly is the U.S. up to? The world deserves to know the answer.”

As Washington tries to ditch the Chinese peace plan to end the Ukraine crisis, the irony is the position of Kyiv itself.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said his country needed to work with China, arguing

“it seems to me that there is respect for our territorial integrity, security issues” in the Chinese 12-point paper to end the war.

This is while the Russian foreign ministry has thanked the Chinese proposal but said that any settlement of the conflict needed to recognize Russia’s concerns including Ukraine refraining from joining the U.S.-led NATO military alliance.

Iran has supported the Chinese initiative, saying it lays the groundwork for peace talks between the warring sides.

This is, in essence, the only solution to the conflict.

The imposition of sanctions and Western profiteering from sending arms have failed to end the war; rather, they have backfired on Europeans who have witnessed record inflation and consequent protests across the continent.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin has hit out at the European Union after the bloc adopted its latest package of sanctions against Russia.

“All this, of course, is absurd,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in response to a question about the 10th round of EU sanctions aimed at undercutting Russia’s finances.

Peskov said Western governments are struggling to find more people and entities to sanction. “That explains the illogical listing of individuals and entities,” Peskov remarked.

“We are talking about such accomplished people and for them, inclusion in the lists will not cause any discomfort,” he added.

Peskov also warned that NATO as a single bloc is no longer Russia’s conditional opponent but its enemy.

As tensions continue to escalate with a serious potential knock-on effect on international peace and security, some sides are promoting peace talks while others are fueling the flames of war with the seemingly never-ending shipments of arms.

WORLD HEADLINES

Greece train collision kills at least 36, injures scores

A Greek passenger train collided head-on with a cargo train late on Tuesday, throwing entire carriages off the tracks and killing at least 36 people in the country’s deadliest rail crash in living memory.

Dozens were injured in the crash and the fire that followed. Officials said the death toll was expected to rise further as temperatures in one carriage rose to 1,300 Celsius after it was engulfed in flames.

A station master was arrested as investigators tried to understand why the two trains had been on the same track.

The collision occurred as the passenger train, heading to the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki from the capital Athens, emerged from a tunnel near the central town of Larissa.

Lukashenko, Xi adopt statement on comprehensive strategic partnership

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko and China’s President Xi Jinping have adopted a joint statement on the basic principles for developing an exemplary relationship of all-weather and all-around strategic partnership between the two countries in a new era, the BelTA news agency reported on Wednesday following the two leaders’ talks in Beijing.

According to the agency, Lukashenko and Xi Jinping met both one-on-one and with the participation of their delegations, and the talks lasted much longer than planned.

An agreement and a memorandum on cooperation in the tourism and sports fields were signed by corresponding agencies. Memorandums of understanding on cooperation between the Belarusian State Control Committee and the Chinese National Audit Office were also inked, as well as memorandums of mutual understanding between the Belarusian Architecture and Construction Ministry and the Chinese Housing and Urban-Rural Development Ministry.

Lukashenko is paying a state visit to China from February 28 through March 2.

Germany’s Scholz argues Russia must be first to take steps towards peace in Ukraine

The German government thinks that Russia should be the first to take a step towards achieving peace in Ukraine, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said at a joint press conference with Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins in Berlin on Wednesday.

Scholz argued it was “clear” to him that Russia had attacked Ukraine, and that Russia was the country that “must do something” to make peace possible. He would like to see the withdrawal of Russian troops in the first place.

Scholz stated that attention should now be paid to what he described as “the security policy situation on NATO’s eastern flank.”

“In the event of an attack, we will together defend every centimeter of the alliance’s territory,” Scholz argued. He assured that the West would continue to “support Ukraine as much as necessary.”

Earthquake death toll in Turkey rises above 45,000

The death toll in Turkey from last month’s devastating earthquake has risen to 45,089, the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) said on Wednesday, bringing the total toll including Syria to about 51,000.

The earthquake and subsequent powerful tremors injured more than 108,000 in Turkey and left millions sheltering in tents or seeking to move to other cities.

President Tayyip Erdogan has pledged to rebuild homes within a year but it will be many months before thousands can leave tents or container housing, and daily queues for food, and move into permanent housing.

More than 160,000 Turkish buildings containing 520,000 apartments collapsed or were severely damaged in the disaster, the worst in the country’s modern history.

Some two million people were registered as having fled the region, which has been hit by more than 11,000 aftershocks since the initial quake, AFAD said in a statement.

It said it had put up more than 350,000 tents, with tent cities established at 332 places across the region. Container housing settlements were being established in 162 places.

Russian allies facing ‘unprecedented pressure’ from US – security chief

The US will use any means necessary to force countries to cut ties with Moscow, the head of Russia’s Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev, said during a visit to Venezuela. He also warned that Washington is intent on preserving a unipolar world order.

Patrushev held security consultations with his Venezuelan counterpart Jose Adelino Ornelas Ferreira and other high-ranking officials in Caracas on Tuesday.

The Russian security chief argued that “all sovereign states are currently experiencing a moment of truth when they have to make a choice either to defend the freedom to select their path, their own values and identity, or to submit to the dictate of the so-called collective West, led by the US.”

In their attempts to preserve the unipolar world order, Washington and its allies resort to “political pressure, military blackmail, financial enslavement, economic sanctions and, of course, deceitful propaganda,” he insisted.

Moscow’s international partners have faced “unprecedented pressure from the US, which is trying to force them to cut any ties with Russia, no matter how close and beneficial they may be,” Patrushev stated.

Taiwan reports 19 Chinese air force planes in its air defence zone

Taiwan’s defence ministry said on Wednesday it had spotted 19 Chinese air force planes in its air defence zone in the past 24 hours, part of what Taipei calls regular harassment by Beijing.

Taiwan, which China views as its own territory, has complained for the past three years or so of stepped up Chinese military activities near the island as Beijing seeks to assert its sovereignty claims.

China has said its activities in the area are justified as it seeks to defend its territorial integrity and to warn the United States against “colluding” with Taiwan.

Japanese ambassador visits tourist sites in Chabahar



From Page 1 ▶ Lipar Wetland, also known as Pink Wetland, is one of the unique natural attractions of Chabahar, competing with only four similar wetlands in the world.

It looks pink because of the presence of planktons. The abundance of organic and mineral matter, which flow through the rivers and firths in Lipar Wetland, increases the number of biological processes in some seasons of the year.

Chabahar is the only ocean port in Iran and the best and easiest access route of the middle Asian countries to free waters. Boasting various natural and historical attractions, Chabahar could be named one of the most underrated destinations in Iran. However, in recent years, various measures have been taken to promote the port as a safe and hospitable choice for both domestic and foreign visitors.

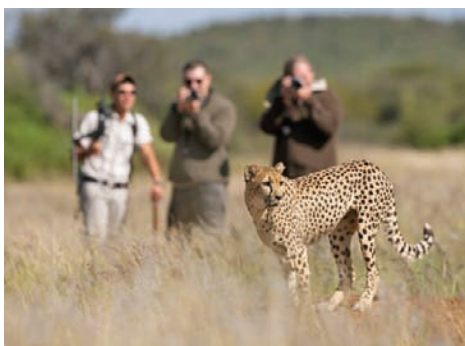
Yazd tourism hosts wildlife event

TEHRAN – Yazd province's tourism directorate is hosting a three-day wildlife event, organized in commemoration of World Wildlife Day.

Visits to wildlife conservation and breeding centers which are situated in Saryazd and Mehriz are parts of the event that commenced on Tuesday, a local official said on Tuesday.

Yazd is usually referred to as a delightful place to stay, or a “don't miss” destination by almost all of its visitors. It teems with 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.

Moreover, the event includes a photo exhibition and specialized workshops on mammals, birds, reptiles, and arthropods of



the province, the official said.

World Wildlife Day is an annual celebration and awareness-building event sponsored by the United Nations on March 3. It's a chance to recognize the many exquisite and interesting species of wild fauna and flora and to spread awareness of the many advantages that people derive from their conservation.

TEHRAN – Tehran tourism directorate has designed eight walking routes for avid sightseers and visitors to the Iranian capital.

“These days, urban tourism has become an inseparable part of citizens’ entertainment. In this regard, Tehran's tourism walking routes have been defined to gain new experiences for tourists and those interested in Tehran.

“Urban tourism is now a crucial component of the entertainment of city dwellers. To provide visitors and those with an interest in Tehran with fresh experiences, walking routes for tourism in Tehran have been developed,” ILNA quoted a tourism expert who has designed eight walking routes in the Iranian capital.

Ehsan Mirabzadeh has said this type of tourism is popular, particularly in historical cities, and has its devotees.

“Walking tourism is widespread throughout the world, particularly in historical settings and in cities like Paris, Istanbul, etc. This style of travel is well-liked and has supporters. To create a set of perceptions and emotions in these routes among tourists, we defined a few walking routes in Tehran.”

Over the past year, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has paid more attention to Tehran and its



Eight walking routes designed for Tehran visitors

tourism than before to help define different routes in terms of experiential tourism, religious tourism, agritourism, etc. in different cities of Tehran province including Pakdasht, Varamin, and Ray.

“The ability to interact with

locals and hear about their experiences allows tourists to experience walking tourism. We will also see a strengthening of the local economy in those areas of the city,” he said.

“In this regard, eight routes have been defined in Tehran

Discover stunning water cave in northern Iran

TEHRAN – A unique natural attraction, Daniel Cave in the west of the northern Mazandaran province is one of Iran's impressive geotourism attractions.

The water cave is one of the most visited natural attractions in the region, especially during the Noruz holidays.

Located five kilometers south of Salmanshahr, the property features two bat halls, needle-shaped stalactites, a fixed temperature throughout the year, and drinkable water.

The cave is situated at the intersection of two faults that come from different geological eras.

A long and narrow corridor with a width of about five meters runs through the cave, passing through tight corridors and small ponds along the way.

A beautiful roof combined with calcareous fields, rivers, and landscapes in this cave makes it comparable to Hamedan's Alisadr cave.

There has not been any determination of the end of the cave, but spelunkers estimate its length to be 6,000 meters. Most spelunkers have been able to travel up to about three kilometers deep.

As well as the water flowing inside the cave, its roof, in the natural and beautiful scenery, double its attractions. The cool and pleasant

air, especially during the summer months, makes the cave very pleasant to stay in for a long period.

There is enough room for four boats to move together in the cave based on its width and water.

Exploring a cave may not be on the “to-do list” of travelers in Iran. However, Karafu, Ali-Sadr and Quri Qaleh, and Katale-Khor are among the most visited caves.

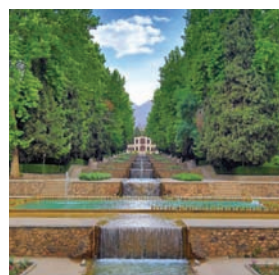
Iran is geologically a part of the Alpine-Himalayan organic belt. According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, the enigmatic evidence of human presence on the Iranian plateau is as early as the Lower Paleolithic times.

Shazdeh Garden to close for four days for repairs

TEHRAN – Shazdeh Garden, a World Heritage site in Mahan of Kerman province, southern Iran, is set to be closed for four days due to structural repairs.

The Qajar era garden, which is situated near a barren desert, will be closed from March 4 to 7 to allow for maintenance work to be carried out. Kerman's tourism chief Freydoun Fa'ali said on Wednesday.

Last September, the official noted 200 billion rials (some



\$690,000) had been allocated to improve the tourism infrastructure in Shazdeh Garden. “The project is expected to bring more satisfaction to visitors and help attract further sightseers.”

Many visitors consider Shazdeh Garden a miracle due to its location. Apart from the beauties of the garden, a two-story mansion in the western and eastern parts of the garden perfectly represents Persian architecture. The main material used in them is brick, and the art of tiling is easy to recognize.

The Persian Garden, which includes Shazdeh Garden and eight other counterparts with significant architectural, traditional, and cultural elements, was inscribed on the

UNESCO World Heritage list in 2011.

Iranian gardens have been regarded as a symbolic representation of paradise on Earth for millennia because they combine the beauty of art and architecture with the magic of nature.

A typical Persian garden weaves natural elements with artificial components to embody the idea of creating a paradise on earth through artistic, philosophical, figurative, and religious visions.

Ins and outs of Persian carpets

TEHRAN – When it comes to high-quality carpets in the world, the name Persian Carpet stands out.

Handmade rugs and carpets are considered one of the top Persian souvenirs to take home while paying a visit to Iran.

In the 17th century, some seventy Dutch artists included representations of Persian carpets in their paintings, mainly types originating in northwestern Persia, Iranicaonline reported on the history of carpets in the world.

Persia has been renowned for its dyes for many centuries; in 987/1579, for example, an Englishman was sent to learn the secrets of dyeing wool and silk in the Persian manner, the encyclopedia added.

The most common design format in Persian carpets is a central field, known as ‘matn’ in Farsi, enclosed by a border, known as ‘hashiyeh’ in Farsi, of patterned stripes alternating with narrow bands of solid colors, the source further noted.

Medallion, ‘toranj’ in Farsi, cartouche, arabesque, bota (lit. ‘bush, shrub’), palmette (gol-e eslimi lit. ‘patterned’ or ‘arabesque flower’), and rosette are among the motifs which are common in both the fields and borders of Persian carpets.

Herati (lit. ‘from Herat’), Minakhani (literal meaning unknown, possibly derived from a proper name), reciprocal-

trefoil, S-stem, and Shah-Abbasi (lit. ‘of Shah Abbas’) are among the most frequent patterns on Persian carpets.

The two basic types of knots found in Persian carpets are the symmetrical and the asymmetrical both of which may be open either to the right or, more commonly, to the left.

In earlier carpet literature, the symmetrical knot was generally called the Turkish or Ghiordes knot: among Persians in the trade, the technique of knotting carpets in this fashion is commonly known as ‘torkibaf’. The corresponding terms for the asymmetrical knot are Persian or Senna and ‘farsibaf’.

The loom (dastgah, lit. “equipment,” dar, lit. “pole”) is the frame upon which carpets are woven.

In Iran, looms may be set up either horizontally or vertically. The ends of horizontal looms (‘ru-zamini’ in Farsi) are usually pegged to the ground, and sometimes the sides are also supported. They can be quickly dismantled and easily transported and are thus favored by nomadic peoples. More commonly used is the vertical (‘divari’ in Farsi) loom, the upper and lower beams of which are either linked by two upright poles or posts or are fitted into holes in the side walls of the workroom (kargah in Farsi).

The distinctive rugs called vase carpets (because of the flower vases in their



designs) are generally thought to be from Kerman, Britannica reported.

Kerman carpet has been the origin since the 16th century of highly sophisticated carpets in well-organized designs. To this city is now generally attributed a wide variety of 16th- and 17th-century carpets, including vase carpets; rugs with rows of shrubs; arabesque carpets; the finest of the garden carpets; and, on the basis of constructional similarities, a group of medallion carpets with animals, according to the encyclopedia.

All of these had asymmetrical knotting on cotton wraps, with stiff, heavy woolen wefts pulled straight and silk or cotton wefts between left relatively slack. The result is a “double-warped” carpet, the warps of one level lying almost directly behind their neighbors. The color schemes are among the richest and most varied found in Persian carpets, the source added.

Second Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TWO-STAGES TENDER No: 1401/108-33/01

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

To Supply TurkmenAlem Satellite Signalling Equipments in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From **Wednesday 01 March 2023 (1401/12/10) 09:00 a.m until Tuesday 07 March 2023 (1401/12/16) by 09:00 a.m** with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

-The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit for participating in tender is USD 5,000 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 2,300,000,000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation package/envelope separately packed , should be submitted no later than **09:00 a.m. on Sunday 09 April 2023 (1402/01/20)** at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:

The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes is on **Sunday 09 April 2023 (1402/01/20) at 10:00 a.m** in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of opening Envelopes:

The envelopes A of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on **Sunday 09 April 2023 (1402/01/20) at 14:00 p.m** in the office of Financial Vice President .In case of complete content in the envelopes A the envelopes of B and C of eligible participants will be opened at the same time and place.

The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.

Fore more information please see :

www.iriboffice.ir/tenders and http://iets.mporg.ir/ Tel: 00982122167053

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

From page 1 ► The family physician program will be implemented across the country in the next Iranian calendar year (starting March 21).

Deputy health minister Hossein Farshidi has said the level of insurance will be increased in line with the program, IRNA reported.

Family medicine is a type of medicine in which family physicians are in direct contact with families. These doctors are responsible for primary health care and are physicians who are always present.

They are usually in contact with families in case of illness or accidents.

Due to accurate knowledge of the people covered by them and familiarity with their medical history, these doctors can find out their illnesses sooner and treat them continuously in case of illness.

People who have a family doctor have a trusted and knowledgeable counselor for their medical problems.

Family physicians are also always available and present, caring for the target population.

The program started in 2005, targeting almost 25 million citizens residing in rural areas.

Periodic examinations and monitoring of people's health status, easy and round-the-clock access to basic services and primary care, and preventing frequent visits to doctors are the characteristics of a family physician.

The program started in 2005, tar-

World Food Program in Iran releases January report

TEHRAN - The World Food Program (WFP) has released a report, expounding on activities in Iran over the month of January.

WFP reached 33,387 beneficiaries including 32,765 refugees and 622 Iranian teachers as per the monthly target under unconditional resource transfers (URT), of whom 9,361 were women, 9,609 men, 6,881 girls, and 7,536 boys.

The refugees were assisted with a total of 248 MT of fortified wheat flour (9 kg per person per month) and vegetable oil (900 cc per person per month).

WFP provides cash assistance to 7,251 Afghan and Iraqi refugee households each month. In January, a cash amount of Iranian Rials (IRR) 1,200,000 (US\$ 4.1) per person per month was distributed to households headed by refugee women and IRR 1,000,000 (US\$ 3.4) per person per month to households headed by refugee men.

During the reporting period, WFP distributed school meals consisting of milk and biscuits in all settlements, reaching 8,766 students and their teachers.

Moreover, it provided 2,790 refugee girls with a cash incentive of IRR 500,000 (US\$ 2) transferred to their bank accounts.

This is part of WFP Iran's efforts to promote education for refugee girls by providing them with cash for each month of regular school attendance.

On 13 and 14 December, Iran Country Office organized a two-day workshop in Tehran for its government counterparts from the Bureau of Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA) of the Ministry of Interior.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

‘Climate change impact on Iran doubles world average’

The effects of climate change on Iran has more than doubled on average compared to other parts of the world, while southern provinces of the country are more likely to bear the consequences, secretary of environmental policy at the center for strategic studies affiliated to the presidential office has said.

“The Hoomand-Absard station in Damavand county in northeast of Tehran experienced a temperature increase of 2.7 °C over the past 50 years, while over the past 100 years, the temperature rise was about 0.76 °C,” ISNA quoted Mohammad Darvish as saying on Tuesday.

Climate change impact is increasing in southern part of the country, among which Yazd province's condition has raised concern, he said, adding, the industries operating in the province must reduce their dependency on water, otherwise water scarcity might worsen in the region.

تغییرات اقلیمی در ایران دو تا سه برابر جهان

محمد درویش، دبیر سیاست محیط زیست مرکز بررسی های استراتژیک نهاد ریاست جمهوری گفته، ایران با تأثیرات تغییر اقلیمی دو تا سه برابر بیشتر از تأثیرات ایجاد شده در کره زمین روبرو شده است. محمد درویش، در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایسنا با اشاره به گزارش های منتشر شده توسط سازمان هواشناسی، وزارت نیرو و سازمان آب، اظهار کرد: ایستگاه هومند آبرسد در دامنه های کوه دماوند طی نیم قرن اخیر افزایش دمایی حدود ۲.۷ درجه سلیوس را نشان می دهد و این مسئله در حالی رخ داده است که در ۱۰۰ سال گذشته، حدود ۰.۷۶ درجه سلیوس افزایش دما داشته ایم. وی اضافه کرد: هر چقدر به شهرهای جنوبی تر کشورمان نزدیک می شویم، تغییرات اقلیمی هم بیشتر می شود به طوری که از این میان یزد وضعیت نگران کننده ای دارد. باید میزان وابستگی صنایع در یزد نسبت به آب کاهش پیدا کند چرا که در غیر این صورت می تواند شتاب خشک سالی ها را افزایش دهد.

with timely diagnosis by doctors, the staggering costs of treatment can be reduced, Farshidi pointed out.

All the necessary medical controls of people are done through these doctors, and if there is a need to receive higher levels of services, the necessary action will be taken to refer to a specialist doctor who is in this plan, he added.

Strongest health system

In September 2022, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said that Iran has one of the strongest health systems in the region and that this opportunity should be used optimally in the field of health diplomacy.

Based on innovative indicators of health technology development in 2021, Iran was ranked 60th among 132 countries, which shows an improvement of 60 steps compared to 2014, Younes Panahi, the deputy health minister for research and technology, has announced.

In June 2021, Ahmed al-Mandhari, the World Health Organization director for Eastern Mediterranean Region, said the Islamic Republic of Iran is a role model for primary health care.

Budget rise

The national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1402, which starts on March 21, has increased the health sector's budget by 29 percent compared to the current year's budget.

The bill has proposed a budget of 2,730 trillion rials (about \$6.8 billion) for the Ministry of Health, IRNA reported.

The administration has also proposed 690 trillion rials (about \$1.7 billion) as subsidies to provide medicine by health industries.



continued to prefer a mix of in-kind and cash assistance, as in 2021. In-kind only remains the least preferred assistance modality since 2019.

WFP Iran works under its Interim Country Strategic Plan (2018-2020) extended until the end of 2022 to align it with both the United Nations development assistance framework (2017-2021), which has been extended for one additional year, and the National Development Plan (2016-2022).

The new ICSP for 2023-2025 is also under development. WFP assists 32,000 beneficiaries yearly through unconditional food assistance, in addition to the provision of a girls' education cash incentive, and a school feeding initiative consisting of nutritious school snacks.

The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA) are the main cooperating partners of WFP in Iran. BAFIA is responsible for coordinating all matters related to refugees and international agencies.

Bi-annual meetings take place between BAFIA, UNHCR, and WFP. Monthly operational coordination meetings are also held to monitor the refugee situation and discuss appropriate response actions.

SOCIETY

MARCH 2, 2023

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Earthquakes shake Iran 706 times in a month



TEHRAN – A total of 706 earthquakes have been recorded across the country over the past calendar month that ended on February 19, according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Of the total quakes, 16 had a magnitude of more than 4 on the Richter scale, the largest of which occurred on January 28 with a magnitude of 5.9 in the northwestern city of Khoy, ISNA reported.

Statistically, 614 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, 76 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4, 15 earthquakes with magnitudes between 4 and 5, and 1 earthquake with magnitudes between 5 and 6 have occurred in the country.

Among the provinces of the country, West Azarbaijan with 324 earthquakes, Khorasan Razavi, and South Khorasan with 65 and 45 earthquakes, respectively, recorded the highest number of earthquakes in the country.

Meanwhile, seven earthquakes were also recorded in Tehran province, the largest of which was near Firouzkouh with a magnitude of 3.3 on the Richter scale.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very

seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

Iran has entered a decade of earthquakes since the [Iranian calendar] year 1396 (March 2017- March 2018), as the Iranian plateau is shrinking by 30 millimeters per year, Mehdi Zare, professor of engineering seismology at the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES), has said.

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

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

On the other hand, Tehran has an over 8,300,000 nighttime population with a mixture of old non-resistant structures as well as modern high-rise buildings that affect the vulnerability of this city.

WORLD RAMSAR SITES

Gangtey-Phobji

Gangtey-Phobji Ramsar Site lies in a wide glacial valley that spreads across the central highlands of Bhutan.

Streams in the valley drain through open grasslands to the Nakeychu, Khewangchhu and other small annual and perennial streams.

Most of the areas along the streams are marshy, covered by grass, bamboo, and several species of shrub and herbs including thick sphagnum moss.

They support rich ecosystems, and provide prime winter habitat for up to 300 globally vulnerable black-necked crane (*Grus nigricollis*), and other globally threatened species such as the endangered red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) and tiger (*Panthera tigris*), and the vulnerable sambar (*Cervus unicolor*).

The valley is an important water source for drinking and irrigated agriculture for the 44 villages in the valley as well as the villages downstream.

The Gangtey-Phobji area is a popular tourism destination with the number of tourists increasing each year. A traditional festival is organized to welcome

the arrival of the black-necked cranes in October, and the roosting cranes heighten the breathtaking scenery and help to promote nature-based tourism.

Projects to promote community-based tourism have been implemented, aiming at building local people's capacity and developing tourism products and activities such as home-stays, local guides, cultural programmes, and campsites.

Ecological character

Gangtey-Phobji is a beautiful highland valley with diverse species of flora and fauna. Slopes adjacent to the valley floor in the north are dominated by blue pine (*Pinus wallichiana*) with understory hard woods such as birch (*Betula utilis*), several

species of rhododendron and maple (*Acer* spp.).

As the altitude increases, Gangtey-Phobji valley is both culturally and aesthetically important.

The scenic beauty of the landscape is enhanced by the revered 16th century Gangtey Monastery, which makes Gangtey-Phobji valley also a popular destination for both domestic and international tourists.

Source: Ramsar.org



Joyous, colorful Kurmanji wedding

Kurmanji kurds live in the northeastern North Khorasan province. Their wedding ceremonies are always joyous and colorful occasions. Thanks to its valuable and unique elements and its role in the social consolidation of the family, Kurmanji wedding ceremonies were registered in the national intangible heritage list in 2005.

TEHRAN TIMES



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MARCH 2, 2023

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do not wish to be like anyone except in two cases. The first is a person, whom Allah has given wealth & he spends it righteously; (the second is) the one whom Allah has given wisdom and he acts according to it and teaches it to others.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times» Noon:12:17 Evening: 18:17 Dawn: 5:09 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:32 (tomorrow)

Iran: classical Persian literature

Part 14

However, all that changed when in 1244 an errant dervish, Shams ad-Din of Tabriz, undertook the re-education of the brilliant Jalal.

He took him on the mystic path that leads “to the station where the Beloved resides,” where the lover loses his identity in the beloved. Thus begins Rumi’s Divan, dedicated to Shams, “sun of God”—of God discovered through the prism of His herald.

Every lover knows that the test of separation is inevitable, befalling him inexorably. The envious drove Shams away, and Rumi’s intense poems become the salve on the wound of separation.

His magnum opus, Masnavi-e Manavi-e Mowlavi, an immense and somewhat unruly masterpiece, begins on a note of separation. The poem consists of six books, containing three to four thousand distiches each.

It remained unfinished upon Rumi’s death in 1273. A long succession of spiritual tales, interspersed with digressions of a doctrinal nature, in turn illustrated by stories, the poem was first recited in declamatory style in public sessions, where ecstatic dances were held.

As Sufism matured it tended to become institutionalized in orders. This was not accomplished by Jalal ad-Din but by his son and successor, Soltan Walad.

Author of a number of works, he is the true founder of the Mowlaviya order. As previously mentioned, Ebn al-Arabi lived in Konya; and Mowlavi died there in 1273.

Sadr ad-Din Qunawi, who died here as well in 1274, knew both masters. Eraqi of Hamadan (d. 1289), who had returned from Multan in India, also settled in Konya.

He knew Qunawi, and his poetry and his didactic work in prose, Lama’at (Flashes), were influenced by the doctrines of Ebn al-Arabi.

Eraqi contributed to the eastward expansion of Persian Sufism, which was then flourishing in Anatolia. Ghazals by Eraqi are among the most often sung today.

However, Eraqi’s spiritual contribution is linked to the specifically Iranian tradition that developed from Hallaj and such masters as Ahmad Ghazali.

Classical literature in its maturity: work of Sadi

Jalal ad-Din Rumi (1207-1273) and Sadi (ca. 1209-91) lived in the same century. Sheltered in Konya, Rumi had imported spirituality from Khorasan. Sadi lived in Fars, a province spared by the Mongol Hulegu.

Under the government of the Salghurids, Fars had not therefore experienced the cultural rupture and social turmoil experienced by other provinces.

Sadi’s work represents a peak in the historical development of Persian literature. The 13th century also brought the first phase of the successful propagation of Persian literature in India; and, with Joveyni as a prime example, it was the great century of Persian prose as used by historians in the service of the Mongols.

Sadi’s work in Shiraz is at the confluence of different literary genres and approaches, narrative, moral, and political, as well as the most classical literary expression of Sufism.

His major works, the Sadi-nama (later named the Bustan) and the Golestan, are a faultlessly seamless tapestry of anecdotes and stories with commentary.

Without the ghazals of his Divan, we would not have those of the following century, especially of Hafez. Without the ribaldry of his facetious remarks (Khabisat), Obeyd-e Zakani would not have had a worthy predecessor.

During his lifetime his reputation extended far beyond Fars. With Sadi, a seemingly effortless but meticulously crafted diction, influenced by Arabic but firmly grounded in the everyday Persian of the time, rediscovered its authentic power and verve and served as a model of clarity and aesthetic virtuosity for the subsequent generations.

Like Nezami, Sadi, was a fervent believer in the power of speech and the inestimable value of language. His work was in ways a summation of the cultural achievements of the previous three centuries. For a long time, the cultured Iranian individual recognized himself in the mirror of Sadi, the sage.

Sadi’s work contains several personal references and biographical details. Yet, here as elsewhere, as pointed out before, one must differentiate between the man and the literary persona conjured up by the writer.

This character, let’s say Sadi, would have visited the length and breadth of the Islamic world, from North Africa to India to Khotan.

He would have even been a prisoner of the Franks, or so this seasoned and well-traveled writer (jahan-dida) tells us.

Sadi studied in Baghdad, made the pilgrimage to Mecca, met great spiritual masters. Wisely he returned to Shiraz at the outset of the Mongol invasion in 1256; and two years later, he dedicated the Bustan and then the Golestan (undoubtedly the fruit of many years’ labor) to Abu Bakr ibn Sa’d the Salghurid ruler.

We sense his involvement in the ordinary lives of the citizens in Shiraz, visiting the court and its patrons, and maintaining links with spiritual personalities in the capital.

More classical in form than the Golestan, the Bustan is a long didactic poem in nine chapters, dealing successively with the justice of the prince, his kind deeds, human and divine love, humility, acceptance of fate as determined by Providence, education, recognition, and finally repentance.

But all this is woven into a sea of stories told in a most beautiful language. The Golestan conveys similar lessons delivered in a lighter style in the form of sessions.

Written mainly in prose, these are in general anecdotes drawn from daily life and illustrate a lesson distilled in one or two beautiful distiches.

The work belongs to the maqamat tradition and had many imitators. For Sadi two characters predominate in society: the prince and the dervish.

They represent the two pillars of society: political power and religious institutions. Traditional Iranian thought opposed the Greek vision of the prince-philosopher but later revised it with the proviso that no prince can act wisely without an advisor.

This became the political justification for Persian literature itself, as it manifested its own potentials and scope as just such an advisor.

A second classical period of Persian literature

In the founding period we have just examined, Persian literature revealed the breath of its expression, and the possible paths for its future were delineated.

With the Mongol power on the wane, a new period begins in the 14th century, enabling local dynasties to flourish. Tabriz, Shiraz, Kerman, and Baghdad became the seat of power for princes who competed with each other as generous patrons of the arts, friends of Sufi circles, and supporters of religious schools.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued.

Iranian Studies Center to unveil Persian paintings inspired by Nezami poetry

TEHRAN – The Iranian Studies Center plans to unveil five Persian paintings produced based on stories from the works of Nezami Ganjavi, the greatest romantic epic poet in classical Persian literature.

The artworks have been created by Mehdi Farrokhi and will be introduced as part of the center’s program to celebrate Nezami Day, which falls on March 12 this year, the director of the center, Abdolmajid Sharifzadeh told the Persian service of IRNA on Wednesday.

Following the unveiling ceremony, Mohammad Ali Rajabi of the Farshchian Islamic-Iranian Arts University will deliver a speech.

“Nezami is one of our great poets who introduces himself as an Iranian in his poetry and never feels ashamed of his nationality,” Sharifzadeh said.

“In his Panj Ganj [The Five Treasures], he thoughtfully composed the most profound lyrics produced in the history of Persian literature and taught us morals and wisdom,” he added.

“Due to their unique literary characteristics, his works deserve to be scrutinized in different meetings, and in the Iranian Studies Center of the Iranology Foundation, we plan to discuss his poetry and its impact on art, in particular Persian painting,” he noted.

“By a study into the past, we learn about a close relationship between Iranian literati and artists, and the correlation has been a source of inspiration for the artists and has been represented in their artworks,” Sharifzadeh explained.

Iran will commemorate Nezami Ganjavi in an eight-day festival beginning on March 5.

The National Orchestra is scheduled to perform a concert with poems from Nezami at Tehran’s Vahdat Hall in a closing ceremony on Nezami Day.

Nezami Ganjavi (c. 1141-1209 CE) is mostly known for “Khamseh”, two copies of which that are preserved in Iran were inscribed on UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register list in 2011.

“Khamseh” is a pentalogy of poems written in Masnavi verse form (rhymed couplets) with a total of 30,000 couplets.

These five poems include the didactic work Makhzan ol-Asrar (The Treasury of Mysteries); the three traditional love stories of Khosrow and Shirin, Laili and Majnun, and Haft Paykar; and the Eskandar-nameh, which records the adventures of Alexander the Great.

There are various versions of “Khamseh” in Iranian libraries, but the two versions kept at the Central Library of the University of Tehran and the library of the Shahid Motahhari School and Mosque in Tehran are the ones that were registered by UNESCO.

A Persian painting by Mehdi Farrokhi.

Iranian series enter world streaming market

From Page 1 ▶ “Jeiran”, a historical love drama directed by Hassan Fathi, is available on platforms offering video service in Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Iraq and Pakistan.

TV networks in Japan, Iraq, Russia, Bosnia, Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and some North African countries, including Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Libya, plan to screen the series.

“The Accomplice” by Mostafa Kiai is being screened on TV networks in Bangladesh, Iraq and several other countries in the Persian Gulf and North Africa.

“Rebel” by Mohammad Kart is been screened on TV networks in Japan, Iraq and Malaysia. The crime series stars Ali Shadman, Parsa Piruzfar and Tannaz Tabatabai.

“Queen of Beggars” by Hossein Soheilzadeh, “I Want to Stay Alive” by Shahram Shah-Hosseini, “Blue Whale” by Fereidun Jeirani and “The Island” by Siruz MOqaddam are screening on television networks in Iraq and Bangladesh.

“The Actor”, a drama series by Nima Javidi, will compete in the Series Mania Festival, the biggest event dedicated uniquely to television series in Europe.

The festival will take place in Lille, France, from March 17 to 24.

Starring Navid Mohammadzadeh, Ahmad Mehranfar, Hasti Mahdavi and Hanieh Tavassoli, the series is about Ali and his friend Morteza, two naturally gifted but unemployed thespians, who exert their acting talents in unique ways to earn a living.

Hopping from one staged marriage proposal to one university acceptance celebration, they perform at wealthy people’s functions to surprise their guests and in the hope of finding their way back to a proper theatre stage. But surprises can sometimes turn awry, and soon enough Ali and Morteza catch the attention of a mysterious agency.

“While Mortals Sleep” at Iranian bookstores

and love take curious twists in ordinary lives.

An ambitious builder of roads, commanding an army of bulldozers, graders and asphalt spreaders, fritters away his free time with miniature trains—until the women in his life crash his fantasy land.

Trapped in a stenography pool, a young dreamer receives a call from a robber on the run, who presents her with a strange proposition.

A crusty newspaperman is forced onto a committee to judge Christmas displays, a job that leads him to a suspiciously ostentatious ex-con and then a miracle.

A hog farmer’s widow receives cryptic, unsolicited letters from

a man in Schenectady about “the indefinable sweet aches of the spirit.” But what will she find when she goes to meet him in the flesh?

These beautifully rendered works are a testament to Vonnegut’s unique blend of observation and imagination.

Like a present left behind by a departed loved one, “While Mortals Sleep” bestows upon us a shimmering Kurt Vonnegut gift: a poignant reflection of our world as it is and as it could be.

The collection includes sixteen stories, including “Jenny”, “The Epizootic”, “Hundred-Dollar Kisses”, “Guardian of the Person”, “With His Hand on the Throttle”, “Girl Pool”, “Out, Brief Candle” and “The Man Without No Kiddleys”.

What did you wish to convey to the audience with Abazar’s continual back and forth between good and evil in this novel?

Abazar is merely seeking to understand himself and his desires; he is not seeking good or evil. A teenager’s personality development and ability to make the best decisions for their futures are greatly influenced by their level of knowledge.

People occasionally experience internal tensions; how did you navigate this journey in this book?

The Inner struggle is more evident during teenage, whether it is conflict or alignment with aspirations; That is, if a teenager selects a path in line with his own ambitions and goals, it happens that he doubts it and examines it numerous times. On occasion, Abazar questions and rebels against himself. Abazar occasionally challenges himself and wonders about himself too.

“Original Fingerprints”, inner struggle in teenagers

reject youthful mischief and childhood that never had a chance to develop. With the book “Original Fingerprints,” I provided this teenager with a place to express himself.

Why is this book using Turkish terminology?

The story is set in Meshginshahr, a small town. Many of the incidents in the book are true; they were created by combining a number of interviews and memoirs.

Native names used in the book include those for places, people, cultures, subcultures, and customs.

In addition to these elements, which are essential for a native novel, the romantic poetry “Asli and Kerem” was employed to illustrate the depth of Abazar’s feelings for Gulara. I have to use the original Turkish poems for this poem since they represent the emotional states of the characters in the book. The subtitles explain each poem’s purpose.

Yet, I needed to search for specific Turkish terms and idioms in order to enter these stories

An interview with Hussein Ghorbanzadeh

As reported by the Ibna news agency, Hussein Ghorbanzadeh wrote “Original Fingerprints” for teenagers. It’s an inspiring collection of stories about not-so-famous men and women who tried to make the world a better place with compassion, forgiveness, and self-belief.

How was Abazar created as a character in the book?

One of the narrators whose life recollections I wrote about, introduced me to the Abazar character. When speaking with this narrator, I became aware of another character who had the potential to be incredibly interesting but had never been given the chance to do so.

The character had chosen a course that he seemed satisfied in his words, having followed in accordance with his father’s expectations and the surroundings around him. But I could tell that he had the potential to grow more.

Those who are older and in high positions